

# GPSS Senate Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 9th 2022, 5:30pm on 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  
Executive Senator Pratima KC  
Executive Senator Davon Thomas  
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 5:46pm

**Aaron Yared** called the meeting to order at 5:46pm.

## 2. [Action] Approval of the Agenda 5:46pm

**Malikai Bass (Museology)** moved to approve the agenda. **Marty Varela (RCSA)** seconded. No objections.

## 3. [Action] Approval of the Minutes 5:47pm

**Davon Thomas (Public Administration)** motioned to approve the minutes. **Jack Flesher (Music)** seconded. No objections.

## 4. [Information] Land Acknowledgment 5:48pm

**Ashlee Abrantes (Environmental & Forestry Sciences)** gave the land acknowledgment.

**Ashlee Abrantes (Environmental & Forestry Sciences)** said that in her last meeting with President Cauce, she had been informed that a rock was thrown through a window of the Intellectual House last night just after midnight. She said that she had reflected on the fact as she walked home because the Intellectual House was on her path. She said that though she was not particularly strong, she could pitch a rock in several other buildings' windows. She said that this thought sat with her as she walked home and that she reflected on what a land acknowledgement meant to her as an Akwesasne. She said that she thought about the Duwamish and the many other tribes who fought in courts just to have their status, their name, and even parts of their culture recognized up through the 20th century. She reflected on how the Duwamish and the Chinook struggled and still lived without fundamental privileges like accessible clean water.

**Ashlee Abrantes (Environmental & Forestry Sciences)** said that these disparities bothered her every day, and that she asked non-native people to acknowledge the land so that they did not forget, and that it was more than just native people banding together. She said that there were a couple hundred native students around campus asking non-native students not to forget them. She said that this was about having the Intellectual House on campus and having the unfunded mandate for the second half of the Intellectual House. She said that these things should not be forgotten.

**Ashlee Abrantes (Environmental & Forestry Sciences)** left the Senate with a Mohawk expression: *Teyethinonwerátons ne onkwe'shón:'a, we give thanks to all people*. She asked everyone to treat each other with respect and to acknowledge the people that had been here since time immemorial.

## 5. [Information] Senate Check-In 5:50pm

**Aaron Yared** introduced the Senate check-in prompt: "How did you feel about UW's transition from virtual to in person? And are there any specific issues in your program that you would like GPSS to address?" He encouraged senators to either speak up or respond through Poll Everywhere.

**Matthew Mitnick (Public Administration)** suggested exploring the policies around giving teaching assistants and graduate student instructors more agency over the modality that they taught in. He said that in his circumstance, he felt that he was restricted by departmental decisions or professors who made decisions on behalf of the class. He said that more consideration should be made for the actual instructor of the class. He also suggested that departments facilitate a more comprehensive student feedback process for instructors.

**Aaron Yared** said that those decisions were so decentralized that when he tried to address the issues, he was constantly redirected. He asked if anybody was able to find N94, N95 masks within their department buildings.

**Malikai Bass (Museology)** said that he had a small program. He said that his program administrators handed them out. He said that there was a box in the classroom and that the

professor gently reminded students to upgrade their masks in the classroom. He speculated that his department purchased the masks independently from the university.

**Aaron Yared** asked if Malikai Bass (Museology) had also said that his program was covering the fee for changing grades to credit/no credit and the late add/drop.

**Malikai Bass (Museology)** said yes. He said that his program had been good. He said that the head of his department had had several meetings with him and said that they were getting pressure from the Dean and the Provost that they were not able to offer remote-only classes. He said that the department could not offer hybrid classes either unless the two experiences were exactly equal, which they were not. He said that this is why classes had to return to how they were listed on the time schedule. He said that though the program did not offer synchronous remote access, it had done many other things for its students, so he felt that his program was taking student concerns seriously.

**Chianaraekpere Ike (Law)** said that she was in a meeting on Monday to plan for an annual diversity week. She said that she had been told that departments cannot make contracts with vendors this year and that everything had to go through UW's central administration. She said that something as simple as a student organization wanting to hire an African American museum could not make a contract with the vendor. She said that since everything had to go through UW's central administration, things had to be planned out months in advance. She asked if the GPSS knew about this shift in policy and what it thought about having every little vendor contract go through UW's central administration.

**Aaron Yared** said that to his understanding, this had always been the policy. He said that the current negotiation with the museum was a three-year contract and that for certain levels of contracts, the central administration needed to give their approval. He said that this policy could apply to all contracts, but he was not sure.

**Chianaraekpere Ike (Law)** said that now, every single contact had to pass through the central administration, which was not the case before.

**Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering)** said that for facilities repairs like repainting building walls or hanging things on walls that required drilling and hole boring, everything was required to go through UW Facilities. He said that this was partially due to UW Facilities being unionized labor. He said that he was not aware that this was a new policy. He asked if he had misunderstood Chianaraekpere Ike's (Law) question.

**Aaron Yared** clarified that the question was not related to UW Facilities. He said that the question was about programming.

**Justin Computaro** said that each building had different regulations and rules about what could and could not be done to it in terms of facility usage.

**Aaron Yared** thanked everyone for their input and said that he would use them as talking points for when he met with UW administration.

## 6. [Information] SAF Presentation 6:01pm

**Alece Stancin** introduced herself as the vice chair of the Student Activities Fee (SAF) Committee. She said that she was formerly the ASUW Finance and Budget Director and that she had worked a lot with last year's GPSS Treasurer Jules Overfelt. She said that this was her second year on SAF.

**Fatin Almaroof** introduced herself as the SAF's organizing director. She said that she was the only hired staff member on the SAF Committee and that it was her first year. She thanked everyone for giving her their time to clarify the purpose of the SAF Committee.

**Fatin Almaroof** explained that the SAF Committee was an oversight committee consisting of 11 students. She said that the most important thing that it did was decide on how to allocate funding from the SAF to the 18 different units on campus, which included ASUW and GPSS.

**Fatin Almaroof** read the SAF's mission statement:

*We are a student-levied, student-distributed fee to support and enhance the out of class experience of students at the UW Seattle. The Services and Activities Fee provides online operational and capital funding for programs which protect and enrich cultural, emotional, intellectual, physical and social well being of the student.*

**Fatin Almaroof** said that everything the SAF funded was a service that was available to all students. She said that this was very important to the SAF Committee because the fee was paid by all students. She said that all students should not pay for something that only some students could acquire. She referred to the slides which showed what the SAF looked like on a student's tuition statement. She said that the fees were itemized in a student's tuition statement and noted that the fee cost \$151 last year. She said that this money went into the SAF budget and that the SAF Committee reviewed unit requests and approved units' budgets or followed up with questions.

**Alece Stancin** said that the SAF Committee's responsibilities mainly fell under oversight. She said that every year, each of the 18 SAF units of SAF, including the GPSS, provided funding requests to the SAF Committee. She said that the SAF Committee used the information provided by the different units to make funding decisions for the following year for each of the units. She said that the SAF Committee oversaw the collection of the fee, the capital projects implemented by different units, such as the IMA's gender neutral locker room project or the building of the Intellectual House. She said that the SAF Committee supported SAF units with financial or budgetary issues that arose throughout the year.

**Alece Stancin** referred to the slides which showed the logos of the 18 units that the SAF Committee funded. The funded units included The Daily, Student Legal Services, the Q center, the D center, GPSS, ASUW, the HUB, Hall Health, Live Well, and UW Recreation.

**Alece Stancin** emphasized that all of the SAF-funded units offered services specifically focused on supporting students. She noted that both the GPSS and ASUW appoint students to the SAF Committee at the beginning of every year. She said that though the student representatives could be part of the student government, they were typically students at large that were

passionate about budgeting. She said that the students did not represent the Senate, but represented the student body as a whole. She said that it was important that students were in charge of deciding how the fees are spent. She said that the GPSS and ASUW combined comprised about 10% of the SAF Committee's yearly budget. Alece Stancin welcomed questions for the audience and invited them to email either her, Fatin Almaroof, or Benjamin Chan.

**Aaron Yared** asked if new organizations could ask the SAF Committee for funding.

**Alece Stancin** said that the SAF had added new units over the years. She said that the feasibility of adding a new unit depended on the capacity of the committee's budget.

**Benjamin Chan** introduced himself as the appointed committee chair of the SAF Committee. He added that the SAF Committee had a prospective unit policy. He said that the committee had a series of checks and balances to ensure that any unit that wanted to receive additional funding was serving the entire student population with accessible services and that that the funding proposal and solvency were valid. He said that the committee would attempt to integrate new units into a probation process which would last a couple of years. He said that the process took a couple of years because the committee's priority was to fund the active units so as not to disrupt any ongoing services.

**Benjamin Chan** said that the request for any new or prospective units typically only occurred in the fall quarter of each year. He said that the SAF Committee conducted an internal review, talked with the units, and made sure things were in good order before introducing the new unit to the committee. He said that the new unit could present their prospective budget for the committee to decide on. He clarified that new units would only be funded a low amount initially because the SAF did not have much money. He said that this was due to the large number of services and active commitments that the SAF Committee had.

**Benjamin Chan** said one example of a new unit was the UW Food Pantry. He said that the food pantry had been added in 2018 and that the food pantry mostly used the fees to pay its student employees and coordinators to ensure the food pantry remained operational. He said that the SAF Committee gave the food pantry either \$10,000 or 20,000 to start and had increased the amount as the needs grew and the SAF became more familiar with the program.

**Alece Stancin** said that SAF Committee meetings were open to anyone. She said that they were held on Fridays at 1 p.m. in HUB 303 and that the information was also on the website and in the chat.

## 7. [Information] Personnel Presentation 6:16pm

**Gabby Rivera** said that she met with each of the GPSS staff members one-on-one last month. She said that her intention was to provide timely changes to the job descriptions and the hiring process. She said that it would be helpful to have the updated job descriptions before the GPSS elections in preparation for the successor of her role. She said that she was also updating the personnel policy with some Executive Senators. She said that her presentation might be relevant information to the organizational structure as senators thought about GPSS's budget

timeline. Gabby Rivera said that she wanted to share the results from her staff interviews just for the sake of transparency. She noted that the GPSS's employees and officers were paid by SAF, so it was important for the senators to know that the GPSS was doing this work.

**Gabby Rivera** said that staff members thought that their job descriptions were accurate. She said that there were some specific suggestions on how to improve them. She said that many staff members shared that their workload varied by week. She said that some of the staff members had weeks heavy with certain projects such as event programming preparing for the passage of the Legislative Agenda. She said that all staff members shared that they liked their job. She said that staff members mentioned wanting to be more knowledgeable of what other staff members worked on. She said that she brainstormed some suggestions for what that would look like in an in-person office setting. She said that she was still trying to figure out what that could look like in a hybrid setting.

**Gabby Rivera** said that every staff member had different responses to how their role interacted with the officers. She said that some staff members worked with every officer while some only worked with one. She said that it was important for the senators to note this detail as the Senate considered the potential of adding a staff member or adding an officer. She urged the Senate to think about how the new staff member or new officer related to the other positions and how their relationships would change the support they would provide.

**Gabby Rivera** said that some staff members liked the hiring process. She said that she had received positive feedback from those who had to make deliverables. She explained that the GPSS communications and creative directors had to submit a deliverable prior to the interview round, and that the university affairs position had to make a deliverable after the interview round. She said that there had been no consensus about moving up the hiring timeline. She explained that this year, the job applications had been posted early August and had closed at the end of August. She said that staff members had been hired throughout the month of September. She said that all staff members had appreciated the staff resource guide, but that some would have preferred a more structured onboarding process.

**Gabby Rivera** said that some ideas for the onboarding process included having one-on-ones with each officer, having an orientation prior to the first day of school, and having more in-depth transition documentation. She said that this year, the GPSS had been unable to host an orientation in September as the officers had planned because some of the staff had been hired later than expected. She said that the staff had met in October to go over the GPSS's goals. She said that there was a need for a more structured event.

**Gabby Rivera** said that she appreciated how each staff member was able to articulate how their role served graduate students at large. She said that many of the staff members had shared that their role was fulfilling. She recommended that the GPSS increase pay for staff. She said that some staff members mentioned that they needed another income in addition to the income from the GPSS to afford basic living necessities. She said that other staff members shared that there were other opportunities in research and teaching that they had heavily considered during the hiring process. She noted that during the hiring process back in September, the GPSS had lost some great candidates to other on campus positions. She said that because it was possible given the GPSS's budget and in order to be more competitive with other positions on campus,

she recommended increasing staff wages. She said that she was personally disheartened to hear that some of the staff members needed to work other jobs in addition to their job at GPSS.

**Gabby Rivera** recommended that the Student Activities Office (SAO) play a heavier part in the onboarding process. She said that this recommendation was influenced by her experience in the ASUW. She explained that the ASUW hosted a multi-day orientation in September which included bonding events, moving into the office, and workshops put on by the SAO. She said that though a multi-day orientation was unnecessary for the GPSS's staff, the SAO workshops about SAO operations and going over the GPSS's history would be valuable for staff members. She said that the officers could take on the role of presenting shared goals, establishing timelines for the academic year, moving into the office, etc.

**Gabby Rivera** recommended that the GPSS hire a website manager for one academic year. She said that many of the staff mentioned that their work on the website was typically a last priority. She said that she agreed because none of the current staff members were specifically hired to work on the website. She suggested creating a contract position to finish the website. She said that it would not need to be a budget line item. She said that the GPSS had staff positions whose responsibilities were to update website content as necessary, but not necessarily develop an actual website. She said that developing the website could be done if the GPSS just paid someone to do it.

**A.J. Balatico** said introduced himself as the Vice President of Finance & Budget. He said that he had linked the nonbudgeted expenditure for the staff raises in the chat. He said that the Finance & Budget Committee (F&B) had recommended that the Senate raise the staff pay rate from \$18 to \$23 an hour for the winter and spring quarter, keeping the hours the same. He said that this would effectively increase the staff's take home pay by \$2,000 and would cost the GPSS a one-time expense of \$23,177. He said that since this expenditure was over \$5,000, the decision had to be brought directly to the Senate. He said that the rationale for the raise was also to make the GPSS's staff pay competitive with academic student employee pay on campus, which included positions like reader-graders and tutors. He said that this was just one way of supporting the GPSS staff.

**A.J. Balatico** said that this was about a third of the GPSS's annual usable amount if it considered \$90,000 to be the total amount that it was aiming to spend down in its general fund. He said that the Senate would vote to raise the pay for our current staff for this quarter and next quarter today. He said that the staff wage increase would also be retroactive applied to hours worked already. He said that the staff should see of the wage increase by their February 25 or March 10th paycheck.

**Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering)** said that the ASUW had also tried to hire a temporary webmaster to remake their website over the summer. He said that they had received STF funding to do so, but that the plan did not work out. He said that this failure was one of the reasons that was cited in his time on the committee as to why the STF did not pay student employees. He said that the previous failure did not guarantee failure again, but it made him wonder whether having a more permanent webmaster position through a more normal process was a better solution.

**Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering)** asked A.J. Balatico if the proposed staff raises and hiring a more permanent webmaster role were two mutually exclusive things. He asked whether the GPSS could afford a permanent webmaster if it approved the staff raises?

**A.J. Balatico** said that he would go over the options that the GPSS had. He said the GPSS could hire up to three staff members comfortably after raising staff wages and be okay for the next decade.

**Aaron Yared** addressed Alexander Novokhodko's (Mechanical Engineering) comment and said that though the GPSS's website was clunky, the actual amount of upkeep was minimal. He said that that was the logic behind making it a short-term gig.

**Davon Thomas (Public Administration)** said that since the GPSS hired graduate students, offering them \$23 was better than \$18, especially since the staff members all held bachelors degrees. He also noted that the staff were not paid benefits and that he was in support of paying them \$23.

**Andrew Shumway (Earth & Space Sciences)** referred to Item No. 4 on the budget expenditures form about maintaining the staff wage raise for future years. He said that it looked like the GPSS would roll the raises into the SAF budget next year and request the new rates. He noted the officers nodding. He asked if the officers, based on their experience with SAF, thought that the SAF would approve of the budget.

**A.J. Balatico** said yes. He said that the GPSS only had to emphasize anything that was above a 10% increase, any expenditures that would be over \$20,000 or any rapid changes. He said that the staff wage increase would only increase the GPSS's budget by 3%. He said that the GPSS would be deficit spending, so it would only ask for a 3 to 4% increase every year. He said that the GPSS could be more aggressive, and that it was up to future F&Bs to decide. He said that the GPSS would comfortably be budget neutral two years from now in fiscal year (FY) 25, which was in the 2024-'25 school year. He said that the projection also included this year. He said that if the staff wage increases were the only change the GPSS made to its budget, it would cost \$36,000 this year and then decrease by about \$14,000 every year until it was paid off. He said that the plan was to deficit spend to address the GPSS's large reserve. He said that the GPSS was one of the few units of SAF who had a reserve of over \$10,000.

**Andrew Shumway (Earth & Space Sciences)** said that the decision made a lot of sense to him. He said that if the GPSS had the money and if the decision would not set the GPSS back financially, then the GPSS should absolutely pursue it because the staff was worth it.

**Marty Varela (RCSA)** moved to approve by general consent. **Davon Thomas (Public Administration)** seconded. No objections.

## 8. [Information] Senator Compensation Discussion 6:25pm

**A.J. Balatico** referred to the shared screen and explained that it was the written notice that the F&B had decided on when considering the staff raises. He said that Matthew Mitnick (Public Administration) had wanted to add a discussion item related to senator compensation. He



emphasized that this topic was not a recommendation by the F&B. He said that the topic was on the agenda to hear how the Senate felt about it. He said that as a fiduciary of the GPSS's finances, he wanted to entertain any option that the GPSS could spend money on.

**Matthew Mitnick (Public Administration)** said that the notice outlined the justification for why he personally believed that the Senate should consider compensating GPSS senators. He said that he was curious to hear the Senate's thoughts. He said that he had thought about the matter a lot and had talked to people in various programs. He said that considering that senators were graduate students and that the GPSS meetings were relatively lengthy. He said that not all students could afford to spend two hours every other Wednesday at these meetings. He said that some students needed to work to provide for themselves, so the senator role was limiting for people who faced financial insecurity. He said that compensating people for their service might expand the opportunity to more students.

**Matthew Mitnick (Public Administration)** said that this action could help with the GPSS's current quorum issues, help increase the GPSS's attendance, and be more inclusive of all graduate programs. He said that he had spoken with A.J. Balatico about the various ways that the GPSS could fund the initiative, whether it be through a stipend based on meeting attendance or an hourly rate. He also suggested covering the quarterly SAF fee for senators. He said that the GPSS could look at programs that were typically underrepresented and offer compensation to encourage participation. He said that there were many different ways the initiative could take form. He said that from an equity perspective, the GPSS should stand in support of students' time and their labor, because being engaged during GPSS meetings was work. He said that the GPSS should try to expand the opportunity the best it could.

**Meshell Sturgis** asked Matthew Mitnick (Public Administration) to clarify how the initiation was an equity issue.

**Matthew Mitnick (Public Administration)** said that he had looked at which students participated in the GPSS and analyzed whether participants had the time and financial resources to spend two hours doing unpaid work. He said that the GPSS could expand the opportunity to people who were not participating due to lack of financial resources.

**A.J. Balatico** said that the GPSS would probably need to implement an employment model to make this work. This meant that the GPSS would have to officially hire senators as employees and either compensate them at minimum wage or \$20/hour as proposed, assuming that a Senate meeting was two hours long. This meant that senators would receive \$40/meeting which would be about \$200 per quarter per senator because there were five meetings a quarter.

**A.J. Balatico** said that the other option was to hire the senators as employees and then pay for their SAF fees. He said that this option was always less expensive than Seattle's minimum wage or the other higher rate of \$20/hour. He referred to the slides and said that prior to COVID, the GPSS had 129 senators on its roster. He said that the number decreased, but that it would vary. He said that one challenge the GPSS would have to address was how it would budget for this. He said that he had not gone through the budgeting process for the recently passed staff raises. He said that he would have to verify the numbers. He estimated that the staff wages would cost about \$30,000, which gave the GPSS a working budget of about \$60,000. He said

that \$60,000 would not cover all the possible scenarios of compensating senators. He said that this meant the Senate would have to pick a rate that worked with the budget. He said that the rate and the number of senators could change.

**Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering)** said that compensating senators might be a positive thing for a many people. He said that this idea could help increase participation. He expressed concern that some international students had limitations imposed by their visas on how many hours they could work. He said that this issue came up occasionally in the UAW International Student Working Group. He cautioned the GPSS about saying that it would give everyone a small two-hour hourly employment when some people are limited to working 19.5 hours a week by their visa terms.

**Meshell Sturgis** said she did not think the idea of paying everyone the same amount was an equity issue. She agreed that Senate participation was a problem.

**A.J. Balatico** said that he had previously considered compensating only the GPSS's nonacademic seats. He noted that the nonacademic seats were for protected populations or student subpopulations, as outlined in the GPSS Bylaws. He listed examples like Student Veteran Life, the D center, and the Q center. He said that some of these nonacademic seats had not sent in representatives, but that offering a stipend could encourage them to come. He said that this mechanism that was used for Executive Senators could be applied to regular senators as well. He said that the GPSS did not necessarily have to pay everyone.

**A.J. Balatico** referred to the graph on the shared screen and said that it would cost about \$20,000 if the GPSS compensated a limited number of senators. He said that the stipend option was only manageable if the GPSS only compensated a few people. He said that if the GPSS compensated the entire Senate, the idea would have to use an employment model due to management issues.

**Andrew Shumway (Earth & Space Sciences)** asked if peer institutions had implemented something similar.

**Aaron Yared** asked if anybody knew. He said that if nobody knew, then the resolution sponsors could look into it and get back to him.

**Andrew Shumway (Earth & Space Sciences)** acknowledged that he had not had much time to think about the topic. He said that his immediate impression was that he was concerned about how the senators' constituents might view this act of taking their SAF fees and then waiving the SAF fee for themselves. He said that it might be difficult to explain.

**Jack Flesher (Music)** said that as an ASE that was employed at 19.5 hours a week, there had been many times where he had been involved in various projects that wanted to compensate him for his work, but the administration repeatedly told him that ASEs could not earn more. He speculated that receiving compensation would be an issue for senators who were ASEs if the GPSS used the employment method.

**Rene Singleton** said that the Senate compensation idea would impact the entire process of

paying ASEs. She said that that was why the senators should be paid at the end of the quarter, so that it would not interfere with whatever they earned in their programs. She said that people had many different stipulations due to the grants, scholarships, and the programs that they were in. She said that the whole process was very complicated. She said that however the GPSS implemented the idea, it needed to be implemented in a way that did not interfere with a senator's academic payment program or tuition payments.

**Rene Singleton** said that the GPSS used to be known for compensating senators with food at the meetings. She noted that since the Senate met on Zoom, senators had not been compensated through food and that the GPSS had experienced a decrease in participation. She suggested that the GPSS consider this history.

**Ashlee Abrantes (Environmental & Forestry Sciences)** pointed out that ASEs already had their SAF fees waived or paid for. She said that the GPSS would need to have a second mechanism to cover those people in some way.

**Pratima KC (Environmental & Forestry Sciences)** asked if the compensation would be based on whether someone was the senator or if they attended the meetings. She noted that there were many senators who did not attend meetings.

**Aaron Yared** said that the Executive Committee had discussed the need to create a mechanism to confirm whether a student was a senator. He said that this meant that the GPSS needed to know how each department selected senators, which was something the GPSS had attempted to do last year, to little avail. He speculated that there were close to 200 different departments at the UW, which meant that the GPSS could theoretically have up to 400 senators.

**Ashlee Abrantes (Environmental & Forestry Sciences)** said that the maximum number of senators was somewhere around 360.

**Aaron Yared** said that keeping track of senators took a lot of effort and many people did not respond. He addressed Pratima KC (Environmental & Forestry Sciences) and said that people who showed up to meetings but were not senators would not be compensated. He said that the idea was to compensate senators for the meetings they attended, which was why the GPSS was discussing a business model for employment. He said that the executive senators logged their hours through Workday.

**Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering)** motioned to extend time by 2 minutes.  
**A.J. Balatico** seconded. No objections.

**Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering)** said that there were some students, such as himself, who were recipients of fellowships like the NSF GRFP. He said that these fellowships sometimes had restrictions on other employment. He said that he knew that he could work as a teaching assistant, but not as a research assistant, unless it was a small, supplemental research assistant job. He said that he did not know how the GPSS employment would be classified and if it would interact with the terms of his fellowship. He said that this information could be found at the Graduate School's Office of Fellowships and Awards.

**Ashlee Abrantes (Environmental & Forestry Sciences)** said that the GPSS employment would not affect GRFP.

**Aaron Yared** highlighted the questions that Justin Computaro had written into the chat:

*Would it be compensated just for attending meetings? Would there be expectations for how long they stay at the meeting? For how much effort they invest? Who would manage all of this accountability?*

**Aaron Yared** said that it seemed that the general consensus was that there were a lot of logistics that needed to be figured out before this idea could be implemented. He said that the soonest the idea could be realistically, practically, and ethically implemented would be next year. He said that the GPSS would have to think about the idea of constituents seeing the senators waiving their own SAF fees or senators paying themselves through SAF fees. He said that it would be unethical to vote on it, but that pushing the issue into next year could mitigate the ethical gray area.

**Marty Varela (Residential Community Student Association)** said that the GPSS needed to decide if there was a need for senator compensation, and, if so, how it would implement it. She said that before the GPSS determined whether it needed senator compensation, it needed to ask itself what it was trying to compensate. She asked if the GPSS's goal was to try to get people to meetings, attend committees, or be more engaged in a virtual environment in the midst of a pandemic. She noted that some students might respond to the pandemic by reducing the amount of their virtual engagement. She asked if the GPSS was trying to treat the issue as temporary and if the issue would disappear in the future. She said that the Senate needed to be able to articulate why the senators needed compensation.

## 9. [Information] GPSS Budget Discussion 6:34pm

**A.J. Balatico** said that he wanted the Senate to decide whether it was open to pursuing an officer position or only staff positions. He referred to the slides and said that the options cost a similar amount. He said that over the years, the cost would change. He said that if the GPSS assumed that it would reinstate staff raises next year, it could use \$90,000 this year. He said that as time progressed, the GPSS's spending would catch up to its budget if it pursued 3% to 4% increase of the SAF's GPSS allocation each year. He said that the GPSS's current reserves were around \$420,000, so any of the options shown on the slides would work for the next decade. He pointed out that the most expensive option was adding one officer to the GPSS's current structure (on top of the staff raises) as it would be a \$58,000 change. He said that the SAF allocations would catch up by either FY28 if the GPSS asked for 3% raises year over year, or by FY26.

**A.J. Balatico** said that the budget neutral options that the GPSS had were not doing anything or reducing three staff members and adding one officer. He said that he was presenting all of the options for the sake of transparency. He said that the money accumulated in the reserve was collected from students who were long gone from the university. He said that the GPSS was making projections with a 3 to 4% growth, which was a smaller fraction of the SAF growth. He said that the SAF fee grew faster than what the GPSS asked for. He said that whichever

option the Senate chose, the GPSS would have more than \$100,000 in its general fund. He also noted that the GPSS had an endowment valued at \$100,000 which generated interest.

**A.J. Balatico** referred to the slides and said that those were the biggest change that the GPSS could make without affecting its general fund. He said that if the GPSS did not use its general fund the SAF could choose not to give the GPSS its allocation and force the GPSS to spend down its general fund. He said that the GPSS had not spent much in the last few years due to COVID. He said that the GPSS's biggest single expenditure was in 2020 when it pooled the money that it did not spend on travel grants, special allocations, or departmental allocations, and donated it to the CARES fund. He said that it had amounted to about \$50,000. He said that much of the budget that had not been spent was put into the general fund.

**A.J. Balatico** said that the GPSS's most recent, biggest single item expense was extra buses to Olympia, which was only a few thousand dollars. He said that unless the GPSS ordered buses more frequently, it would not spend down its money. He said that the largest, most recent expenditure was actually the staff raises. He said that the GPSS had many available resources and were one of the only groups on campus that had this large of a reserve. He said that the GPSS restructuring also would address needs that were not currently fulfilled.

**A.J. Balatico** said that he would not express his personal opinion because he wanted the senators to kind of come to the conclusion that made sense to them. He said that the senators would then vote. He announced that one of the GPSS staff members had a proposal.

**Janis Shin (Molecular Engineering & Sciences)** said that after she heard all the ideas at the previous Executive Senate meeting last week, she brainstormed a possible new position. She said that she was not advocating for creating a new officer position over a staff position. She said that this was just how she happened to brainstorm the idea, but that the Senators could decide whether the position fell under the officer or staff category.

**Janis Shin (Molecular Engineering & Sciences)** said that the position would be titled "Vice President of Administration and Accountability" (VPAA). She said that the person in the role would sign off on official communications and hold the GPSS accountable for things like OPMA and keeping information transparent. She noted that the GPSS did not mention fees anywhere on its website. She referred to Matthew Mitnick's (Public Administration) idea about senator compensation and said that implementing the idea would require much overhead. She said that the role would be responsible for making sure that the senators were paid and that those being paid were official senators.

**Janis Shin (Molecular Engineering & Sciences)** said that she envisioned the position's core responsibilities to include parliamentarian and maintaining the resolution lifecycle. She explained that the role would help people write resolutions, present resolutions, send out resolutions, and hold resolution workshops. She said that last year, the person who helped write resolutions was former Secretary Logan Jarrell. She said that the role would also encompass scheduling all special meetings, writing Senate communications, and recruiting Senators. She said that she was on the fence about also adding HR to the list of responsibilities. She said that the position would be supported by the Director of Communications and the Senate Clerk.

**Janis Shin (Molecular Engineering & Sciences)** said that at the previous Executive Senate meeting, there were some points made about how the position just seemed like an apolitical laundry list of administrative tasks. She said that the position did have a platform. She said that the person in the role could think of ways on how to make the GPSS run more efficiently, how to communicate to senators and constituents more effectively, and do more senator recruitment. She said that senator recruitment was currently a shared responsibility amongst all officers. She said that it would be better to have one dedicated person. She said that the role could offer services that were intrinsic to GPSS. *(At this point, Janis Shin vanished from the Zoom meeting.)*

**Aaron Yared** said that he would give Janis Shin (Molecular Engineering & Sciences) the opportunity to finish if came back, but that he would entertain discussion for the time being.

**Gabby Rivera** echoed everything that Janis Shin (Molecular Engineering & Sciences) talked about in terms of responsibilities. She said that voting for a staff member or an officer at this time did not necessarily have to follow Janis Shin's (Molecular Engineering & Sciences) proposal. She said that digitizing what the responsibilities could be was a great way to determine whether or not a senator voted to add an officer. She said that senators did not have to commit to the current responsibilities shown on screen. She said that the Executive Committee had discussed what the responsibilities of a new officer could look like.

**Gabby Rivera** said that this year was the first iteration of dividing the tasks of the former secretary amongst the officers. She said that she did not feel like she was able to prioritize the secretarial part of her job compared to her other responsibilities. She said that she could not speak for the other officers, but that having crucial tasks shared amongst everyone meant that those tasks did not receive the necessary amount of attention. She said that the issue of Senate recruitment was a really great example and that her only caveat to the proposal was that the communications director might need to be shared amongst multiple officers. She urged the senators to consider the organizational structure and said that some things could be decided outside of this particular vote.

**A.J. Balatico** said that the reason the topic had been brought up today was so that both the Judicial Committee and the Elections Committee had time to make changes outside of the election season. He said that the senators did not have to commit to a specific choice on whether to only add staff or an officer, because the choice would ultimately fall to the Judicial Committee, though they would act with the input from the rest of the Senate. He said that members of the Executive Committee were thinking about whether they should even pursue this. He noted that changes to staff did not require a change in the Bylaws and would not affect the Elections Guide except the part about which staff members an officer might supervise.

**Janis Shin (Molecular Engineering & Sciences)** continued and said that the difference between the VPAA and the Vice President of Internal Affairs (VPI) would be that the VPAA focused on "intra-" matters while the VPI worked on "inter-" matters. She said that the VPAA might also help with the hiring process or share the responsibility with the VPI.

**Janis Shin (Molecular Engineering & Sciences)** said that the possible projects she saw for the position included senator onboarding and staff onboarding. She said that she wanted the

VPI to host the SAO day event, but that the VPAA could help manage the paperwork or send out emails so that the VPI could work on organizing the actual event. She said that in the event that Matthew Mitnick's (Public Administration) suggestion of compensating senators was approved, someone needed to keep track of the Senate roster and it could be the VPAA. She said that the GPSS had the potential to have 360 senators on the roster which meant that this could be a large workload.

**Janis Shin (Molecular Engineering & Sciences)** said that last week, Davon Thomas (Public Administration) had floated the idea of having officers write one-page summaries of what they worked on for that month. She said that someone needed to keep track of who wrote those and distribute the one-pagers. She said that she also envisioned that the position would work to publicize GPSS victories. She said that the GPSS had accomplished a lot through its lobbying and needed to make sure that students were aware of how the GPSS benefited them. She said that the VPAA could take on a project of making information transparent.

**Davon Thomas (Public Administration)** asked why Janis Shin (Molecular Engineering & Sciences) had chosen to put the responsibility of the Judicial Committee under the proposed new role.

**Janis Shin (Molecular Engineering & Sciences)** said that the role of the VPAA was to ensure that the Bylaws and Constitution were followed, so she thought it appropriate to make the position participate in the Judicial Committee. She said that this was just an idea and was open to suggestions.

**Davon Thomas (Public Administration)** recalled that the GPSS had discussed the position of diversity and inclusion a few weeks prior. He commented that the Judicial Committee was a large committee, but that he understood Janis Shin's (Molecular Engineering & Sciences) reasoning.

**Aaron Yared** pointed out that the GPSS had been referring to Meshell Sturgis's position as the Vice President of Equity and Inclusion. He said that her title was officially written into the Constitution and Bylaws as "Vice President of Equity and Accountability." He said that if the GPSS wanted to officially change the title of "Vice President of Equity and Accountability" to "Vice President of Equity and Inclusion," it could do so and move the accountability aspect to the newly proposed position.

**Ashlee Abrantes (Environmental & Forestry Sciences)** said even as a self-proclaimed "workaholic," she could not accomplish all the tasks listed in 19.5 hours. I could probably not do all of the tasks that are outlined right now. She noted that the proposal was tentative, but if the responsibilities remained the same, she would immediately vote to have three staff members instead of one officer, because having three people work a combined 60 hours a week versus one person who had to do it all in 20 sounded insane. She said that she spoke from her experience being a staff member, a senator, and an Executive Senator.

**Janis Shin (Molecular Engineering & Sciences)** said that she had not thought about new staff positions yet. She thanked Ashlee Abrantes (Environmental & Forestry Sciences) for the enlightening comment. She pointed out that the Senate recruitment was currently shared among

officers and that she believed it was important to have a single point person.

**Aaron Yared** agreed.

**A.J. Balatico** said that the options were not quite three staff members or one officer. He said that it was possible to only add one officer to the GPSS's existing structure. He said that staff duties could be changed later. He added that the GPSS did not have to use all of its money and could choose a lesser option. He explained that this was why he had eight different versions of adding officers and staff listed.

**Aaron Yared** said that officers were also in charge of staff oversight. He said that having so many staff members under the VPI overloaded the position. He said that though Ashlee Abrantes (Environmental & Forestry Sciences) had made a good point about 60 hours versus 20 hours, the 60 staff hours required oversight.

**Ashlee Abrantes (Environmental & Forestry Sciences)** acknowledged that Janis Shin's (Molecular Engineering & Sciences) proposal was just a spitball pitch. She said that the same problem occurred last year in that duties were quickly assigned and then trickled out. She said that before any decision was made, the GPSS should have a better definition of who would be responsible for what tasks. She said that the GPSS should not make the division of labor an afterthought so that it could avoid having responsibilities fall through the cracks again.

**Aaron Yared** suggested that the decision was not an either/or but that there could possibly be another option of something in the middle. He pitched the idea of having a hired officer-level position which would be paid at the same level of officers.

**Janis Shin (Molecular Engineering & Sciences)** said that she had suggested the idea to A.J. Balatico

**Andrew Shumway (Earth & Space Sciences)** suggested a Chief of Staff position.

**Marty Varela (Residential Community Student Association)** agreed with Aaron Yared in that the GPSS leadership needed another body. She said that she was reluctant to give up any staff members. She said that she knew that adding an additional officer and retaining the staff was the most expensive option, but that the GPSS should try to meet its goal regardless. She asked if the GPSS's goal was to add an officer or if it was to fulfill tasks that were not being fulfilled by current officers and staff. She asked if it were necessary to create a position where tasks that were currently not being managed well could be managed by a single individual. She said that if the GPSS created a job that was doable and executed the Senate's tasks, she would agree to add an officer position because she knew that an officer position would have their obligations outlined in the Bylaws, the obligations that they have.

**Marty Varela (Residential Community Student Association)** agreed with Ashlee Abrantes (Environmental & Forestry Sciences) that Janis Shin's (Molecular Engineering & Sciences) proposal probably had too many responsibilities. She said that whatever the GPSS did, it should not give up its staff because the staff were working at capacity. She said that she could not imagine exchanging one person for three people and how that would affect the GPSS. She said



that she was willing to move to consider adding another person to the GPSS leadership. She said that more discussion was necessary to determine whether the ideal body was an officer or a unique staff position that complemented the current dynamics.

**A.J. Balatico** motioned to extend time by 5 minutes. **Jack Flesher (Music)** seconded. No objections.

**Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering)** said that he wanted to add onto the idea of having a position that was neither staff nor an elected officer and said that the ASUW board had positions like that. He said that the ASUW communications director, personnel director, and finance and budget director were all hired positions that were members of the ASUW board. He said that these members did not vote on things like resolutions. He noted that the ASUW's vice president also functioned in a similar role at the GPSS.

**Aaron Yared** said that during his time at UW Bothell, he was the director of government relations, which was a hired officer position. He said that this granted him the full powers of a director but that he was hired, not elected.

**A.J. Balatico** said that the GPSS would also have to consider how such a position would be compensated. He said that such a role would earn either the same or less than an officer. He said that the compensation options were exchangeable and could be discussed later. He said that the plan would ultimately need to be considered by the Judicial Committee.

**Gabby Rivera** said that creating a new level in the organization also opened up different power dynamics between the staff. She said that she had previously been one of the executive staff members that Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering) had mentioned and said that since she was not the only one who was compensated higher than other staff members, it was less strange. She said that only giving one person in the office more wages than the others could create a weird dynamic. She asked if the GPSS was unintentionally implying that this executive staff member's job responsibilities were more important than that of others. She said that if the GPSS was trying to create a manager, it should also consider whether other officer positions were worthy of their officer distinction.

**A.J. Balatico** said that Rene Singleton had confirmed that students needed to be elected in order to receive tuition waivers.

**Aaron Yared** said that he had brought up at the previous Executive Senate meeting that the VPAA's duties were mostly administrative and required less of a platform than a level of proficiency. He agreed with Gabby Rivera that the Judicial Committee was one thing that went beyond proficiency, but said that participating in the Judicial Committee was not being neglected as much as the other listed responsibilities. He said that that was why he brought up the idea of a hired executive staff member where proficiency, not a platform, was expected of them. He said that the GPSS would still compensate the position fairly.

**A.J. Balatico** said that it was time to vote. He said that the job duties would be decided by the Judicial Committee and that more discussions would happen there. He said that the vote was to make sure that the Senate was interested in making changes in the first place. He said that if

the Senate deferred the vote to the next Senate meeting, the change was still doable, but that the Judicial Committee and Elections Committee would have two less weeks to work on the changes.

**Aaron Yared** asked if someone wanted to motion to vote on the matter.

**A.J. Balatico** said that the senators were able to choose multiple options when voting. He said that senators could choose all the options that they felt comfortable with.

**Andrew Shumway (Earth & Space Sciences)** asked if A.J. Balatico was trying to hold a straw poll. He said he did not understand the current process and noted that adding another officer position would require a constitutional amendment, which had to be approved by the Judicial Committee.

**A.J. Balatico** said that he was looking for the Senate's opinion on what options were acceptable so that the officers could know whether to prepare something for the Judicial Committee. He said that the Senate was not voting on a specific officer position.

**Aaron Yared** said that it was more so a straw poll than a binding vote.

**Andrew Shumway (Earth & Space Sciences)** asked the GPSS officers to call for an informal straw poll instead of a vote. He expressed concern that there were members of the Senate including himself who did not have a solid idea of what these positions were going to look like yet. He said that he wanted to have more exact information before casting a binding vote.

**A.J. Balatico** said that the poll was just to eliminate the possibility of whether the officers should even pursue the work of adding a new officer, which meant that there would not be any work for the Judicial Committee.

**Meshell Sturgis** said that the Senate had discussed the possibility of adding an officer, but the poll was asking the senators to also speak to staff. She pointed out that the Senate had not discussed what staff scenarios would look like and said that she felt that some information was not fully being shared or discussed.

**Aaron Yared** said that he assumed that if people preferred staff over an officer, the Executive Committee members would simply split up the responsibilities amongst the staff members. He said that if the GPSS was creating a new officer position, then that officer would have a set number of responsibilities. He said that staff members supporting the officer would inherit those same responsibilities.

**A.J. Balatico** agreed and said that adding or changing staff positions did not require Bylaw changes whereas adding or changing officer responsibilities would require changes to the election manual.

**Aaron Yared** asked senators to participate in the informal vote on the Poll Everywhere.

## 10. [Action] Resolution: Waiving S/NS Grade Change Fee 7:33pm

**Matthew Mitnick (Public Administration)** explained that the legislation was a method for the GPSS to officially call on the UW administration to waive the \$20 grading change fee. He said that he and Davon Thomas (Public Administration) had met with Assistant Vice Provost Jason Campbell from the Office of Planning and Budgeting. He said that the three of them had discussed the Higher Education Emergency Relief Funding Act. He said that Jason Campbell had provided many helpful resources where students could track the spending. He said that the three of them had also discussed having the university cover the grading change fee and what identifying the funding source to cover fee would look like. He said that Jason Campbell seemed to agree that the resolution was a worthy proposal and that it was possible to use the institutional portion of the in the third round of the Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds for this purpose.

**Matthew Mitnick (Public Administration)** said that he and Davon Thomas (Public Administration) had made few slight revisions to the legislation: updating one of the whereas clauses, giving evidence that flexible grading policies can support low-income students during the pandemic, citing sources, and in the “Be it resolved” section, specifying that the money would be from the third round of institutional funds considering that the second round of funds have all been spent.

**Davon Thomas (Public Administration)** said he had also met with the Financial Aid Office and asked if they had funds to support this cause as well. He said that he found that the emergency financial aid from the Higher Education Emergency Relief Funding Act could not be used. He said that there was money left over from the institutional side to use. He said that he and Matthew Mitnick (Public Administration) would continue to meet with these offices and would meet with the Provost as well. He said that the purpose of the resolution was to demonstrate the GPSS’s official stance.

**A.J. Balatico** asked both sponsors whether they were able to find out how many students were affected and used the option. He asked what the overall expenditure of administering the fee was.

**Matthew Mitnick (Public Administration)** said that they had not been able to find that data. He said that he could pursue the question in the future and look at the rate that students were using the fee in general. He said that Jason Campbell had indicated that it would be relatively inexpensive for the administration to waive the fee. He said that Jason Campbell had said that the cost associated with staffing was not enough to make a large difference. Matthew Mitnick (Public Administration) said that the reason why the fee existed in the first place was to dissuade students from using the option. He said that he and Davon Thomas (Public Administration) felt that the fee presented a financial difficulty for many people and that students had a right to pursue this option during an “extraordinary circumstance” quarter. He said that people were currently experiencing many different things, so there were both financial and ethical arguments as to why students should be able to utilize the grading option without the fee.

**Matthew Mitnick (Public Administration)** reiterated that he had received confirmation from someone in the Office of Planning and Budgeting that the fee could be waived and that the funding source they had identified could be used for this purpose. He said that having the GPSS's support could significantly help this effort progress.

**Aaron Yared** said that the number of S/NS grades increased about four times in "extraordinary circumstance" quarters. He explained that this meant roughly 2,000 grade changes became 8,000 grade changes. He said that this was a very small fraction of the 175,000 grades posted each quarter on average.

**Andrew Shumway (Earth & Space Sciences)** said that he was confused why the administration tried to dissuade students from changing their grade.

**Malikai Bass (Museology)** responded with "paternalism" in the chat.

**Jack Flesher (Music)** asked if the resolution sponsors had made an effort to create a joint resolution with ASUW on this topic. He noted that this issue probably affected undergraduates more than graduate students since there were more undergraduates than graduate students. He said that he remembered when "extraordinary circumstance" quarters were first introduced, he had sent a political email to his students reminding them of the S/NS option. He said that the university had decided that this option was only for people who could afford to do it. He said that he fully supported the effort.

**Matthew Mitnick (Public Administration)** said that he had been in touch with a number of ASUW senators and that they were interested. He said that he would have to coordinate the effort but that he agreed with Jack Flesher (Music).

**Janis Shin (Molecular Engineering & Sciences)** asked how many waivers a person could have. She asked if the waiver would cover the whole quarter or just one change per quarter.

**Matthew Mitnick (Public Administration)** said that he interpreted the effort as any time a student asked for the grade change, it would be waived and would not incur a fee.

**A.J. Balatico** asked Bill Mahoney from the Graduate School whether changing grades to S/NS would meaningfully affect graduate students' grades.

**Ashlee Abrantes (Environmental & Forestry Sciences)** speculated that the answer to A.J. Balatico's question depended on one's program. She said that everybody had different requirements on how many graded courses they needed to graduate in every single program, and said it was incumbent on the person and potentially their advisor to know if they met the requirement.

**A.J. Balatico** said he was looking for the specific graduate student memo that said that 18 hours needed to be graded. He wondered if S/NS grades counted because this would replace the required courses.

**Bill Mahoney** agreed with Ashlee Abrantes' (Environmental & Forestry Sciences) response. He

said that a minimum of 18 credits needed to be graded. He said that PhD students needed to have 60 to sit for their general exam and 90 to sit for their defense. He said that the Graduate School did not care how the rest of those credits were graded, outside of the 18. He said that some programs might have additional requirements on top of the Graduate School's, especially ones that were externally accredited. For example, some programs in the College of the Environment and some professional programs had separate accreditation. He said that it was a program-by-program decision, though he did not know if the 18 credits could be swapped for S/NS.

**Aaron Yared** said that he thought that the purpose of the "extraordinary circumstance" label was that even if a student switched to S/NS grading, the class would still count towards whatever requirements a student needed to meet.

**Bill Mahoney** said that Aaron Yared might be right. He said that in the grand scheme of things, it was probably more of an issue for a masters student than a PhD student, especially and academic student employee, because he had yet to meet a graduate student that had trouble getting the required credit hours to graduate. He said that he knew students in his program that had over 100 or nearly 200 credits by the time they graduated. He said that the issue had not yet been raised because the Graduate School had not had any students who had had issues meeting graduation standards. He said that he did not yet have an answer.

**Matthew Mitnick (Public Administration)** moved to pass the resolution. **Davon Thomas (Public Administration)** seconded. No objections.

## 11. [Action] Resolution: On Evacuation Plans for University Buildings 7:48pm

**Malikai Bass (Museology)** said that the main feedback he had received about the resolution was thinking more deeply about the representation he had initially asked for. He said that he and Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering) had looked at models of representation from other universities and had looked into the structure of the University-wide Health and Safety Committee that he was asking for representation on. He said that the committee had about 42 members. He said that about 27% of the U.S. population was disabled, but that this was not reflected in university demographics due to structural barriers that made academia inaccessible. He said that the percentage of disabled students at the university fluctuated between 5 and 7% which translated to 1-2 students on the committee.

**Malikai Bass (Museology)** said that he and Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering) decided that they did not want to tie representation to the proportion of students, especially because there was a disproportionate impact on how the current policies affected students. He said that he spoke with some student groups over the past couple weeks. He said that only one disabled student out of a couple hundred students had told him that they felt completely confident in how they would evacuate from all the activities they do on campus. He said that this was because this particular individual did everything on the first floor, and noted that not all disabled students could be that lucky.

**Malikai Bass (Museology)** said that he had changed the resolution to read “THAT, University-Wide Health & Safety committee appoint or elect a minimum 1 undergrad, 1 graduate student, 1 faculty member, 1 staff member, with disabilities with student members selected by SDC and the D center, and faculty and staff selected through processes accepted in those communities in overall committee population.”

**Jack Flesher (Music)** moved to approve the resolution. **Pratima KC (Environmental & Forest)** seconded. No objections.

**Malikai Bass (Museology)** said that the same resolution had passed in the ASUW too. He said that having joint support of two student bodies might put more pressure on the administration.

## 12. [Information] Officer and Committee Reports 7:52pm

**Aaron Yared** said he had met with President Cauce and Provost Richards last week. He said that he had communicated many of the points that have come up in Senate meetings to them. He said that he felt that there was a large consensus that the administration was failing to put out a single narrative and that students were confused from all the different sources of information. He said that he had discussed how the administration could be clearer and more deliberate in their communication. He said that he had also discussed the administration’s plans to reimagine campus safety. He said that he was holding the administration accountable and making sure that the administration was actually reimagining, not performatively reorganizing, campus safety.

**Gabby Rivera** referred to the slides and said that those were the events for the quarter and that all events would offer food. She said that she was planning as if the events would not be canceled due to COVID. She said that more information could be found on social media. She said that the mixer planned for March may turn into something like last quarter’s food pick-up event.

**Gabby Rivera** revealed plans for “Senator of the Month” nominations. She said she had discussed the idea with the Executive Committee last week and that she wanted to celebrate senators’ achievements. She referred to the link to nominate senators and asked senators to nominate their colleagues who were doing great things in GPSS, in research, or in the larger community. She said that the nominated senators would be highlighted on the GPSS’s social media. She said that the GPSS could also write resolutions that provided evidence of how great senators were.

**Gabby Rivera** said that the Student Advocates for Graduate Education summit was this weekend. She thanked Alexander Novokhodko (Mechanical Engineering) for sending her a reminder. She said that she would post the information to Discord soon.

**Gabby Rivera** said that the ad hoc committee had met last Friday and that Matthew Mitnick (Public Administration) and his team had done great work. She said that the committee had made changes to the resolution’s language. She said that the next meeting would be in two weeks and that the committee would hold a space for community groups to share their responses to some of the language. She also noted that the committee had made a good effort

to go to other community groups to get their opinions.

**Gabby Rivera** said that the Graduate School Council had not met much. She said that the U-PASS Committee would discuss funding projections next Tuesday and that she would go over the information at the next Senate meeting. She reminded everyone that the GPSS would likely pass a bill in support of a fee increase in spring quarter. She asked people to let her know what information they needed to feel prepared to vote on the issue.

**Joel Anderson** introduced himself as the GPSS Policy Director. He announced that Davon Thomas (Public Administration) had recently been appointed to the graduate student position on the Washington Student Achievement Council by Governor Inslee. He said that this appointment was the realization of much hard work on behalf of the GPSS and other stakeholders over the past year. He congratulated Davon Thomas (Public Administration).

**Joel Anderson** said that the External Team was continuing to recruit for its Huskies on the Hill annual lobbying event which was next Thursday, February 17th. He put the link to the RSVP form in the chat and the Discord. He said that the External Team would host a training event on Friday the 11th from 4 to 6 p.m. He acknowledged that the time was not ideal, and said that the External Team would record the training event so that it would not deter anyone from participating in Huskies on the Hill. He said that the training would cover how to plan lobby meetings and how to talk about legislation. He said that the External Team had scheduled 30 meetings with Washington state legislators to talk about GPSS priorities in collaboration with ASUW and other groups.

**Joel Anderson** said that in terms of the legislative session, it was past the cut off for bills to make it out of their respective committees, whether policy or fiscal-based committees. He said that the next deadline was February 15th, which was the last day that bills were allowed to be passed out of their house of origin. He said that the Legislative Advisory Board (LAB) would meet tomorrow at 11 a.m. on Zoom. He said that the LAB would cover updates from the legislative session from Payton Swinford. He said that the LAB had finalized its advocacy one-pagers and would be looking them over. He said that the LAB would host a general Q&A about its next steps for the rest of the academic year.

**Meshell Sturgis** said that the diversity committee was meeting next week and would be hosting some presentations from people who had applied for diversity funding. She invited senators to help decide which groups were awarded with funding. She said that the race and equity initiative group, which was started by President Cauce six or seven years ago, met last week. She said that the group seemed to want to act on initiatives but were unsure of their direction. She said that she was open to any feedback from people who had been involved with raising equity initiatives and wanted to see specific outcomes from the group.

**Meshell Sturgis** said that she had attended the UW Tacoma Town Hall and that the goal of the particular meeting was to discuss the efficacy of its campus safety task force and reimagining campus safety. She said that she had been trying to gather perspectives on safety from all three campuses. She said it was nice to hear from UW Tacoma's chancellor and task force members. She said that she had a meeting with Rickey Hall later this month and that she would be willing to bring up any concerns to him on their behalf. She invited all senators to email her and said that she had spoken with one executive senator about inquiring about recruitment data that was

no longer available.

**A.J. Balatico** said that F&B was no longer meeting this week and urged senators to attend the Huskies on the Hill training in the evening. He said that the next three F&B meetings would cover allocation requests and budget work. He told senators that his next Senate update would be on March 9th. He said that travel grants were still open and the F&B had received many applications. He said that there was currently a disconnect on when the students submitted their applications and when faculty members submitted their recommendations. He noted that the number of travel grant applications had increased and that the F&B had granted double the initial amount of travel grants halfway through this quarter. He anticipated that many students would apply for spring conference travel grants.

**A.J. Balatico** said that the SAF Committee was meeting on Friday and was halfway through orientations. He said that after three more SAF meetings, the SAF would review budgets, including the GPSS's. He anticipated that the GPSS's budget would be ready for the SAF's review at the start of the spring quarter.

**A.J. Balatico** said that the STF was having trouble. He said that the STF had not met regularly and that the committee had passed the window of being able to change the fee for this academic year. He noted that the STF Committee could still change the fee for upcoming years because it had such a large reserve. He said that both SAF and STF had open seats for graduate student representatives.

## 13. [Information] Announcements 8:05pm

**Davon Thomas (Public Administration)** said that he had pitched the idea of having officers commit to writing one-pagers summarizing the work they do every month. He said that the two minutes at the end of each meeting were insufficient for people to learn about all the work the officers were doing. He said that having a written document uploaded in an accessible online location might be helpful. He said that the officers' first report was due in early March and that he had not received any push-back from the officers.

**Malikai Bass (Museology)** said that the next issue he wanted to work on was the UW's attendance policies. He noted that research showed that attendance policies did not help graduate students and that attendance policies were unfair to students who were experiencing poverty or other issues. He invited people to email him if they had thoughts or strong feelings on attendance policies and wanted to collaborate with him

**Waleed Khan (Education)** asked people to give themselves some grace and kindness and to appreciate themselves for all their hard work.

**A.J. Balatico** referred to the slides. He announced that the Lunar New Year Gala, which was funded by GPSS's F&B, would be held on Saturday. He noted that the event was hybrid and that updated information was available on the website. He said that FIUTS was hosting a Cultural Fest next week. He said that the Provost Town Hall would be held next Tuesday from 3-4 p.m. and would feature a faculty speaker. He said that the Q Center and Leadership Without Borders were hosting a Zoom event on Friday from 2:30-3:30 p.m. He said that the GPSS had a liaison opening. He said that the position was of great importance to the administration, not just to GPSS. He said that the UW Institutional Chemical and Physical Safety Committee needed a graduate student nominally appointed by GPSS for two years. He said that the student would be



a non-voting member and that the meetings were held quarterly through Zoom. He said that ASUW was having their elections soon and that graduate students interested in running should refer to the information on the slides. He said that the next ASUW elections information meeting was on February 17 in the HUB.

## 14. [Action] Adjournment 8:10pm

**Davon Thomas (Public Administration)** motioned to adjourn the meeting. **Ashlee Abrantes (Environmental & Forestry Sciences)** seconded. No objections

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