

## The Graduate and Professional Student Senate

Meeting of 11, October 2023 at 5:30pm

In-person and remotely via Zoom

### The following GPSS members and staff attended the meeting:

A.J. Balatico, GPSS President

Davon Thomas, GPSS Vice President of Internal Affairs

Nicholas Juno, GPSS Vice President of External Affairs

Marty Varela, GPSS Vice President of Equity & Inclusion

Jack Flesher, GPSS Vice President of Administration

Jon Choi, GPSS Vice President of Finance

~~Pratima K.C., Executive Senator~~

Maleen Kidiwela, Executive Senator

Ella Spurlock, Executive Senator

Charles Bugre, Executive Senator

Raj Dewangan, Executive Senator

Devon Woodley, Executive Senator

Francisco Dojenia, ASUW Director of Internal Policy

Rene Singleton, SAO Advisor

Carrie Moore, HUB Executive Director

Bill Mahoney, Graduate School Advisor

Daniel Cook, GPSS Senate Director

Madeline Nicole Valdez, GPSS University Affairs Director

1. [Action] Call to Order 5:30pm

**A.J. Balatico** called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

2. [Action] Approval of the Agenda 5:32pm

**Maleen Kidiwela** moved to approve the agenda. **Nicholas Juno** seconded. No objections. Motion passed.

3. [Action] Approval of the Minutes 5:33pm

**Ella Spurlock** moved to approve the meeting minutes for the Executive Meeting on September 27, 2023. **Jack Flesher** seconded. No objections. Motion passed.

4. [Action] GPSS Senate Meeting Agenda Setting 5:34pm

**A.J. Balatico** asked for a volunteer to say the land acknowledgement at the Senate meeting.

**Jon Choi** volunteered to say the land acknowledgement.

**Ella Spurlock** suggested that the committee add a period for introductions for the GPSS Senators to the Senate Meeting Agenda. She said it was hard to get to know everyone else last year.

**A.J. Balatico** said GPSS could have a structured icebreaker at the Senate meeting with preapproved questions. He mentioned useful icebreakers from prior years. He said there will be an officer at the meeting dedicated to managing online participants. He said that the attention at the meeting will be on the in-person audience. He explained the issues of maintaining a virtual chat feature on Zoom because anything said in a public meeting should be accessible to anyone who is in person. He showed everyone what the CART captioning and Zoom chat for meeting attendance would look like in the Senate meeting.

**Jack Flesher** volunteered to lead the ice breaker.

**A.J. Balatico** said there will not be working groups for the upcoming Senate meeting. He said GPSS will recommend that Senators meet with their assigned committees on November 4. He said the committee formation will be for Judicial, Finance and Budget, and Elections. He said GPSS will send an email to Senators to nominate themselves for certain committees.

**Ella Spurlock** volunteered to lead the ice breaker.

**Amanda Chin** asked if there was an introduction to who is chair for each committee.

**A.J. Balatico** responded that the introductions would be a condensed version of what GPSS did for orientations. He said GPSS has officer updates. He asked if it would be helpful to have officer updates before committee formation at the Senate meeting.

**Maleen Kidiwela** said it would be better to introduce officers first.

**A.J. Balatico** said people might leave early if the announcements are at the end of the meeting.

**Jack Flesher** suggested placing the announcements after the icebreakers.

**A.J. Balatico** mentioned that the meeting was short but could be extended. He said that there are currently about 50 voting members in GPSS including officers.

**Jack Flesher** said the meeting is at 63 minutes.

**Charles Bugre** asked how long the meeting is supposed to be.

**Jack Flesher** responded that there is no time requirement.

**Nicholas Juno** said he, Raj, and Mykail are considering a resolution for the Seattle Home Levy. He emphasized that the resolution is not yet complete. He said discussing the resolution should not take longer than 10 minutes at the Senate meeting. He asked if GPSS should allocate time for discussing the resolution.

**A.J. Balatico** said GPSS will have to bring it up if Nick introduces it. He suggested adding the resolution to the agenda.

**Nicholas Juno** asked if GPSS could add the resolution to the agenda on the day of the Senate meeting.

**A.J. Balatico** said GPSS would normally add the resolution by Monday before 5:30pm. He said GPSS could add the resolution to the agenda on the day of the Senate meeting if it is easy to understand.

**Nicholas Juno** said Monday before 5:30pm should be fine.

**Jack Flesher** asked when he would like it to occur at the Senate meeting.

**Nicholas Juno** suggested that the resolution should occur either right before or right after committee formation.

**Jack Flesher** asked for clarification on what the resolution entailed.

**Nicholas Juno** responded that the resolution entailed supporting the Seattle Homeless levy. He said the Seattle Homeless levy will be on the ballot on November 7. He said the resolution is something that might come off the agenda because he is still working on it.

**A.J. Balatico** said that ideally the resolution would be ready prior to the Senate meeting. He said GPSS will skip the first reading because voting would happen before the GPSS's next meeting.

**Ella Spurlock** asked if GPSS could facilitate a spreadsheet where Senators working on resolutions can access, see what others are working on, and find collaborators more easily.

**A.J. Balatico** said GPSS hopes to get Microsoft Teams to facilitate collaboration and committee meetings.

**Matthew Moran** suggested another five minutes for committee formation to discuss committees more in depth and hopefully get people in them as quickly as possible.

**A.J. Balatico** noted that the meeting would be 78 minutes based on the items thus far presented. He said the Senate meeting would end at around 6:50pm. He said the Executive Committee can add to the agenda later.

**Matthew Moran** motioned to approve. **Ella Spurlock** seconded. No objections. Motion passed.

5. [Information] GPSS Liaison Appointments 5:46pm

**A.J. Balatico** said GPSS has received 115 applications since Friday for liaison positions. He said that other opportunities do not yet exist. He said there will be more informal working groups for addressing specific university-wide topics that will be a combination of faculty, staff, and students. He said he and Madeline reviewed the applications. He said they were very confident in students' abilities to fulfill their roles in university committees. He said applicants on the list of qualified applicants he and Madeline selected have not received any official offers. He said that GPSS will wait to produce formal write-ups until after the applicants accept offers from GPSS. He discussed each applicant's qualifications and the reasoning behind the selection process. He said GPSS has not confirmed the applicants. He said that approving the list of applicants will give Madeline permission to notify the applicants of their nomination via email. He said next time the Executive Committee can formally write up the appointment letters.

**Jon Choi** said he thought he would make the final recommendation for the SAF and STF nominations to the Executive Committee.

**A.J. Balatico** responded that the names provided reflect his and Madeline's strong recommendation. He said Jon can take more time to review the applications. He said he has consulted with the GSC and with Amanda. He said Jon was not in the office when the list he and Madeline finalized the list.

**Charles Bugre** asked if there was a way for officers to contact one another.

**A.J. Balatico** responded that he and Madeline made the decision to finalize the list at 5:00pm.

**Charles Bugre** said he recalled A.J. telling him that the Vice President of Finance oversaw STF staffing when he was interested in becoming an officer.

**A.J. Balatico** responded that Jon was not present to make the decision.

**Charles Bugre** expressed concern that A.J. and Madeline made the list without Jon's consent. He asked what would happen if Jon expressed interest in another applicant.

**A.J. Balatico** said discussing specific applicants that GPSS did not select was not up for discussion. He said he and Madeline reviewed all the applications.

**Charles Bugre** asked why discussing specific applicants that GPSS did not select was not up for discussion.

**A.J. Balatico** said he would not say whether a student applied or not in a public meeting. He said he printed and reviewed every application.

**Charles Bugre** asked if A.J. and Madeline reviewed the applications at 5:00pm right before the meeting.

**A.J. Balatico** said he and Madeline had been reviewing the applications since last Friday.

**Charles Bugre** asked if Jon was around for reviewing applications during that time.

**A.J. Balatico** responded that he and Madeline did not process all the applications until 5:00pm today. He said Jon could have reviewed the list if he were in the office before the meeting.

**Amanda Chin** said A.J. checked in with her. She said she reviewed A.J. and Madeline's list of recommendations. She said she did not look at all the other applications.

**Charles Bugre** said he was concerned because he got an email saying that a particular student expressed interest. He said he is concerned there is nobody on the list with experience in GPSS. He said he expected there to be somebody with experiential knowledge of the STF position.

**A.J. Balatico** said the STF has 8 ex-Aficio's, so there is institutional knowledge. He said the ASUW can appoint people with institutional knowledge. He said it is not GPSS's responsibility to instantiate the institutional knowledge of another entity on campus.

**Jon Choi** said he wanted to mention that the implication that he was not in the office to review applications could be biased. He said he was in class until 5:20pm today, which is why he was not in the office today. He said he had been in touch with A.J. in the office over the last week and a half and had asked A.J. how he could help review the applications with the understanding that he and A.J. would discuss the list of recommendations prior to making recommendations to the Executive Committee. He said he does not discount A.J.'s expertise and will defer to his recommendations. He said he is concerned because he did express interest in being involved in the review process.

**Devon Woodley** called a point of order to vote on whether to approve the list of recommended applicants presented to the Executive Committee.

**Jon Choi** recommended adding a specific applicant to the list.

**A.J. Balatico** said that adding a specific applicant to the list would not be fair to the applicants on the finalized list. He said Jon did not review the application in question's application.

**Amanda Chin** said it would be unfair to base a decision off experience with GPSS and disregard the qualifications of the other applicants. She noted that hired GPSS staff were qualified despite lacking prior experience with GPSS. She said it would be unfair to disregard all the other applicants in favor of someone known from last year.

**A.J. Balatico** said there were 70 applicants for STF.

**Charles Bugre** expressed that he is happy that there were so many applicants.

**Ella Spurlock** asked if it would be possible to vote to approve the appointments except for STF because Jon expressed interest in reviewing the list.

**A.J. Balatico** asked if GPSS should delay the SAF appointment as well.

**Jon Choi** said he trusted A.J.'s judgement on the SAF appointment.

**Ella Spurlock** moved to vote to approve the appointments except for STF. **Matthew Moran** seconded. No objections. Motion passed.

**A.J. Balatico** said Madeline can email the approved applicants if they are interested in the liaison appointments.

**Charles Bugre** said he feels that a particular applicant is very qualified and asked A.J. to specify a concern he had about appointing the applicant to the Graduate School Council.

**A.J. Balatico** said that as a member of the Graduate School Council, the applicant would help choose who receives the Graduate School Medal, for which the applicant is also highly qualified. He said that being on the Graduate School Council would preclude the applicant from being able to receive the Graduate School Medal.

6. [Information] ASUW fall update 6:02pm

**Francisco Dojenia** said there were difficulties with the volunteer application process. He said the Office of Outreach and Involvement had a rough transition, but that they have resolved the issues with the application process. He asked if there was specific information the Executive Committee wanted to hear from ASUW.

**Jack Flesher** asked for more information on ASUW plans in response to the conflict in Israel and Palestine.

**Francisco Dojenia** said ASUW has not discussed that yet.

**A.J. Balatico** asked if there were persistent issues with posting the agenda.

**Francisco Dojenia** said ASUW's record page is having difficulties, and that ASUW is working with IT to resolve the problem.

7. [Information] GPSS Staff Hiring Update 6:04pm

**Amanda Chin** said that of the 2 GPSS staff positions that still needed to be filled there is 1 staff member confirmed. She said GPSS sent an official offer to another applicant, but that GPSS is awaiting a response.

**A.J. Balatico** said GPSS orientation is on Saturday.

8. [Information] Officer Updates 6:05pm

**Matthew Moran** said there were interviews for the GPSS staff position for Diversity and Equity and is waiting to hear back. He said he is still working on collaboration with UW athletics. He said he is awaiting a response from the Alumni Association. He said there will be a pre-game mixer before the Women's Basketball game in December. He said the game and the mixer are free for students. He said he is preparing the Diversity Committee

and the Judicial Committee for next week. He said he wants to get people into the committees earlier and more consistently. He said is navigating how to guide the Judicial Committee while not leading it.

**Charles Bugre** asked if there was a GPSS ticket link for the march this week.

**Matthew Moran** responded that there was not.

**Amanda Chin** said that with UW Athletics, GPSS wanted to focus more on community. She said GPSS does not have access to data on who is going to the game or who bought tickets.

**Matthew Moran** said it did not seem like there was an interest in providing a ticket link. The event will be a free networking event. He said this would be a good experiment.

**Charles Bugre** asked if there would be a flier advertising the event that Senators can share with their constituents.

**Matthew Moran** said GPSS will have a flier out once GPSS knows who it is talking to in the Alumni Association. He said GPSS might have a flier out by next month.

**Amanda Chin** said the events for next month include a 21 and older GPSS bowling night on November 7 from 6:00pm to 8:00pm with free beverages and pizza. She said there will be a cooking demo for vegetarian curry and garlic naan on November 14 with Tracy. She said the cooking demo is limited to 20 people. She said there will be a speed friending event at HUB 334 on Tuesday, Nov 21 from 5:30pm to 7:00pm. She said GPSS will send all this information out once GPSS finalizes the posters.

**Nicholas Juno** thanked Amanda, the other officers, and staff for helping fully staff the External Affairs team. He said Adrian Laverne will be the new Legislative Organizing Director from the Information Management department with previous legislative and community organizing experience. He said the Washington Student Association is hosting a summit on October 21 and 22 at Central Washington University. He said he has not yet seen the agenda for the summit but has requested it. He said GPSS has three votes at the summit but that each representative can vote twice. He said that he and Mykail will go to the summit to represent GPSS. He said he submitted a proposal for each university to have more control over activities fees and allocations. He said he and Mykail are conducting research on how staff fees impact other universities across the state. He said LAB had good conversations around housing, healthcare, and undocumented student issues. He said the Interest Survey is live until Oct 13 and that the survey has received

190 responses. He mentioned the Senate survey will remain open until October 18. He mentioned that election day is on Tuesday, November 7 and that mail-in ballots should be in the mail by 10:20am. He reminded committee members that they can register to vote online. He said he, Raj, and Mykail will write a resolution to support the Seattle Housing Levy, which provides funds to support housing projects across the state.

**A.J. Balatico** said it would be helpful to think about how GPSS will act after the resolution.

**Ella Spurlock** said when SAGE was dissolved at the end of the last academic year, GPSS voted to join two other governmental organizations. She asked if there were any updates on that.

**Nicholas Juno** said there were no updates. He explained that SAGE is a national organization and stands for Student Advocates for Graduate Education. He said SAGE has dissolved and wrapped its services into NAGPS, the National Association of Graduate and Professional Students. He said NAGPS has not been particularly active thus far. He said he would reach out for more information from NAGPS.

**A.J. Balatico** said the graduate caucus is frozen in time.

**Nicholas Juno** said they have not done anything since the press release.

**A.J. Balatico** said there were some updates from a specific MIT group, which is a mix of public and private universities.

**Jon Choi** said Travel Grants has been up and running since the beginning of October and has collected 19 applications. He said that with help from A.J., Kailyn, and Devon, he passed along 8 of those applications to graders. He said 11 were not passed to graders because 2 were incomplete, 1 was withdrawn, and 8 were unqualified. He said that 5 of the 8 applications passed to the graders were approved for travel in October and November. He said Finance and Budget received another 11 applications over the weekend. He said conference dates indicated in the applications received were anywhere from October 11 to March 20. He said Finance and Budget will prioritize passing applications to graders according to which travel dates are coming up sooner. He said he updated the travel grants webpage to show the different submission windows for each month. He said that because there was an issue with the faculty recommendation form, Finance and Budget decided to extend the application deadline from Monday to Friday of this week. He said he will share the application results by Oct 27. He said Maleen, Raj, and Charles will rejoin the Finance and Budget Committee. He said he is awaiting a

response from Pratima. He said Jack connected him to students from the Foster School of Business interested in the committee. He said Linh, the Budget Director, might become a Senator and join the Finance and Budget committee. He said A.J. recommended 4 candidates for the Student Activities Fee. He said he will review Student Technology Fee applications with A.J. and prepare nominations for the next Executive Committee meeting. He said he met with Trevor from HUB finance. He said the GPSS operating budget was \$150K. He said GPSS has not received the Student Activity Fees allocation yet. He said GPSS expects to receive the Student Activity Fees allocation by the end of November. He said the discretionary fund was \$72,500, but realistically it is closer to about \$10,000. He said this was due to the financial transformation from last year. He said there were invoices from last year that were not finalized and paid out. He said the discretionary budget will not be updated until end of November because of the financial transformation.

**Jack Flesher** said he has been working on confirmations for the Senate. He said there are currently 42 confirmed Senators. He said there are currently 3 confirmed non-academic seat Senators. He mentioned that 14 Senators are returning from last year while the rest are new. He said he has been liaising with several departments and trying to get people confirmed. He said he updated the Senator handbook and sent it out to everyone along with a link to Nick's survey. He said there is 1 open Executive Senator seat. He said Pratima's position will be open again in December. He said there are currently no appointees from CIRCLE, the Graduate Student Equity and Excellence, Black Student Union, D Center, Q Center, or UAW4121. He said he is expecting more confirmations from the Evans School, the Jackson School, Medicine, and Nursing.

**Charles Bugre** asked if there were any confirmations GPSS is waiting on from MLIS.

**Jack Flesher** responded yes for MLIS but not yet MSIM. He said GPSS had Charles and Michele.

**Amanda Chin** said for MLIS (indiscernible).

**Jack Flesher** asked if MSIM was AIMS?

**Amanda Chin** said yes.

**Jack Flesher** explained that the departments that allow internal student organizations to select Senators may take longer. He said selected Senators are welcome to attend Senate meetings, but that they cannot vote until confirmed. He said he cannot say if he has heard from MSIM specifically, but he did hear from AIMS.

**Nicholas Juno** asked how the quarterly meeting attendance requirement for Senators would be affected if students attended the first Senate meeting prior to being confirmed.

**Jack Flesher** responded that a meeting attended prior to confirmation would not count towards the quarterly meeting attendance requirement; however, he said he calculates the attendance requirement based on when he confirms Senators. He said the attendance requirement is 2 of 3 meetings per quarter. He said GPSS will discuss proxies at the meeting.

**A.J. Balatico** said GPSS met with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and the provost of Senate Committee on Planning and Budgeting (SCPB) to set the agenda for the year. He said they are trying to figure out ways to provide non-wage faculty benefits, including tuition for dependents. He said there will be a budgetary impact and will affect how the university can support graduate students. He said GPSS met with the Tri Campus Advisory Board and the Provost Advisory Committee. He said GPSS is set to meet with Dental Suite and Sally Clarke before the next Senate meeting. He provided an update on the Executive Director search for Hall Health saying that it has concluded. He said the appointee will not start until December or January. He said for now there is only an interim director for Hall Health, which is holding up campus initiatives. He said Sharps containers and Naloxone resolutions require input from Hall Health. He said the Counseling Center is experiencing a surge in demand. He Student Life has mentioned their video to address events in Israel and are taking counseling appointments. He mentioned that Student Life wants to promote Let's Talk as an informal mechanism for supporting students. He said CIRCLE had a welcome mixer last Friday and that CIRCLE will be front line support for international students from the region. He said the UW President will give her address tomorrow. He said immediately after the President's address at 12:00pm there will be a large rally for Students United for Palestine to protest in Red Square. He specified that in mentioning these events he was neither endorsing nor disapproving of them. He said the Alumni Association and the Bookstore are having their joint meeting this Friday to discuss the Welcome Center and other projects. He said Homecoming will take place next week on Saturday, October 21 in observance of the 162<sup>nd</sup> birthday of UW.

**Jack Flesher** asked if the Jackson School has a response to the events in Israel and Gaza.

**A.J. Balatico** said that a recent graduate of the Jackson School was killed in the conflict. He said there has not been any particular response from the Jackson School. He said members of the Jackson School are receiving grief counseling and other support.

**Jack Flesher** mentioned that there was a moderated panel when there was conflict in Iran and was wondering if the Jackson School was planning a similar panel or session for grieving to address the events in Israel and Gaza.

**A.J. Balatico** said the Graduate School hosts a Near East and Middle East PhD program. He said the program and GPSS have been discussing what sorts of resources are available for students. He said next week is the Graduate School retreat. He said they will discuss what Graduate School will look like and how it is a public good keeping in mind the university's 2050 mission. He said he expressed to multiple administrators GPSS's aspirations to host a research symposium. He said he met with the Medical Student Association to discuss the entering class of 2022's going away party. He said the 2022 entering class will be going on medical rotations at the end of December. He said this going away party would be the last time the 2022 entering class would be together. He said GPSS is looking for ways to support the Medical Student Association in addition to the Finance and Budget allocations and diversity funds. He said ASUW Shell House Executive Committee met last week to shore up their last \$700k philanthropic drive culminating in the release of the George Clooney movie on December 25. He said that in the meantime the Shell House is potentially a venue open to student groups.

9. [Action] Executive Session 6:34pm

**A.J. Balatico** announced the beginning of the executive session at 6:34pm

10. [Action] Executive Session Extension 7:05pm

**Charles Bugre** moved to extend time on the Executive Session by 15 minutes. **Maleen Kidiwela** seconded. No objections. Motion passed.

11. [Action] Adjournment 7:20pm

**Charles Bugre** moved to adjourn the meeting. **Maleen Kidiwela** seconded. No objections. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 7:20pm.

*Meeting minutes prepared by Daniel Cook, GPSS Senate Director.*