

GPSS Senate Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 3rd 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 Camputaro

1. [Action] Call to Order 5:37pm

Aaron Yared called the meeting to order at 5:37pm.

2. [Action] Approval of the Agenda 5:38pm

Payton Swinford motioned to move agenda item 8 up one position by switching its place with agenda item 7. **Britahny Baskin (Neuroscience)** seconded. No objections

Jack Flesher (Music) moved to approve the agenda. **Pratima KC (Environmental & Forestry Sciences)** seconded. No objections.

3. [Action] Approval of the Minutes 5:38 pm

Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering) raised a point of inquiry and asked if his edits were incorporated in the minutes. He asked if he had to motion to amend the agenda because he had asked Janis Shin to correct the minutes earlier in the week.

Janis Shin said that his edits had been incorporated into the minutes draft so he did not have to motion to amend the minutes.

Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering) moved to approve the minutes. **Davon Thomas (Evans School)** seconded. No objections.

4. [Information] Land Acknowledgment 5:40pm

Malikai Bass (Museology) acknowledged that UW was on the Duwamish's people's land.

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] Icebreaker 5:40pm

Senators were sent to breakout rooms for 10 minutes. The icebreaker prompt was "What is a piece of advice that you got in your life that has been influential for you?"

6. [Information] Senate Check-In 5:53pm

Aaron Yared asked senators if they felt that anything was missing last year. He asked them how they were doing.

Senators answered via Poll Everywhere.

Aaron Yared said that the GPSS wanted to hear more from senators and would continue hosting this exercise moving forward.

7. [Action] Legislative Agenda First Reading 5:59pm

Payton Swinford introduced himself as the Vice President of External Affairs. He said that his office passed a legislative agenda every year. He said that the GPSS had significantly expanded the scope of the agenda and reshaped its appearance. He said that this change was also reflected in the title of this agenda: Policy Agenda. He said that the GPSS was thinking more broadly than just passing bills and making legislative fixes.

Payton Swinford said that the GPSS needed to work with higher education-related state agencies for changes that graduate students needed. He said that he hoped to keep expanding the scope because there was a lot of change that the GPSS needed to fight for at all levels of government. He said that the legislative agenda was not an exhaustive list of every issue.

Payton Swinford thanked everyone who helped put the legislative agenda together. He thanked all the people who had filled out the legislative issues survey, had attended Legislative

Advisory Board (LAB) meetings, or were part of his staff for creating a comprehensive agenda that broadly and inclusively covered graduate student issues. He said he was proud of the product of all of their work.

Payton Swinford pointed out that the GPSS was not only writing the policy agenda for current graduate students, but also looking at who was not represented in the graduate student population and what barriers were preventing those not represented from becoming graduate students in the first place. He said that this affected diversity within graduate programs. He said that his team had also looked into how graduate students did after they left school such as the amount of student debt they incurred. He said that the policy agenda was written with the whole experience of graduate students in mind.

Payton Swinford said that the policy agenda was broken in an introduction of general values and 5 broad areas. He said that the first issue was about pipelines for creating more equitable avenues to get into graduate school. The following issues were representation, how represented graduate voices were in the policy conversation; affordability; wellness; and barriers. He said that some of the topics overlapped with each other.

Payton Swinford said that under the category of creating a more equitable pipeline to get to graduate school, the policy agenda suggested reducing disparities in FAFSA completion rates, expanding the Washington College Grant eligibility award levels, forming an admissions task force that would give guidance on best practices for equitable admission policies, and repealing the state-wide ban on affirmative action. He said that these goals were targeted at the graduate school admissions process. He said that all graduate school students had to have graduated from undergraduate programs first. He said that the diversity in graduate students was limited by the diversity in the undergraduate student population and that the GPSS recognized this issue on the policy agenda.

Payton Swinford said that the GPSS wanted to include more graduate student achievement statistics in state research. He said that there were many different state agencies and groups that conducted research on higher education, looked at education equity, and wrote policy solutions. He said that graduate students were often not included in this research. He said that increasing the presence of graduate students in conversations about education required increasing graduate student representation on the state's higher education boards and councils. He reminded everyone that Washington state cast a bill to add a graduate student on the statewide higher education council, the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC). He said that he had sat on the council as an undergraduate, but that the WSAC would have a graduate student representative who would push for graduate student priorities in state policy conversations once the governor's office had appointed someone. He said that the GPSS needed to pressure the governor's office to hurry up with the appointment.

Payton Swinford said that the GPSS should incorporate graduate student issues into the scope of more relevant state agencies. He said that currently, graduate student issues were only heard when graduate students talked about them. He said that if the GPSS wanted long term

progress, then it needed to increase the rate at which other bodies and entities talked about graduate students.

Payton Swinford said that the affordability section pertained to expanding low interest loan, grant, and work study options and guaranteeing recurring funding for state grant programs meant to increase racial diversity within fee-based programs. He said that there was currently a logistical problem where fee-based programs used money to recruit underrepresented students to their programs. He said that because the money was not guaranteed to come back every year, the programs could not use the money for recruitment since the money could not be promised a year ahead. He said that this issue would be one of GPSS's priorities this year.

Payton Swinford said that the GPSS would work on broadening the loan forgiveness programs and exploring ways to have more wealth-based, rather than income-based means for testing for financial aid. He said that the affordability section discussed the ratio of wealth gaps and how income was not the best indicator for how privileged or wealthy a family or an individual might be.

Payton Swinford said that the wellness section discussed healthcare and mental health care access. He said that the GPSS proposed tracking the rate of students who were either uninsured and underinsured rates. He said that the GPSS had previously passed a bill regarding this issue, but that due to COVID budget cuts, the funding for the bill was cut. He said that graduate students faced unique barriers to health insurance coverage and that the GPSS was interested in reinstating a university-based affordable health insurance plan that was open to all students and their dependents. He said that the GPSS also aimed to increase the UW's mental health counselor to student ratio.

Payton Swinford referred to the last category and said that his team had change the name of the category four times because it encompassed many different issues faced by different student populations such as student parents who needed childcare, international students who faced barriers to immigration, students with disabilities who had trouble receiving accommodations or faced barriers with accessibility. He said that the text was just a draft of the policy agenda and not what the final product would look like. He opened up the floor for comments.

Waleed Khan asked if he could share the draft of the policy agenda with his constituents and other fellow graduate students.

Aaron Yared said that anyone could reach out to Payton Swinford in the next two weeks to suggest changes. He said that Payton Swinford could accept or reject any of the suggested changes. He said that when Payton Swinford presented the updated draft at the next Senate meeting, any changes that were made required formal motions.

Payton Swinford asked everyone to share the policy agenda with their respective programs and to give him feedback. He added his email to the policy agenda and asked Janis Shin to send it out after the meeting.

Davon Thomas (Evans School of Public Policy) suggested renaming the “Barriers” section to “Accessibility.”

Payton Swinford said that he originally named it “Accessibility” but found that another section was called “Access.” He said that the theme of accessibility was found throughout the entire policy agenda, so he changed the heading to “Inclusion” but found that the contents of the section did not match up with what people expected a section named “Inclusion” to have.

Dominic Min-Tran (Medicine) asked if Payton Swinford had considered the inclusion of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) students. He said that in the “Pipeline” category, there was no mention of the Washington Application for State Financial Aid (WASFA) even though DACA students were ineligible to apply for FAFSA.

Payton Swinford said that the intention was to include both FAFSA or WASFA applicants and that he was open to making the language more specific. He said that he had not received a specific ask in the legislative survey for DACA students this year. For example, last year, the GPSS was able to ask for and secure COVID relief checks for DACA students. He asked everyone to email him if they had specific questions.

Matthew Mitnick (Evans School of Public Policy) asked Payton Swinford if he had thought about incorporating housing into the agenda, especially considering that the cost of graduate student housing was so expensive.

Payton Swinford said that he had thought about it. He said that theoretically, his role involved advocacy work at many different levels of government. He said that most of the housing issues were local and tough to tackle. He said that he had looked into different things in order to get the state to increase housing affordability, but that it came down to small policy issues that seemed too far removed from the scope of graduate student issues. He said that the voices of graduate students would not carry as much weight in housing conversations because graduate students were not the only ones being affected. He said that he was open to policy suggestions that were targeted towards students such as passing a bill so that students had special eligibility for subsidized housing or something.

Ashlee Abrantes (Environmental & Forestry Sciences) asked that the language in the “Barriers” section be made more direct. She referred to the line that read “funding capital projects at the University that improve physical accessibility infrastructure” and said that the university needed to do more than just improve it. She said that there were buildings on campus that legitimately had no accessibility and were miles away from ADA compliance.

Payton Swinford said that the lack of accessibility on campus was an obvious problem, but that policy makers only had the power to change certain things. He said that two things came to mind. First, changing laws around buildings with historical status: the majority of the ADA-noncompliant buildings were exempt because of their historic building status. He said that he could try to do something to try to change that law.

Meshell Sturgis motioned to extend time by 5 minutes. Davon Thomas (Evans Schools of Public Policy) second. No objections.

Payton Swinford said that he was open to other approaches. He said that most of the things listed on the policy agenda were not the best solution to solve problems, but were strategic points that had specific actionable steps that state policy leaders could do something about. He said that there were many issues that could be dealt with more appropriately internally.

Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering) said that in regards to housing affordability, to his understanding, the state could be and has been involved in progressive county taxation efforts. He said that if the county wanted to have a progressive tax designed to fund affordable housing, the state had to be involved in some way and that the state could take the initiative on it, too. He said that he ultimately wanted to point out that the GPSS could ask state policy makers specifically about raising funding for affordable housing.

Payton Swinford said that state-wide housing issues were only related to graduate students tangentially. He said that the issue affected graduate students but that graduate students did not have much political capital in the issue. He said that his voice did not carry as much weight in a housing committee as it did on issues that more directly impacted graduate students. He said that he understood the impact that housing costs had on graduate students and that graduate students could collectively advocate for housing, but that he was not sure that the GPSS was the best platform to do that. He said that there were other groups on campus that also partook in government advocacy to represent student interests whereas the GPSS focused on issues that were directly student-related. He said that that was how he saw his role, but that if someone else had a different interpretation, then they should let him know. He said that he did not want to promise the GPSS that he would work on something when he knew certain audiences would not listen to his voice.

Meshell Sturgis asked how many responses the legislative survey received.

Joel Anderson said that the survey received over 120 responses.

Meshell Sturgis asked if any DACA student issues came up in the survey responses.

Payton Swinford said that he could not recall seeing responses specific to DACA student issues.

Meshell Sturgis suggested that the external team make sure that the survey reach certain populations that didn't get to fill it out this year.

Matthew Mitnick (Evans School of Public Policy) moved to extend time by 10 minutes. **Gabby Rivera** seconded.

Theodore Cohen (Molecular Engineering) objected and proposed amending the time extension to 5 minutes.

Matthew Mitnick (Evans School of Public Policy) rejected the motion. No further objections.

Dominic Min-Tran (Medicine) said that senators could reach out to their respective programs and Leadership Without Borders for ongoing issues.

Lauren Gonsalves (Microbiology) asked Payton Swinford if he had considered putting student safety under the "Wellness" section. She said that her program had had many incidents regarding safety and security in the health sciences building. She said that students in her program had received push back from the university administration and saw little or no movement to increase student safety.

Payton Swinford said that safety was one of the issues that he did not have a clear goal for how to change policy. He said that the GPSS had successfully passed bills related to faculty misconduct in the past. He said that he was open to having more policies that reflected those issues. He said that he needed help researching specific solutions. He asked Lauren Gonsalves (Microbiology) to specify what type of safety she was looking for.

Lauren Gonsalves (Microbiology) said that there had been several instances of theft, an instance of sexual assault, and incidents of stolen chemicals and dangerous microbial agents that were hazardous to the general public. She asked if there was something that the GPSS could do to address the issue at a higher level.

Payton Swinford said that he was working on not asking his constituents for specific policy ideas because they provided a barrier to giving people feedback for their legislative ideas. He said that if there were topics that were totally underrepresented, he and his team could do more research throughout the next two weeks to find policies to address those issues. He thanked Lauren Gonsalves (Microbiology) for bringing up the topic.

Lauren Gonsalves (Microbiology) said that there was a group of students working to bring change by making a list of easy ways to improve building security. She said that this list might be helpful to Payton Swinford for brainstorming policy ideas.

Aaron Yared pointed out that this was an issue with barriers to funding capital projects.

Payton Swinford said that he would get Lauren Gonsalves' (Microbiology) email and the name of the group later.

Matthew Mitnick (Evans School of Public Policy) said that he understood Payton Swinford's point, but that he wanted to see something specific to graduate students like a state housing voucher program with an eligibility threshold not totally related to income because many students did not have a full-time income. He said that he had heard that some legislators were interested in exploring that idea and that he was happy to discuss it with Payton Swinford in the next two weeks. He said that some people needed additional accommodations because of the pandemic or other circumstances and allies at the state level could pressure the administration on that point.

Britahny Baskin (Neuroscience) said that people who were below a certain income could get housing, but only if they lived with someone who had a full-time income. She said that it would be easy for Payton Swinford to remove this stipulation. She said that this policy was in line with workers rights and that many graduate students were workers and not necessarily students.

Davon Thomas (Evans School of Public Policy) asked how much influence the state and administration had over campus safety.

Payton Swinford said that the state influenced things in many ways. He said that issues could be addressed at the state level, but if he could not find a state policy relevant to the problem, then there was not much he could do.

Aaron Yared said that security was a capital project that was funded by the state. He said that all capital projects were put on a list and were funded in order, so it sometimes took years for the change to happen. He said that the GPSS could lobby to put security higher on the list by explaining that students were being physically harmed.

Britahny Baskin (Neuroscience) said that it affected many people in the Neuroscience department as well.

Davon Thomas (Evans School of Public Policy) motioned to extend time by 1 minute.

Britahny Baskin (Neuroscience) seconded.

Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering) objected and proposed amending the time extension to 3 minutes.

Davon Thomas (Evans School of Public Policy) rejected the motion. No further objections.

Payton Swinford said that people who still had questions could connect with him offline.

Lauren Smith asked if there would be any protections for students living in off-campus housing. She said that she had to work 40 hours a week at Safeway while pursuing her masters degree.

She said that she lived in very unsafe conditions and that she had not been able to get a hold of the Tenant's Union.

Payton Swinford asked Lauren Smith to clarify what she meant by safety.

Lauren Smith said that she frequently had people put their head in through her window at night. She said that there was black mold all throughout the unit and the lights would often go out. She said that she was in a much better place now, but that she did not want any other graduate student to go through the same situation.

Payton Swinford said he would look more into the matter. He thanked everyone for their time and asked them to email him with more feedback.

8. [Information] STF Presentation 6:43pm

Lucas Wang introduced himself as the chair of the Student Technology Committee (STF). He said that the yearly funding plan was a proposed plan for the operations of the STF for the next fiscal year which would span from July 2021 to June 2022. He said that the document would cover various topics such as the goal of STF, internal operations, budget proposals, plans for next year, and proposed changes to the STF's yearly funding plan. He referred to the document and asked everyone to hold their questions until the end. He said that the document could be found on the STF's website.

Lucas Wang said that the STF was a fee that was part of the students' tuition which was pooled in reserve funding to fund student technology or technological projects that could be proposed by any student as long as they had the means to disperse the funds, i.e. the proposal needed to have a staff contact with a budget number. He said that last year, the STF had been suspended for the spring and summer quarters of 2021 due to imbalances between the reserve funding and the decrease in the number of projects and project allocation during the pandemic.

Lucas Wang said that there had been a total of 77 proposals, 11 blocks, 9 of which were continuing and 2 of which were new, that had been brought to the STF over the past fiscal year. He said that due to the pandemic, the number of proposals had gone down, but the size of the proposals had gone up, which meant that the total allocation seemed to be fairly stable. He said that only 46% of the proposals had been allocated, meaning that only 40% of the approved projects had spent money during Fiscal Year 21. He said that this was due to logistical delays, market reasons, etc. He said that this made the numbers in the past year a bit strange since many proposal deadlines had been extended to the end of September.

Lucas Wang said that one of the goals for the STF was to resume standard operations amid the uncertainties caused by COVID. He said that this included hosting hybrid meetings and being mindful of the fact that proposal dynamics were still very uncertain. He said that the STF did not know how much funding would be needed, especially for registered student

organizations (RSO). He said that he did not know if RSO enrollment was staying constant and that this general uncertainty meant that the STF had to be cautious.

Lucas Wang said that the reserve balance acted as a padding for fluctuations in the STF's revenue. He said the uncertainty caused by the pandemic meant that the STF needed to keep its padding higher than normal and that the padding was currently sitting at about \$10 million. He said that other goals for the STF included making changes to the internal operations of the committee, such as outreach and communication. He said that most of these changes were internal but might have positive effects for external stakeholders.

Lucas Wang said that he would explain how the committee allocates its awards. He said that the most common award that the STF bestowed was the single award. He said that single awards were proposals which the committee either accepted or rejected after discussing. He said that block funding was an allocation that, once approved, would continue to carry on annually. He said that there could be modifications to the blocks such as special projects, but that, for the most part, they were just annual subscriptions.

Lucas Wang said that there were two types of special STF projects. The first one was called "Detached timeline for Voting and Allocations." He explained that the proposals that fell in this category were discussed and allocated immediately if approved. He said that this was a special mechanism to expedite the proposal process. For example, the Student Technology Loan Program Laptop Proposal had been in dire need for remote learning equipment that it was given this special status so that the proposal could be approved and allocated at the same meeting. He said that the second special project was "STFC Oversight and Manage." One example of this was the STF charging stations around campus. He said that the STF had 14 charging stations not managed by any third party campus entities; they were managed by the STF itself. He said that the STF did not typically oversee proposal products.

Lucas Wang said that the STF's estimated revenue for Fiscal Year 2022 was \$4.81 million. He said that the STF anticipated \$4.18 million during the standard academic term and \$0.6 million during the summer quarters. He said that the reserve of \$10.28 million carried over. He again noted that this reserve funding was higher than usual. He said that the STF was planning to allocate about 60% of the total available funds, around \$15.8 million, maximum. He said that the STF would have problems if it spent more than that, but he said it was unlikely that that much money would be spent.

Lucas Wang said that the STF maintained an administrative project which was used for all internal items. He said that the STF proposed to increase the administration budget. He explained that the administration budget was responsible for all of the committee's internal spending which included the payroll and benefits for all of its student employees and its one HUB employee. He said that the HUB employee was special because the employee's salary was pulled out as a lump sum and given to the HUB to disperse.

Matthew Mitnick (Evans School of Public Policy) motioned to extend time by 5 minutes.
Davon Thomas (Evans School of Public Policy) seconded.

Lucas Wang said that the STF would partake in a joint policy with the Student Activities Fee Committee (SAF). He said that the STF would provide stipends to eligible committee members so that the committee members could receive equitable, reasonable, compensation and enact a policy that would keep STF and SAF committee member compensations in sync. He said that the STF was also working on maintaining its website's backend infrastructure; its oversight projects, such as the replacement of charging cables for the STF campus charging stations; internal equipment expenses, such as telephone charges, Zoom webinar subscriptions, office supplies, and work devices; and outreach expenses, such as advertisements in *The Daily*.

Lucas Wang said that the reserve pool was only to be used to fund projects. He said that the administration budget was not part of the reserved pool--it is a fixed amount of 2.25% the annual STF revenue. For example, if the STF received \$10 million of revenue, the STF's administration budget would be capped at a maximum of \$2.25 million. He noted that the STF's revenue would fluctuate based on the number of enrolled students because it was a component of student tuition. He also noted that student worker unions, such as the UAW, could choose to exempt certain students from the fee. He said that the padding reserve could not help mitigate the fluctuations in the administration budget which made the administration quite vulnerable. He said that the STF's administrative budget had demonstrated a constant year-on-year increase. He said that until last year, it never exceeded its allocation.

Lucas Wang shared that the STF and the SAF were planning to implement a joint policy that would make changes to the current stipend model and potentially structure compensation for all student employees. He said that there was no solid process for increasing compensation with regards to inflation and economic factors. He said that this policy would be one of the biggest changes proposed in the STF's Yearly Funding Plan for Fiscal Year 21. He said that the STF was proposing to raise its annual revenue for its administration budget from 2.25% to 3%. He said that this change would provide the STF the means to cover its overhead costs and to counter fluctuations in the years to come. He said that he was working to put the pay for STF in sync with the SAF. He invited Benjamin Chan, the chair of SAF, to help him answer questions.

Benjamin Chan said that the SAF had looked over the policies and cost of compensation for activities in the past across campus. He said that he spoke with prior STF and SAF chairs before deciding to run a pilot stipend program for otherwise uncompensated committee members for dedicating a significant amount of time committee work. He said that the coordination between the SAF and the STF was happening so that there were no disparities in participation between both groups. He said he had come to the meeting to show support for and answer questions about the STF's new compensation policy. He clarified that the SAF had its own internal budget that was independent of the student government's and would be able to fund its own stipends.

Lucas Wang invited people to ask questions either about the new stipend policy or the document.

Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering) said that he had served on the STF in the past and that giving stipends to non-staff committee members was a good idea. He noted that the Campus Sustainability Fund (CSF) was also a very similar committee which received grant proposals for projects and allocated them based on a set of criteria. He said that CSF also comprised a committee of student volunteers and that it would not be equitable to give stipends to STF and SAF members without also giving stipends to CSF members. He asked Lucas Wang and Benjamin Chan for their thoughts.

Benjamin Chan said that the SAF was actively collaborating with different entities on campus, including CSF. He said that the main decision behind why this policy was implemented was because both the STF and the SAF were run by the Washington Administrative Court to administer fees.

Meshell Sturgis motion to extend time by 2 minutes; **Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering)** seconded. No objections.

Benjamin Chan continued and said that that was the immediate priority that he looked at when evaluating compensation. He said that he was keeping other communities in mind and was communicating with them to ensure that the policy was equitable. He said that his primary focus was on the degree of responsibility that was entrusted to committee members and that amongst the committees on campus, the STF and the SAF had one of the highest levels of required administrative functions.

Andrew Shumway (Earth & Space Sciences) said that last year's STF chair came to the GPSS and proposed a budget of about \$9 million. He said that he had asked the chair whether the STF would be able to spend that much money and the chair had assured him that they would, but based on the Fiscal Year 21 summary, only \$4 million had been allocated and \$2 million had been spent. He said that that was why the STF had suspended the STF fee and that he thought it had been the right choice. He said that he saw a very similar budget this year and was skeptical that the entire budget would be spent. He said that he understood that the STF wanted to have wiggle room in its budget, but hoped that the STF would consider suspending the fee again if it noticed that it was not spending as much as it had anticipated. He asked if the STF had plans in place to waive the STF fee so that the students were not paying a fee for a service that was not being used.

Lucas Wang said that the \$9 million was the maximum budget which was in place to prevent the padding from getting too thin. He said that he understood Andrew Shumway's (Earth & Space Sciences) concerns. He said that despite the uncertainties, he did not believe that the maximum budget was meant to be reached because then it would suggest that the padding was too thin. He said that the core reason why the STF fee was suspended last year was because the padding became too thick. As a result, the STF stopped adding to its padding and started

using it instead. He said that the STF was at the beginning of its proposal cycle and had spent a lot of time auditing and synchronizing past and current committee policies that needed to be fixed in order for the STF to function sustainably for the next five years. He said that it was for this reason that the STF was a bit delayed on its Fiscal Year 21 fourth quarter 2021 proposal schedule. He said that the STF planned to participate in more outreach in the upcoming quarters. He said that if the padding started to blow up, suspending the fee would be one effective mitigation strategy. He said that he could not promise it because he was uncertain about the future. He said that he was unsure how RSOs felt or whether departments were planning to start new projects. He said that he could list strategies for possible scenarios but that he could not give concrete answers.

Andrew Shumway (Earth & Space Sciences) said that he just wanted to make sure that the option was still on the table. He said that he hoped the STF received many applications and was able to fund as many projects as possible. He said that the STF's work was very important.

Aaron Yared said that if anyone had further questions they could email them to him and he would forward them to the speaker.

Lucas Wang thanked everyone for their time and referred them to the STF's [website](#) for more information.

9. [Information] Departmental Allocations 7:10pm

A.J. Balatico introduced Michelle Noyes (Genome Sciences) to present on departmental allocations.

Michelle Noyes (Genome Sciences) said that the departmental allocation applications were now open. She said that departmental allocations were a way for senators to engage with their departments and receive funds from the GPSS. She said that there were two essential things that senators could request: 1) capital improvements and 2) retreats. She referred to the slide and said that there were guidelines on what the money could and could not be used for. She said that items bought with the money needed to stay within the department for more than a year, like a microwave, for example. She said that the money could not be used for food or giving people money. She said that the money could be used for sending students to a retreat on state property, up to \$15 per student. She said that the retreat could not be used to supplement coursework—it had to be an out-of-classroom experience.

Michelle Noyes (Genome Sciences) advised everyone to speak to members in their department to see if their students wanted any items or wanted to go on a retreat. She welcomed everyone to download and complete the application. She said that the applications needed to be signed by a department budget coordinator and that completed applications could be submitted to any of the places listed on the slide.

Davon Thomas (Evans School of Public Policy) asked if anybody could submit an application since it was on behalf of the department.

Michelle Noyes (Genome Sciences) said that only senators could submit applications on behalf of their constituents.

A.J. Balatico added that the proposal had to be for the entire department. He said that it could not be used for a specific lab. He said that the application reviewers also looked favorably on student surveys.

Meshell Sturgis asked if departments that shared buildings could collaborate on one application.

A.J. Balatico said that each application could only be filled out by one academic degree-granting department.

10. [Action] Committee Nominations 7:15pm

Aaron Yared said that this agenda item would recur until all the positions were filled. He said that the Finance & Budget Committee (F&B), the Judicial Committee and the Elections Committee had positions that needed to be filled. He asked Meshell Sturgis how many positions were still unfilled.

Meshell Sturgis said that the Judicial Committee needed 2 more people and that the Elections Committee needed 3 more people.

A.J. Balatico said that the F&B had quorum, but that he wanted 2 more people to join so that it would still have quorum if a committee member missed a meeting.

Aaron Yared said that the GPSS had been trying to get rid of a fridge for a while because the F&B had not been able to vote.

Matthew Mitnick (Evans School of Public Policy) asked if executive senators were expected to be on a committee and if there was a process for becoming an executive senator. He said that he had noticed the crossed out names of executive senators on the agenda.

Britahny Baskin (Neuroscience) said that the role of the executive senators was to keep the officers in line. She said that the executive senators did extra things for the Senate but could not serve on the Judicial Committee. She said that if someone was looking to join a committee with a low time commitment, then the Judicial Committee was a good committee to join. She said that she had served on it before and enjoyed the experience. She said that the committee only met as needed and that meetings were scheduled on a time that worked for everyone. She said that the Judicial Committee only met if an issue with the Bylaws or a Bylaw amendment came

up. She said that the Elections Committee was responsible for putting the Elections Guide for the upcoming year and running the election. She said that three at-large senators and at least one executive senator needed to sit on the Elections Committee. She said that executive senators were elected positions.

Lauren Smith said that she was from the School of Law and that she planned to be a senator soon. She asked if she could apply to be a part of the Judicial Committee.

Aaron Yared said that she would not be eligible until she became a senator, but that he recognized her soft commitment.

Andrew Shumway (Earth & Space Sciences) self-nominated for the Judicial Committee.

Aaron Yared said that if the Election Committee was filled, the GPSS would be able to host executive senator elections.

Britahny Baskin (Neuroscience) said that executive senators received \$450 each quarter for putting extra effort into the GPSS.

Aaron Yared said that the GPSS needed 3 more people on the Elections Committee.

Andrew Shumway (Earth & Space Sciences) raised a point of information and said that executive senator elections did not require an elections committee. He said that in the event of not having an elections committee, the Executive Committee served as the Elections Committee.

Aaron Yared said that the Executive Committee was aware of the rules but that they wanted to form the committee as soon as possible because setting up officer elections was very time-consuming and intense.

Ashlee Abrantes asked if a hypothetical executive senator who was willing to be on the Elections Committee and was defending in the Spring could serve on the Elections Committee in autumn quarter and then bail.

Aaron Yared said yes. He said he hoped the hypothetical executive senator could find someone to take her place. He said that senators were allowed to join and quit as they pleased.

Ashlee Abrantes (Environmental & Forestry Sciences) self-nominated for the Elections Committee.

Gabby Rivera moved to extend time by 5 minutes. **Davon Thomas (Evans School of Public Policy)** seconded. No objections.

Marty Varela (Residential Community Student Association) asked if anyone had spoken to previous Election Committee members to see if they wanted to participate again. She said that she understood that at least two of the people that served on the Elections Committee last year were interested in doing it again this year.

Aaron Yared said that he had not but that he would.

Pratima KC (Environmental & Forestry Sciences) asked for clarification on whether she could be on the Elections Committee as a member of F&B.

Aaron Yared said that she was free to be on either the Judicial or the Elections Committee.

Pratima KC (Environmental & Forestry Sciences) self-nominated for the Elections Committee.

A.J. Balatico moved to confirm the 4 nominees for the Elections Committee: Lincoln Lewerke (Microbiology), Ashlee Abrantes (Environmental & Forestry Sciences), Pratima KC (Environmental & Forestry Sciences), and Marty Varela (Residential Community Student Association). **Davon Thomas (Evans School of Public Policy)** seconded. No objections

Aaron Yared said that the GPSS would elect executive senators at the next meeting.

11. [Action] Winter Quarter Senate Meeting Venue 7:26pm

Aaron Yared said that the Executive Committee and the officers had discussed how the hybrid style meeting allowed people to attend Senate meetings from their homes. He said that today was an outlier from the trend and revealed that prior to today, the average in-person attendance was one or two senators a meeting. He said that this raised the question of whether the GPSS should continue to occupy such a large space each week if nobody was coming in. He said that it might be more useful and productive for everyone to revert back to fully virtual meetings in the winter quarter. He said that the Executive Committee wanted people to vote on the issue and said that senators were welcome to have a conversation first to make points for and against.

Rachel Jecker (Medicine) said that they had not seen prior in-person meetings. They asked how big of a space the GPSS occupied.

Justin Computaro said that the space could fit a maximum of 120 people, which was much bigger than the Senate body, but much smaller than what the Senate body could be if the GPSS had representation from every single program

Britahny Baskin (Neuroscience) said that the Executive Committee had brought this up in preparation for winter quarter. She said that the GPSS would revisit the topic in the spring and

were still planning to hold Executive Senate meetings in person. She said that everyone was welcome to join Executive Senate meetings.

Aaron Yared said that the other added benefit of going fully virtual was that the Senate could utilize breakout rooms for icebreakers and bring back working groups, which was something the Executive Committee originally wanted to do at the beginning of this year. He said that it would be much easier for people to interact with one another because the people attending in person were siloed off from the people attending on Zoom.

Malikai Bass (Museology) said that there were some advantages to being virtual. For example, it was easier to share documents and keep everyone together when reading off the same screen. He also pointed out that daylight saving time would start on November 7th and that darkness would fall around the time of the start of Senate meetings.

Meshell Sturgis said that one of the big incentives to come to the Senate meetings prior to COVID was that the GPSS would provide food for all of its meeting attendees since the meetings were held during dinner hour. She said that the HUB did not currently allow for food consumption. She said that people could eat at home, but not in the HUB.

Aaron Yared said that as the COVID situation continued to evolve, it was possible for the food policy to change.

Matthew Mitnick (Evans School of Public Policy) said that though it was his very first meeting, he felt very isolated from the people on Zoom. He said that he could not see their names. He said that it would make a more successful meeting if the method of meeting was consistent for everyone. He said that he was not sure if there was an open forum, but that if people wanted to come and speak, an online platform might be more accessible. He said that hosting meetings online might also make meetings shorter.

Ashlee Abrantes (Environmental & Forestry Sciences) said that the GPSS has or would be upgrading the Zoom experience.

Gabby Rivera said that the Executive Committee had passed the Zoom purchase last week and that the Executive Committee would be purchasing the webinar feature which would hopefully make hosting Zoom meetings much easier.

Davon Thomas (Evans School for Public Policy) said that though his internet was not great, he supported having all Senate meetings online next quarter. He said that he disagreed with the notion that meetings would be done faster if they were held online. He said that he was part of student government last year and that the leadership felt justified to hold longer meetings because the attendees were already at home.

Meshell Sturgis suggested that the GPSS bridge the gap between the people on Zoom and people attending in-person by getting a second screen to broadcast a gallery of faces. She said that the GPSS could iron out the logistics of the cameras.

Marty Varela (Residential Community Student Association) raised a point of information and said that she just wanted people to be aware that Senate meetings got longer as the year progressed. She said that it might be nice to cut out commute time during winter quarter.

Senators used Poll Everywhere to vote on whether to host Senate meetings fully online during the winter quarter.

12. [Information] Officer and Committee Reports

7:37pm

Aaron Yared said that he had been working on accessibility. He said that he met with Regent Rogelio Riojas to discuss accessibility issues and how faculty could make their learning materials accessible to students who have been exposed to COVID or had to quarantine because a loved one had been exposed to COVID. He said that he was working on a project with ASUW and with ASUW-B and ASUW-T to convince the Board of Regents on why students needed more accessibility options. He said that he needed to hear from stakeholders such as student teaching assistants, students with disabilities, and student caregivers because these specific populations were most vulnerable and would help him understand what sort of solution to propose. He said that if anyone was interested in helping him work on coming up with solutions, they were welcome to contact him. He said that the GPSS had done a great job outlining the problem but had not done enough to figure out possible solutions and the logistics for implementing solutions. For example, it was very easy to demand that every professor record their class, but not every classroom was equipped with a camera. He said that there were many buildings that were out of date and that only 41 classrooms on campus had Panopto recording capabilities.

Malikai Bass (Museology) said that he would love to be involved in this and had a couple of ideas already.

Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering) said that he had a lot of information pertaining to Panopto setups in classrooms. He said that he tried to get the STF to pay for Panopto in every classroom which was an expensive ask. He said that the pushback that he received was that existing Panopto systems had low utilization. He said that he was not sure if Panopto systems if the existing systems were being used well. He said that if the Panopto systems were being used well, then this was important information that the GPSS needed to emphasize.

Aaron Yared said that he heard that only 38% of faculty used Panopto, but that those who used it gave very good reviews. He said that it was possible that Panopto was not the solution, and that the GPSS needed to come up with solutions.

Gabby Rivera said that the Graduate School Council had no updates at this time, but was meeting tomorrow. She said that GPSS had appointed all of its U-PASS Advisory Board representatives. She said that the U-PASS Advisory Board had not met yet because the ASUW had not yet appointed its representatives. She said that the U-PASS Advisory Board needed to vote on whether to keep the U-PASS program going during winter quarter. She said that she had received many emails from students regarding the U-PASS. She said that once the U-PASS vote was scheduled, she would invite the U-PASS to the GPSS Senate meetings to come and ask questions.

Gabby Rivera said that the GPSS was partnering with UW Athletics and would be offering discounted tickets to Saturday's November 13th football game against Arizona State University. She asked everyone to spread the word and invite their constituents and loved ones to have a little social.

Gabby Rivera said that the drama department was premiering *The Importance of Being Earnest* on Saturday. She said that the premier run would last all throughout November and that the entire cast was made up of graduate students.

Joel Anderson introduced himself as the GPSS Policy Director. He said that he had not received any updates from Payton Swinford. He said that the LAB had spent two hours refining the GPSS's legislative agenda that was presented tonight. He said that the LAB would continue the process with the feedback that they had received tonight. He invited everyone to email feedback to him or Payton Swinford.

Joel Anderson said that the LAB had not been able to secure a room for holding hybrid meetings, so he had hosted Zoom meetings through his iPad. He said that he would make sure to work on the logistics and provide a Zoom meeting link beforehand and post it to the GPSS's Discord channel.

Lauren Newton added that LAB meetings were held on Friday at 1pm.

Meshell Sturgis said that she was given a seat on the Board of Regents' DEI Advisory Committee and that the first meeting was tomorrow. She said that she would relay information from the meetings. She announced that the GPSS's diversity committee would have its first meeting next Wednesday, November 10, at 4pm, right before the Executive Senate meeting. She said that it would be held in HUB 303 and online. She said that she had posted a flyer on the Discord and sent an email out to people on the diversity committee's listserv. She asked people who were interested to email her so that she could add them to the listserv.

Meshell Sturgis let everyone know that she was virtually available on Friday afternoons for office hours. She said that people could email her or reach out to her on Discord to connect with her. She thanked everyone who nominated themselves to the Judicial Committee.

A.J. Balatico said that the F&B would hold its fifth meeting on Friday. He said that the F&B had approved a few things. He said that the F&B would discuss Bylaws at the next meeting. He said that applications for the special allocation, the departmental allocations, and travel grants were open. He said that the travel grants committee had already approved 6 applications. He reminded everyone that the travel grant provided \$300 for domestic travel or virtual conferences and \$500 for international travel.

A.J. Balatico said that he had appointed all of the STF representatives but needed 3 more SAF representatives from GPSS. He said that the GPSS had requested \$20,000 in discretionary funds from Provost Mark Richards so that it could provide food, drinks, and gifts to graduate students. He said that the GPSS received the full amount with the stipulation that the funds not be used for alcohol. He said that the officers would have to be strategic about spending the money.

13. [Information] Announcements 7:50pm

Justin Computaro announced that the HUB's Excellence in Student Leadership Scholarship was giving away \$1000. He said that the scholarship was open to all GPSS members and that applications were due on November 15th.

Gabby Rivera said that she was planning the GPSS Winter Formal and asked everyone to email her ideas for the theme. She said that in 2019, the theme was "Astroprom."

Marty Varela (Residential Community Student Association) said that the UW sponsored Toastmasters to build communication and leadership skills. She said that Toastmasters met on Thursday's at noon via [Zoom](#).

A.J. Balatico referred to the slides and said that if anyone was interested in teaching gifted children in the winter quarter on Saturdays, there was an opportunity at the Robinson Center to do just that.

Meshell Sturgis referred to the slides and said that the GPSS's virtual version of the Resource Fair would be held on Monday, November 15 at 6:30. She said that it would be held through the HUB's virtual event space called Gather. She said it was very fun and that people used a little avatar to maneuver. She said that there were games and that the Gather platform looked exactly like the downstairs section of the HUB. She said that it was only an hour long and that people could walk up to different tables. She hoped to see everyone there.

14. [Action] Adjournment 7:53pm

Britahny Baskin (Neuroscience) motioned to adjourn the meeting. **Davon Thomas (Evans)** seconded. No objections

Meeting notes prepared by **Janis Shin** (gpsssc@uw.edu), GPSS Senate Clerk.