

# GPSS Senate Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 20th 2021, 5:30pm in HUB 332 and via Zoom

## Members present:

GPSS President Aaron Yared  
GPSS Vice President of Internal Affairs Gabrielle Rivera  
~~GPSS Vice President of External Affairs Payton Swinford~~  
GPSS Vice President of Equity & Inclusion Meshell Sturgis  
GPSS Vice President of Finance A.J. Balatico  
GPSS Senate Clerk Janis Shin  
~~Executive Senator Marty Varela~~  
Executive Senator Britahny Baskin  
~~Executive Senator Ashlee Abrantes~~  
Executive Senator Malikai Bass  
~~ASUW Director of Internal Policy Nicole Hishmeh~~  
Associate Director of Student Activities Rene Singleton  
Associate Dean of Student and Postdoctoral Affairs Bill Mahoney  
~~Husky Union Building Executive Director Justin Camputare~~

## 1. [Action] Call to Order 5:42pm

**Aaron Yared** called the meeting to order at 5:42pm.

## 2. [Action] Approval of the Agenda 5:43pm

**Angela Yang (Foster School of Business)** moved to approve the agenda. **Pratima KC (Environmental and Forest Sciences)** seconded. No objections.

## 3. [Action] Approval of the Minutes 5:43pm

**Angela Yang (Foster School of Business)** moved to approve the October 6th minutes  
**Hannah Garland (Law)** seconded. No objections.

## 4. [Information] Land Acknowledgment 5:44pm

**Aaron Yared** gave the land acknowledgment.

*The Graduate Professional Student Senate acknowledges the indigenous peoples of this land and the land, which touches the shared waters of all tribes and bands within the Suquamish, Tulalip, and Muckleshoot nations and the Duwamish peoples whose lands*

*the university currently occupies. It is everyone's role and responsibility as guests to understand how their impact entangles the caretakers.*

## 5. [Information] Ice Breaker 5:45pm

**Aaron Yared** said that the senators would participate in ice breakers. He asked the senators to introduce themselves, mention their departments and consider the following prompt: "After a zombie apocalypse, what role would you play in rebuilding society? Would you be the cook? Would you be the fighter? The hunter? Etc."

*Senators joining virtually were put into breakout rooms of 3-4 people. Senators in-person formed a circle.*

**Aaron Yared** said he would be a mediator.

## 6. [Action] Second Reading of Resolution on International Students 5:58pm

**Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering)** said that he hoped people had looked at his resolution and said that A.J. Balatico had posted it in the Discord under the resolutions channel. He proposed the amendments as written in the [document](#).

**Meshell Sturgis** asked if any international students helped with the writing of the resolution.

**Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering)** said he had written the resolution with the help of the International Solidarity Working Group which included international students. He said that he had also been in touch with a couple of students affected by Executive Order 10043. He said that the International Solidarity Working Group did not write the resolution, but that he had discussed the matters in the resolution with them. He said that this motivated him to add the clause referencing the task force's earlier resolution. He said that the administration basically told the International Solidarity Working Group that they would create a task force to address international student issues but still had not made such a task force.

**Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering)** moved to approve the amendments.

**Pratima KC (Environmental and Forest Sciences)** seconded. No objections.

**Malikai Bass** said that Michelle Anderson, the CART captioner, said that the live caption needs to be turned off because it was competing with her which ruined the captions.

**Aaron Yared** asked Janis Shin to turn off the live transcript.

**Janis Shin** said that she hid the subtitles.

**Malikai Bass (Museology)** moved to approve the resolution.

*Note from the Senate Clerk: the motion should have been to vote on the resolution, but a motion to vote on the resolution was not raised.*

**Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering)** seconded. No objections.

**Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering)** raised a point of information and asked if the resolution needed to be voted on or whether it could pass by unanimous consent.

**Janis Shin** offered to do a Poll Everywhere. She said that the link to the Poll Everywhere was in the slides.

*Senators voted on whether to pass the resolution.*

*The resolution passed unanimously.*

## 7. [Action] Committee Nominations 6:12pm

**Aaron Yared** said that this agenda item would keep being brought up until all the committees were staffed.

**A.J. Balatico** said that the Finance & Budget Committee, the Judicial Committee, and the Elections Committee were essential to the GPSS's function. He said that the F&B had reached a quorum for that committee, but that it still welcomed more members. He said that the members would be confirmed at the Executive Committee meeting. He said that F&B meetings happened on Fridays at 11:30, both in-person and on Zoom.

**A.J. Balatico** said that the Judicial Committee was something that acted more independently and needed at least six at-large senators. He said that the members of the Judicial Committee could not simultaneously be on the Executive Committee. He said that the Judicial Committee decided on Bylaw amendments and determined whether the GPSS was in compliance with the Bylaws.

**A.J. Balatico** said that the Elections Committee was to be formed with four at-large senators and at least one Executive Senator. He said that the GPSS could theoretically have an election for the two open Executive Senator positions without forming the Elections Committee, but that it was highly advised to have one in place.

**A.J. Balatico** said that the members of the Judicial and Elections Committees needed to be confirmed through a Senate vote, whereas the senators could join the F&B via self-nominations. He said that those interested in joining the F&B should email him after the meeting, but that those who were interested in the Judicial and Elections Committee had to self-nominate during the Senate meeting. He said that the Senate currently had three members for the Judicial Committee and one at-large Senator on the Elections Committee. He said that the GPSS

needed two more at-large senators for the elections committee and three more for the Judicial Committee.

**Justin Pothoof (Chemistry)** self-nominated for the Elections Committee.

**Aaron Yared** agreed with Justin Pothoof's (Chemistry) comment in the Zoom chat that the Elections Committee was fun. He said that he would move to the next agenda item but would come back to the item again until all the committees were filled.

## 8. [Information] Officer and Committee Reports 6:17pm

**Aaron Yared** said that he was currently working on getting money from Provost Richards to have food and booze at GPSS events. He said that it was a work in progress, but that the GPSS had backup plans for events.

**Malikai Bass (Museology)** raised a point of order and asked if the Senate needed to vote to confirm Justin or if the Senate would wait until all the seats were spoken for.

**Aaron Yared** said that the Senate did not need to vote until October 27th.

**Aaron Yared** said that he had been working with the Campus Sustainability Fund (CSF). He said that he met with them to work on seeing how the CSF and the GPSS could better collaborate. He said that the CSF might come speak to the GPSS soon, so the senators should think of questions to ask them. He said that a survey would also be sent out to get possible questions in advance and that the senators could also ask during the meeting.

**Aaron Yared** said that he was also working on trying to get President Cauce to come speak to the GPSS, but that it might not happen until next quarter.

**Gabby Rivera** introduced herself as the Vice President of Internal Affairs. She said that one of her jobs was to program events for the GPSS. She said that the GPSS was still waiting to receive money for food and alcohol. She asked everyone to follow @gpssuw on Instagram and to make sure that they were on the Senate mailing list. She said that some students received the all-campus email in their spam. She said that all of the events would be listed in the emails as well as social media. She said that there were a couple upcoming events in November which she would announce at a later date. She said that she had also booked rooms for big socials for the winter and spring quarters.

**Gabby Rivera** said that she was working on personnel things and that the Graduate School Council had met for an orientation last week. She said that she had the opportunity to meet with deans and chairs from all the programs on campus.

**Gabby Rivera** revealed that she also sat on the U-PASS Committee which voted every quarter whether to instate the U-PASS program for the next quarter. She explained that the U-PASS

was basically each student's metro card that was tied to their student ID. She said that the fee cost \$92 a quarter and was part of the students' tuition statement. She said that she had received a few emails from students, specifically in online programs, who wanted to abolish the U-PASS program for future quarters but that she had also heard from other students that they really valued the U-PASS. She added that the U-PASS Committee only met a couple times a quarter, but that it was in need of student representation. She said that the U-PASS Committee had not met yet this quarter and that if anyone was interested in serving on the U-PASS Committee, they should contact her at [gpssvpin@uw.edu](mailto:gpssvpin@uw.edu).

**Joel Anderson** introduced himself as the GPSS policy director. He said that the GPSS had launched its legislative issues survey and had received roughly 115 responses. He said that he appreciated everyone who had engaged with the survey so far. He said that the survey would be open for another 24 hours until the end of tomorrow night. He said that the Legislative Advisory Board (LAB) would meet on Friday again at 1 p.m. to conduct a review of all the survey responses and start planning for this year's student-led agenda. He welcomed everyone to attend. He asked everyone to reach out to either him or Payton if they had any questions.

**Meshell Sturgis** introduced herself as the GPSS Vice President of Equity and Inclusion. She said that she sat on a couple of different committees and councils as part of her role. She said that she had met with the Office for Minority Affairs and Diversity's student advisory board and two different faculty councils. She said that both faculty councils went through name changes so they were now called the Faculty Council for Gender, Equity and Justice and the Faculty Council for Race, Equity and Justice, respectively. She said that the faculty councils had discussed merging the two councils last year, but that the councils were still separate. Meshell Sturgis said she had also met with the Race and Equity Initiative Group. She said that all of the aforementioned committees were just starting out, so there was nothing important to report out yet.

**Meshell Sturgis** said that the GPSS was planning a spring academic conference and was looking for volunteers to help out. She said that there would be many ways to get involved. She said that the Graduate Opportunities & Minority Achievement Program (GO-MAP) changed its name to Graduate Student Excellence in Equity (GSEE). She said that she and A.J. Balatico were working with GSEE to host a podcast named after the school's motto, *Lux sit*, which meant "let there be light" or "there is light." She said that the podcast was a collaborative effort between the GPSS's Equity, Diversity, and Accessibility Committee (EDA), GSEE, and Core Programs. She said that she would give updates on the podcast project. She announced that EDA would meet every other week on Wednesdays from 4 to 5 in a hybrid setting, starting next Wednesday. She thanked everyone for letting her know their availability. She said that she would email the EDA listserv and invited people who were interested to ask her to add them to the listserv.

**A.J. Balatico** introduced himself as the Vice President of Finance and a PhD candidate in Human Sciences Learning Development in the College of Education. He said that the F&B was meeting at 11:30 on Fridays in the GPSS office and on Zoom. He said that the upcoming

agenda included making a decision on the GPSS office refrigerator, making adjustments for the Bylaws in terms of how much money the GPSS could give to the registered student organizations on campus, figuring out departmental allocations for the year, and figuring out the form and the ways that senators could submit proposals on behalf of their departments. He said that the Travel Grants Committee had enough graders to start reviewing applications. He said that he hoped to open the applications when the committee convened and determined what the rate for conference registration would be. He said that the current rates were \$300 for domestic travel and \$500 for international travel. He said that the committee did not yet have a standard for virtual conferences which varied in length and price, from a couple days to an entire week. He said that the F&B's special allocations totaled around \$22,000 which could comfortably support up to 30 students with \$750. He said that the committee was planning to conduct a mid-year adjustment once it assessed the demand for funds. He said that the Travel Grant Committee had an allocation of \$25,000 which could support 40 to 80 graduate students. He said that the GPSS needed to be conscious of the needs that needed to be met.

**A.J. Balatico** said that the Student Activities Fee (SAF) and Student Technology Fee (STF) committees were beginning to meet. He said that the GPSS was fully represented on the STF committee. He said that the STF committee would be voting on this quarter's proposal guidelines. He said that the GPSS still needed two graduate student representatives for the SAF committee. He said that they could be graduate students from any campus as long as they were currently enrolled. He reminded everyone that the SAF was \$150 per quarter and the STF was about \$38.

## 9. [Information] Announcements 6:30pm

**Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering)** said that if anyone was interested in helping with the international solidarity working group, they should email [intl-workgroup@uaw4121.org](mailto:intl-workgroup@uaw4121.org)

**Aaron Yared** announced that the CSF was hiring a coordinator position for the 2021-2022 academic year. He said that the position was a graduate student assistantship which included a tuition waiver, health insurance and stipend, estimated at approximately \$2500 a month before taxes. He said that this was CSF's 12th year and that the CSF hoped to see itself grow and evolve through the leadership of the new CSF coordinator. He said that the applications were due November 1st and the start date was mid to late November.

**Aaron Yared** said that the CSF was also looking for a representative for their GPSS Environmental Stewardship Committee (ESC) 2021-2022 graduate student position. He said that the CSF was a student-run, student-funded grant-making organization that had been established at the UW for the last 12 years. He said it was led by passionate student workers who sought to find solutions for climate change by financially supporting transdisciplinary projects led by UW students. He said that those interested in getting involved should consider

applying for the 2021-2022 graduate student position. He said it would be an exciting opportunity to gain skills in leadership, budgeting and understanding of grant making.

**Julie Emory (Jackson School of International Studies)** said that she was a former senator currently covering the GPSS meetings as a writer for the Daily. She said that she wanted to leave her email and said that she wanted to feature under-represented students in the Daily. She said that if anyone was interested in having a student feature, they could reach out to her through her email.

**Aaron Yared** said that the working group survey was still live. He said that working groups happened for the last 20 minutes of the meeting, but that it consisted of informal work. He asked people who had not filled it out to fill it out so that the Executive Committee could better understand what kind of issues were most important to this year's senators and constituents.

**Meshell Sturgis** referred to the slides and said that the 2021 virtual resource fair which had originally been postponed would take place on the Gather platform on Monday, November 15th, at 6:30. She said that it was a fun platform where people used an avatar to navigate a virtual world. She said that it would offer a more authentic tabling feel and be safer than Zoom since people would not be able to hijack the entire platform. She said that Gather worked better on a computer than on a phone. She said that the GPSS would be giving away prizes and hoped that people could make it.

**Justin Pothoof (Chemistry)** said that he noticed that there were broken links on the GPSS website. He said that he was not able to access the Bylaws.

**Aaron Yared** said that the GPSS was currently trying to transition over to a new website.

**Meshell Sturgis** recognized Janis Shin for helping build the website and organizing the Senate meeting logistics. She also recognized Devika Kool and Hema Katari for their help promoting GPSS events.

**Janis Shin** said that she sent out weekly Senate meeting agendas and Senate meeting briefs. She said that if senators were not receiving her emails, they should email her to be added to the senator listserv.

## 10. [Action] Adjournment 6:38pm

**Malikai Bass (Museology)** motioned to adjourn the meeting. **Jack Flesher (Music)** seconded. No objections

Meeting minutes prepared by **Janis Shin**, GPSS Senate Clerk.