

The Graduate and Professional Student Senate

Meeting of 6 December 2023 at 5:30pm

In-person and remotely via Zoom

The following GPSS members and staff attended the meeting:

A.J. Balatico, GPSS President
Amanda Chin, GPSS Vice President of Internal Affairs
Nicholas Juno, GPSS Vice President of External Affairs
Matthew Moran, 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
Kana Saarni, GPSS Creative and Communications Director

The following persons also attended the meeting:

1. [Action] Call to Order 5:57pm

A.J. Balatico called the meeting to order at 5:57pm.

2. [Action] Approval of the Agenda 5:59pm

Hannah Shipman (Aeronautics and Astronautics) raised a point of information and asked if there are things that could be eliminated from the agenda to shorten the meeting.

A.J. Balatico said yes.

Hannah Shipman (Aeronautics and Astronautics) moved to remove the Officer Updates from the agenda. **George Fennell (Materials Science and Engineering)** seconded. No objections. 5:59pm

Matthew Moran moved to approve the agenda. **Amanda Chin** seconded. No objections. Motion passed. 5:59pm

3. [Action] Approval of the Minutes 6:00pm

Jack Flesher moved to approve the minutes. **Nick Juno** seconded. No objections. Motion passed. 6:00pm

4. [Information] Land Acknowledgment 6:00pm

Jack Flesher, on behalf of GPSS, gave the land acknowledgment and mentioned the Legislative Advisory Board, the Washington Student Association, wəłəbʔaltx^w – Intellectual House, the ASUW American Indian Student Commission, the Native and Strong Lifeline, Stand with Duwamish, and Real Rent Duwamish as additional resources for getting involved.

“Every community owes its existence and vitality to generations from around the world who contributed to making the history that led to this moment. Indigenous people have lived here continuously since time immemorial, and Seattle is now a highly cosmopolitan territory with overlapping sovereignties and fidelities. Acknowledging the land we are on is only the first step. Therefore, the Graduate and Professional Student Senate at the University of Washington in Seattle acknowledges the coast Salish people of this land, the land which touches the shared waters of all tribes and bands within the Squamish, Tulalip, and Muckleshoot nations and all traditional lands on which we learn and work.”

5. [Information] Announcements 6:02pm

Jack Flesher announced a holiday gathering for international students on Friday December 8 from 5:00 pm to 6:30 pm. He said the gathering is currently at full capacity. He reminded the Senate that Circle regularly hosts events like this. He said the Arts Council has a knitting and crocheting circle and that GPSS is maintaining a spreadsheet with arts and humanities events and resources. He explained that Senators may access the spreadsheet and contribute to it. He provided 3 samples of upcoming UW public lectures in January and announced that registration for the public lectures opens on December 13.

Nick Juno announced that the Legislative Reception is Thursday, December 7 from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm and that the event will be catered. He said the event will include student speakers, legislators, catering, and the reveal of the ASUW and GPSS agendas.

(Indiscernible) asked if there was a dress code for the Legislative Reception.

Nick Juno responded that there was no official dress code but encouraged attendees to dress in business casual.

Joe Rogge (Mathematics) asked if it was too late to RSVP for the Legislative Reception.

Nick Juno said the RSVP form is closed, but people who did not RSVP in time can still attend the Legislative Reception.

Julia Hobbs (JD) asked if attendees may bring a guest.

Nick Juno said yes.

Matthew Moran said the Cultural Showcase is still receiving submissions. He said Senators can email Amanda Chin with any questions.

Hannah Shipman (Aeronautics and Astronautics) raised a point of personal privilege and asked what kind of format the Cultural Showcase will be and what kinds of items people should submit to participate.

Matthew Moran said the Cultural Showcase is performance based and may include dancing, singing, and spoken word performances. He said the Cultural Showcase will be hosted on April 1. He said he will not know the structure of the Cultural Showcase until submissions are received.

Kana Saarni encouraged the Senate to follow GPSS on social media.

Matthew Moran announced that this is Rene Singleton's last GPSS meeting. He thanked Rene for her service to the Senate. He mentioned that a digital card signed by current and former officers will be sent to Rene.

Jack Flesher mentioned that the word of the day is "Singleton" in Rene's honor.

A.J. Balatico said information about the Singleton Leadership Fund will be sent out to the Senate. He said donations will be matched by another entity.

Carrie Moore said that reaching the goal of 33 donors to the Singleton Leadership Fund unlocked a \$5,000 donation from a former ASUW president. She said more than 50 people have donated so far.

Rene Singleton said that GPSS never got money for most of the time she worked at the university. She said she saved up money and set up a fund for ASUW and GPSS to purchase food for Senate meetings. She said that if the Singleton Leadership Fund reaches a certain amount, it can provide \$2,000-\$3,000 annually for food at Senate meetings.

Matthew Moran announced that his advisor, Jennifer, has plans on leaving as well. He recognized the impact that Jennifer has had on the community through her work with RSOs and students from diverse backgrounds. He expressed that she will be missed.

6. [Information] PACS/TABS (with Janis Shin and Kaylin Elliot) 6:09pm

Janis Shin gave a presentation on PACS. She provided a QR code to the PACS survey. She said that PACS meets with the Provost and the President biweekly and needs data on student needs to relay to UW leadership. She emphasized that university policy is not dictated by the President and that every unit on campus has its own leadership. She presented the PACS charter. She explained that there are 6 students on PACS including the Presidents of GPSS and ASUW as well as 2 more representatives from GPSS and 2 more representatives from ASUW. She explained that PACS is responsible for sending student opinions and questions to administration. She gave a presentation on TABS. She explained that TABS meets quarterly with Bothel and Tacoma to discuss tri-campus issues. She said TABS is discussing issues concerning food availability after hearing that students have expressed difficulty accessing healthy food options on campus. She said TABS has also been discussing issues like university grading policies, the retention of first-year students, campus safety, the Disability Resource Center, the current UW Budget, and the shortened course drop period from 2 weeks to 1 week. She said that students have expressed discontentment with this change and that she will be working with the registrar to change the drop period back to 2 weeks. She said that the minutes for these meetings are available for those interested in seeing them. She mentioned that Sally Clarke has a lot of initiatives for campus safety.

A.J. Balatico said Sally Clarke will likely come to the Senate.

Janis Shin said administration was thinking about how students want to be engaged with the Israel/Palestine conflict. She said the university's plan is to open a new course through the Jackson School and sponsor it through President Ana Marie Cauce's office. She mentioned that some of the class talks will be open to the public. She said the Jackson School will invite speakers with different perspectives. She said President Ana Marie Cauce is also thinking about holding moderated small round table discussions.

A.J. Balatico Mentioned that this was also brought up by Clare Koesters in the Executive Committee. He said Student Regent Jay Cunningham has also been part of this discussion. He clarified that the Regent's role is not as a representative of students but to safeguard the organization and integrity of the university into the future. He expressed that GPSS wants to be both leaders in this topic and responsive to what students are asking for.

Beth Fawcett (Chemistry) said there were questions from students in Chemistry about how to respond to these topics in ways that were productive and that they have not received a good response. She suggested informing the faculty about these types of engagements because often this is a student's first point of contact.

A.J. Balatico affirmed that he has heard that many graduate students are concerned about moderating these discussions in their classes.

Janis Shin said she will relay follow-up questions and concerns to administration.

A.J. Balatico asked what Senators' priorities were for the PACS and TABS agendas. He explained that climate infrastructure was not included because PACS and TABS are more academic and student facing.

Beth Fawcett (Chemistry) said her program is only in its 4th year. She said the onboarding process for her program was interesting. She said the orientation was not fantastic and that the program has experienced various issues with signing people up for pay, insurance, key cards, and other resources. She recommended including something for resolving issues with onboarding procedures in the PACS and TABS agendas.

Janis Shin said Student Life is working on getting ChatGPT to help provide students access resources on campus. She emphasized that ChatGPT would not be used for counseling, but for connecting students with resources. She said she would elevate Beth's concerns.

A.J. Balatico said Dean Joy Williamson-Lot is coming to PACS next month. He said Jack Flesher coordinates graduate orientations with 50 different units on campus. He mentioned that GPSS is on the frontline of getting new students connected.

Janis Shin mentioned that A.J. Balatico sits on the TABS committee.

7. [Action] Resolution to Expedite the University of Washington's Decarbonization Plan 6:22pm

Alec Solemslie (School of Environmental and Forest Sciences) and **Hema Velappan (Environment and Forest Sciences)** explained the changes made to the Resolution to Expedite the University of Washington's Decarbonization Plan. Hema said most updates were based on providing data as a white paper and trimming down the resolution itself.

A.J. Balatico asked Ella Spurlock if her concerns from the last Senate meeting were addressed in the updated Resolution.

Ella Spurlock (Chemistry) said yes.

Hema Velappan (Environment and Forest Sciences) said they addressed comments from the first reading.

A.J. Balatico said Jack Flesher sent out link to the Faculty Senate version. He said the resolution was not brought forward to the Faculty Senate on Monday based on the resolution's demanding rather than cooperative tone. He said the Faculty Senate's decision not to bring the resolution forward was unanimous. He explained that GPSS does not have to abide with what Faculty Senate wants to do. He said the next Board of Regents meeting will be before the next Senate meeting. He said there is a plan to have a presentation related to financial divestment goals soon. He said university finances were discussed at the last Executive Committee meeting. He explained that decarbonization would cost \$800 million on top of \$2.2 billion in deferred maintenance and \$700 million in uncompensated care. He said the university cannot unplug the power plant. He explained that the university constitutes the second largest polluter in Washington state. He asked if the Senate is prepared to make these demands. He said the resolution speaks on behalf of graduate students.

Hema Velappan (Environment and Forest Sciences) said the Faculty Senate Resolution did not address a timeline for achieving decarbonization goals. She said there was a clear description of and justification for a timeline in the decarbonization white paper. She said there was a policy window opportunity between the Climate Commitment Act and the Inflation Reduction Act. She indicated that the cost of decarbonization would be the same or even more expensive in 10 years. She expressed that decarbonization will always be a difficult funding decision. She explained that the decision to delay climate action carries with it a massive hidden cost.

A.J. Balatico said there are Washington climate laws that would fine UW until decarbonization is addressed. He explained that there are 7 miles of piping on campus to fix and that updates to buildings are also necessary. He mentioned that it is more cost effective to destroy and reconstruct buildings than to retrofit them. He said deferred maintenance costs amount to \$800 million.

Hannah Shipman (Aeronautics and Astronautics) asked for clarification.

A.J. Balatico said \$40 million is required to retrofit Anderson Hall. He explained that the anticipated yearly cost for Decarbonization will be more expensive. He said most of the deferred maintenance is in the south campus center and medical Magnuson complex. He

said these issues have all been discussed at the Board of Regents and other meetings. He asked Senators if they needed more information.

Hannah Shipman (Aeronautics and Astronautics) clarified that deferred maintenance buildings are wasteful in energy. She asked if this is why it is important to retrofit old buildings.

A.J. Balatico said yes, but there was more to it. He said the university power plant currently uses natural gas. He said it is the single biggest polluter on campus. He said that even if every building on campus were retrofitted, the power plant would still be the biggest polluter. He said the resolution includes addressing pollution from travel, which would involve addressing university-sanctioned travel and commuting to and from campus. He said investing in public transportation and infrastructure could help reduce the university's carbon footprint. He suggested addressing transportation as a broader issue with the City of Seattle instead of strictly with the UW Seattle campus.

Jack Flesher raised a point of information and explained that the Senate can make motions to either approve or table the resolution.

A.J. Balatico said the Senate could invite David Woodson and Lou Cariello to speak on the administration's behalf.

Joe Rogge (Mathematics) asked if the Senate needed to extend time to continue discussing the resolution.

A.J. Balatico said yes.

Joe Rogge (Mathematics) moved to extend by 3 minutes. **Matthew Moran** seconded. **Hannah Shipman (Aeronautics and Astronautics)** objected and suggested extending time by 5 minutes instead. **Joe Rogge (Mathematics)** accepted the suggestion as friendly. No objections. Motion passed. 6:37pm

Joe Rogge (Mathematics) asked about the potential downsides if GPSS were to approve an aggressive decarbonization resolution.

A.J. Balatico said it may tarnish the spirit of cooperation with the university. He said he could relay these concerns to university leadership even if the Senate did not pass a resolution. He said leadership may interpret the resolution as a series of demands without plausible proposals for implementation.

Beth Fawcett (Chemistry) asked if the resolution writers collaborated with the Clean Energy Institute (CEI) to create the resolution.

Hema Velappan (Environment and Forest Sciences) said no, but they are part of the Environmental Stewardship Committee and the Student Energy Taskforce. She explained that everyone they have coordinated with in university Town Halls has said the demands in the resolution are technically feasible and possible. She said these organizations are planning on having an even more aggressive timeline of 6 to 7 years to reduce emissions by 95%. She said the resolution demands a binding commitment from management even if leadership changes.

A.J. Balatico said if the resolution is aspirational, it should be written in a way that does not make demands. He said the Faculty Senate interpreted the resolution as a series of demands on the Board of Regents.

Beth Fawcett (Chemistry) said she asked if the CEI were involved because people in that institute make up a portion of the graduate student population.

Hannah Shipman (Aeronautics and Astronautics) asked what sort of changes to the resolution the Senate would like to implement if the Senate were to table this and gather more information.

A.J. Balatico said the perception was that this would set precedents for the Legislative Agenda. He reiterated that the Resolution would carry an immediate cost of over \$80 million this year. He said the Senate could invite leadership from facilities and David Woodson as experts to provide more information to the Senate.

Joe Rogge (Mathematics) said the students he represents are in favor of aggressive climate action but advocated gathering more information and hearing from experts before voting on the resolution.

Joe Rogge (Mathematics) moved to table the resolution. **Beth Fawcett (Chemistry)** seconded. No objections. Motion passed. 6:45pm.

8. [Information] Senator of the Month 6:45pm

Matthew Moran read the Proclamation Celebrating the Work of **Alec Solemslie (School of Environmental and Forest Sciences)** as Senator of the Month.

9. [Action] Executive Senator Elections 6:47pm

A.J. Balatico announced the expiration of **Pratima K.C.'s (School of Environmental and Forest Sciences)** term as Executive Senator. He explained the responsibilities of Executive Senators.

Hannah Shipman (Aeronautics and Astronautics) raised a point of information and asked if GPSS needed to have 4 Executive Senators.

Jack Flesher said GPSS needs to have 7 Executive Senators.

Noah Nguyen (Material Science and Engineering) self-nominated. She gave a speech on her qualifications. She said the work of GPSS aligns with her goals and experiences. She explained her prior work of connecting STEM students with academic advisors at UW Bothell. She said this experience encouraged her to contribute to UW to make learning experiences enjoyable for everyone. She said the work of GPSS has inspired her to contribute more to the university. She mentioned that she was recently appointed to the Tri-Campus Faculty Committee. She said her goal is to make the 3 campuses at UW more connected and inclusive. She said she hopes to create a dynamic environment for everyone and make sure that everyone feels safe and happy. She shared her experience as a former international student and expressed that she understands how difficult it is to be far from home and experience cultural and language barriers. She said she aims to create a more inclusive environment for international students. She mentioned that she is also on the Student Advisory Board for Material Science and currently serves as the Engineering Chair. She said she wants to encourage women, people of color, and people living in rural areas to learn more about STEM. She expressed her desire to break stereotypes about STEM students.

Jack Flesher announced that Noah Nguyen is the new Executive Senator. He thanked Pratima K.C. for her service to GPSS and the Executive Committee.

10. [Information] Committee Updates and Recruitment 6:58pm

Ella Spurlock (Chemistry) congratulated Noah Nguyen. She gave an update on the Science and Policy Committee. She said the committee is focusing on outreach and science presentations at Senior Centers throughout the Seattle area. She said the committee is taking submissions for new presentations on relevant science that seniors would be interested in. She provided a link to a form for submissions and expressed that the committee needs more volunteers.

A.J. Balatico clarified that the term "Senior Centers" referred to active Seniors who are voters and not those residing in nursing homes or Assisted Living Facilities.

Ella Spurlock (Chemistry) said having science-informed voters is important. She said the committee is also focusing on the Research Symposium. She said there is a call for abstracts and provided fliers and a link for submissions in the Zoom chat. She explained that the Research Symposium is an opportunity for graduate students to practice presenting their research and building their CVs. She said the event will need volunteers. She invited Senators to attend Science and Policy Committee meetings. She said the committee is currently writing two resolutions to be forwarded to legislators in Olympia with proposed legislation. She explained that the proposed legislation will address building climate resiliency for underserved communities in Washington and bolstering Washington state's climate workforce. She invited Senators to get involved in writing these resolutions.

Jack Flesher called for Senators to join the Committee for Senator Motivation and Retention (CSMR) and thanked those who have also reached out about serving as members. He explained that CSMR was formed last year by Charles Bugre to find ways to motivate people to get and remain involved in GPSS. He explained that the purpose is to make volunteering in GPSS worth people's time. He said CSMR wrote a resolution last year to set aside money for monetary recognition to incentivize and recognize Senators for serving on the Elections and Judicial Committees. He said CSMR has also discussed setting up professional development workshops and networking events for GPSS Senators. He said there is also an idea for setting up a GPSS Senator mentorship program. He provided a QR code to a When2Meet for Senators interested in getting involved after the new year. He said he is hoping for 4 or 5 people on the committee.

A.J. Balatico said GPSS is hoping to get Slack for Senate and student-to-student communication to foster better connections between Senators.

11. [Action] Adjournment 7:08pm

Beth Fawcett (Chemistry) motioned to adjourn the meeting. **Joe Rogge (Mathematics)** seconded. No objections. Motion passed. 7:08pm.

Meeting minutes prepared by Daniel Cook, GPSS Senate Clerk.