

The Graduate and Professional Student Senate

Meeting of 17 April 2024 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
Noah Nguyen, Executive Senator
Maleen Kidiwela, Executive Senator
Ella Spurlock, Executive Senator
Charles Bugre, Executive Senator
Clare Koesters, Executive Senator
Raj Dewangan, Executive Senator
Francisco Dojenia, ASUW Director of Internal Policy
Carrie Moore, HUB Executive Director
Christina Coop, SAO Interim Associate Director
Bill Mahoney, Graduate School Advisor
Daniel Cook, GPSS Senate Director
Mark Pock, STF Chair

The following persons also attended the meeting:

1. [Action] Call to Order 5:31pm

A.J. Balatico called the meeting to order at 5:31pm.

2. [Action] Approval of the Agenda 5:31pm

A.J. Balatico amended the agenda to add an item about a mid-year allocation for Travel Grants.

Daniel Cook (History) moved to approve the agenda. **Hannah Shipman (Aeronautics and Astronautics)** seconded. No objections. Motion passed. 5:32pm

3. [Action] Approval of the Minutes 5:32pm

George Fennell (Material Science and Engineering) moved to approve the minutes. **Joe Rogge (Mathematics)** seconded. No objections. Motion passed. 5:32pm

4. [Information] Land Acknowledgment 5:3pm

Jack Flesher, on behalf of GPSS, gave the land acknowledgment and mentioned the Legislative Advisory Board, the Washington Student Association, wələbʔaltx^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. He said UW had its annual Spring Powwow last weekend.

“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 5:35pm

A.J. Balatico presented upcoming meetings for GPSS prior to the election. He pointed out that the Finance and Budget Committee will not be meeting on Fridays until May 3 unless there is relevant business to conduct.

Matthew Moran announced the next GPSS Drag Show will take place on Friday, May 17 at the ECC Theater at 5:00pm with 4 different performers. He provided a series of past and upcoming events that the Diversity Committee has funded. He announced that the GPSS Diversity Resources Fair will take place on April 27 from 12:00pm to 2:00pm at Intellectual House. He said this is the first resources fair GPSS has hosted since the pandemic.

Jack Flesher presented a series of events held through the Jackson School. He asked Lauren if GPSS is still accepting applications for Campus Sustainability Fund (CSF).

Lauren French (Marine and Environmental Affairs) said yes. She said students can apply for awards.

A.J. Balatico asked if students can apply for projects into next year.

Lauren French (Marine and Environmental Affairs) encouraged students to reach out with those questions. She said she thinks CSF can accept applications for funding into next year.

A.J. Balatico encouraged Senators to investigate the criteria to apply.

Jack Flesher said UW Emergency Medical Services (EMS) has opportunities for Naloxone and CPR/AED training on May 20 and May 25. He presented a slide on the ongoing public lectures at UW. He said the Arts Council will host a Craft and Complain Event on Thursday April 25 from 4:00pm to 6:00pm and will reprise Crafts and Drafts for graduate students who are 21 and older on May 23 from 6:00pm to 8:00pm. He said there will be a Book Club meeting on the following Monday at 11:30am. He said there will also be more sketch workshops and knitting and crochet circles.

Matthew Moran said he is waiting on a flier for the Mariners night. He said there will be a link to buy tickets. He said Mariners Night will occur on May 10 and that tickets will cost \$10.

6. [Action] U-PASS Rate Setting (with Guests Saiya Karamali and Tia Bjornson) 5:43pm

Saiya Karamali announced that the UPASS Advisory Board is recommending lowering the UPASS fee from \$86 to \$70 per quarter for next year. They said that the UPASS has a reserve of \$8.1 million which it can spend down. They also explained the introduction of a \$3 flat rate for Light Rail next year. They explained that with the anticipated opening of the East Link Light Rail 2 Line in April 2024, the UPASS Advisory Board is looking to maintain a buffer for future increases in ridership. They gave a presentation on the current UPASS budget and projections into Fiscal Year 2025. They introduced a resolution to reduce the UPASS fee.

Hannah Shipman (Aeronautics and Astronautics) asked if the flat fee were for any students who regularly use Light Rail or if it would be separated from the general UPASS fee.

Saiya Karamali explained that Sound Transit is changing the way fees for Light Rail work. They explained that all trips on Light Rail will cost \$3, which UPASS will pay for.

Charles Bugre (Information Science) clarified that students will not need to tap off when arriving at stations.

Saiya Karamali said they believe so.

A.J. Balatico asked when the new Sound Transit policy starts.

Saiya Karamali said in the Fall.

Mykhail Lembke (Public Administration) asked if it will cost \$3 every time a student gets on the link.

Saiya Karamali said it will cost \$3 for every trip.

Mykhail Lembke (Public Administration) said riders can take an unlimited number of trips on the Light Rail for a flat fee with a day pass. He clarified that the new flat rate would cost UPASS \$3 for each time an individual took a trip on the Light Rail.

Saiya Karamali said it will cost \$3 every time a student uses Light Rail.

A.J. Balatico explained that the resolution would be an information item in May and instated in June. He said the resolution does not address the needs of out-of-state students. He asked Saiya why the UPASS fee could not be reduced to \$50.

Saiya Karamali said there is always uncertainty about future fares and ridership. They said it makes sense to keep the rate as stable as possible.

Charles Bugre (Information Science) asked how much the public pays for light rail and whether there should be a \$3 daily rate.

Saiya Karamali said the UPASS fee has always charged for every trip.

Bill Bryant (Assistant Director of Transportation Services) explained that fares are determined by the Sound Transit Board. He explained that UPASS has never had a mechanism or reason for charging on a day pass basis. He said the fare decisions are out of the hands of the Student Advisory Board.

A.J. Balatico said approving the free ridership of students under 19 already cut out a lot of students' use of the UPASS program and that expenses likely went down. He said costs may go up in the future with Light Rail expansions.

Ella Spurlock (Chemistry) moved to extend time by 1 minute. **Matthew Moran** seconded. No objections. Motion passed. 5:56pm

Ella Spurlock (Chemistry) asked what effect the \$70 rate would have on the reserve.

Saiya Karamali said it would cut into the reserve by \$1.5 million.

Maeve Riley (Drama) moved to a vote. **Mykhail Lembke (Public Administration)** seconded. No objections. Motion passed. 5:56pm

42-1-0 resolution passed.

7. [Action] STF Rate Setting (with Guest Mark Pock) 5:58pm

Mark Pock introduced himself as the Chair of the STF Committee. He explained that the STF is a fee that students pay to help in the creation of technology projects around campus like Husky Link, UW Library, and the Odegaard Learning Commons. He said the STF rate is currently \$22 per quarter, generating \$3 million in revenue for the STF each year. He explained that the rate used to be fixed at \$38 per quarter before the pandemic. He explained that STF spent roughly \$3 to \$4 million per year rather than the \$5 million it generated from a \$38 per quarter fee. He explained that STF has been attempting to spend down its reserve. He said the hope is to have the reserve at around \$3 million by Fiscal Year (FY) 2025, which represents 1 year of STF's minimal obligations in funding recurring block awards. He said the proposal of the STF Committee is to raise the rate to \$27 per quarter to account for new recurring expenditures and allocations that will cost an additional \$700,000. He explained that while single award expenditures have declined, recurring expenditures have increased. He said block awards have increased from \$1.5 million to \$2.2 million. He said this means that STF can meet the necessities of a \$38 fee. He said the plan is to eventually get back to a \$38 fee. He said STF would like to continue with \$3 million per year in single award allocations. He said STF is also asking for an administrative cap of \$300,000. He said STF wants to make students on campus more aware of STF through better marketing, direct outreach, and large-scale infrastructure. He said there are currently many barriers to STF's mission, including

departmental affiliation requirements, lack of awareness, and difficulty in process. He reiterated that the committee is asking to raise the quarterly fee to \$27.

Daniel Cook (History) asked how much STF has currently allocated through single award allocations this year.

Mark Pock said STF has allocated \$1.5 million in single award allocations so far. He said the goal is to allocate another \$1.5 million by the end of the year.

Daniel Cook (History) asked if the \$1.5 million that has already been allocated has been spent.

Mark Pock said it has not been spent. He clarified that allocated money is cleared for spending. He said due to a change in financial systems at the university, most of the allocated funds have not been able to be spent.

Daniel Cook (History) asked how much money has been allocated beyond the \$1.5 million that has already been allocated.

Mark Pock said STF has not made any new allocations for the Spring quarter yet. He said there are currently 30 funding proposals for the Spring quarter that STF will review and approve at the end of the quarter.

Tobin Wainer (Astronomy) clarified that the overall goal is to decrease the reserve which stands at \$12 million to \$15 million.

Mark Pock said the current reserve is roughly \$8 million. He said the reserve was \$12 million or \$13 million 2 years ago.

Tobin Wainer (Astronomy) asked what the reasoning was to raise the fee to \$27 if the goal was to spend the reserve down to \$3 million.

Mark Pock said a sharp increase in the rates later would be less responsible. He said the real reason is that the conceptual plan does not align with the real numbers. He said in the worst possible outcome, \$27 will allow STF reserves to stand at \$3 million next year.

Christine Zhao (Computational Linguistics) asked what makes or breaks an STF application for funding.

Mark Pock said it depends on the amount an application is requesting. He said low-level requests are not as highly scrutinized. He said proposals for technology are very likely to get accepted. He said proposals that do not have people to carry on their implementation into the future are risky.

Charles Bugre (Information Science) said the number of students a proposal affects is also an important factor. He said the STF Committee asks how many students will benefit from the proposal.

Joe Rogge (Mathematics) asked what Mark expected the STF fee would eventually stabilize at to maintain the \$3million reserve.

Mark Pock said \$38. He said that would sustain \$5 million in funding every year.

Joe Rogge (Mathematics) asked what would happen to STF's plan if GPSS rejects the proposal and maintains the STF at \$22 per quarter.

Mark Pock said single allocations would have to be scaled down next year.

Beth Fawcett (Chemistry) moved to extend time by 5 minutes. Matthew Moran seconded. No objections. Motion passed. 6:20pm

Beth Fawcett (Chemistry) asked what will be done with the additional \$50,000 from the administrative increase.

Mark Pock said it would add 2 new administrative positions. He said last year's cap was \$250,000 and that committee members were not paid. He said committee members are now paid, costing \$20,000 per year. He said adding the 2 positions and paying committee members will cost \$260,000 total, leaving \$40,000 in flexible spending. He said \$300,000 would prevent needing to raise the administrative cap again.

A.J. Balatico asked how many staff are hired to STF right now.

Mark Pock said there are 4 people hired to STF. He said there will be 6 next year.

A.J. Balatico asked if staff are employed during the summer.

Mark Pock said staff are not employed during the Summer except for the Director of Operations.

A.J. Balatico clarified that all the staff positions are currently filled.

Mark Pock said yes.

Melody Vahadi (Computational Linguistics) said the STF was \$0 during COVID and during the 2022-2023 academic year. She asked why the STF could be \$0 then but not now.

Mark Pock said that was the first year that the long-term plan was implemented. He said the objective was to begin spending down the reserve.

Raj Dewangan (Real Estate) moved to vote on the proposal. **Nick Juno** seconded. No objections. Motion passed 6:25pm

33-12-6 resolution passed.

8. [Action] Executive Senator Election and Committee Elections 6:27pm

A.J. Balatico explained that there is a vacancy that needs to be filled on the Executive Committee. He said the term would last from Spring 2024 to Spring 2026.

Jack Flesher explained the responsibilities of an Executive Senator and gave examples of how Executive Senators contribute to GPSS.

A.J. Balatico explained that Executive Senators receive \$450 at the end of each academic year.

Maeve Riley (Drama) self-nominated for the Executive Senator position.

Maeve Riley (Drama) gave a speech detailing her goal to expand her work on the Arts Council and the Elections Committee. She said she would love to be more involved in making the GPSS space open for everyone. She said her goal is to become the Chair for the Arts Council next year and to include art and art therapy into her work on the Arts Council. She said she would like to incorporate her work from the School of Drama into one of the arts projects she would work on. She said she loves collaboration in the arts among people of various backgrounds.

A.J. Balatico announced Maeve Riley as the next Executive Senator.

Jack Flesher explained who can be on the Judicial, Elections, and Finance and Budget Committees. He explained the process of volunteering to serve on committees. He explained that Senators cannot serve on the Judicial or Elections Committees if they plan on running for an Officer position.

A.J. Balatico explained that there will need to be a regular Senator on the Elections Committee to replace Maeve now that she is on the Executive Committee. He called for volunteers for the Judicial Committee and the Finance and Budget Committee.

Beth Fawcett (Chemistry) said that if the Judicial and Elections Committees are not meeting quorum, elections cannot happen.

Tobin Wainer (Astronomy) asked for clarification on the responsibilities of Elections Committee Senators.

Alex Solemslie (Environmental and Forest Sciences) explained that most of the Elections Committee work has been completed. He said Senators will need to attend committee meetings so that the committee can meet quorum and approve the elections.

Beth Fawcett (Chemistry) said the Judicial Committee reviews any irregularities with the elections or candidacy. She said the committee normally meets on a Friday once per month. She said it is possible for the Judicial Committee to call an emergency meeting in the event of elections irregularities.

Maleen Kidiwela (Oceanography) said there will be an Elections Committee meeting tomorrow at 1:00pm.

A.J. Balatico reiterated that being on the Elections Committee would prevent a Senator from running for office.

George Fennell (Material Science and Engineering) self-nominated for the Elections Committee.

Matthew Moran explained that the Judicial Committee helps adjudicate elections and implement bylaws changes. He emphasized that serving on the Judicial Committee is a fun experience.

Joe Rogge (Mathematics) asked what time on Fridays the Judicial Committee meets.

Beth Fawcett (Chemistry) said the committee is in the middle of establishing a meeting time.

Joe Rogge (Mathematics) self-nominated for the Judicial Committee.

Pratima KC (Environmental and Forest Sciences) asked for clarification on whether there is a new member on the Judicial Committee.

A.J. Balatico said no. He said there was an issue with an overlap of an appointment.

Pratima KC (Environmental and Forest Sciences) asked if the Judicial Committee would have to meet after the elections.

A.J. Balatico said no. He said the committee intends on completing bylaws changes and other meetings before the year ends.

Pratima KC (Environmental and Forest Sciences) asked how many Judicial Committee meetings there will be per quarter.

A.J. Balatico said the need to hold meetings other than the elections and bylaws meetings is to be determined.

Pratima KC (Environmental and Forest Sciences) self-nominated for the Judicial Committee.

Hannah Shipman (Aeronautics and Astronautics) raised a point of information clarifying that a Senator left the Elections Committee earlier in the year and that Maeve was a regular Senator on the Elections Committee prior to becoming an Executive Senator. She said the Elections Committee is looking to fill another regular Senator position aside from the one left vacant with Maeve's election to the Executive Committee.

A.J. Balatico said the Elections Committee would still be above quorum. He said there needs to be another regular Senator to take Maeve's position on the Elections Committee. He reiterated that the Elections Committee can meet quorum if everyone is in attendance.

Jack Flesher clarified that Maeve is still on the Elections Committee but that it needs another regular Senator now that Maeve is an Executive Senator.

A.J. Balatico said the Finance and Budget Committee does not require additional Senators, but they are nice to have. He said Officers have needed to fill in as proxies. He explained that he is a non-voting member of FB even though he is standing in as VP of Finance. He invited Senators to participate in FB meetings on Fridays at 10:30am. He said FB is not expecting any major allocations for the rest of the year.

Jack Flesher moved to approve Pratima KC as a member of the Judicial Committee and George Fennel as a member of the Elections Committee. **Raj Dewangan (Real Estate)** seconded. No objections. Motion passed 6:47pm.

9. [Action] Mid-Year Allocation for Travel Grants 6:47pm

A.J. Balatico explained that GPSS has hit its \$30,000 spending limit for Travel Grants. He said Travel Grants received over 60 completed applications. He said GPSS has about \$7,000 left but needs \$3,000 more to be able to fund 50% of the applications it has received. He said this measure would redirect funds from Special Allocations to Travel Grants. He explained that spending on Travel Grants is capped at \$30,000 this year, but that anticipated expenditures on Travel Grants this year would be \$33,000.

Jack Flesher explained that voting on moving funds would require the Senate to suspend a bylaw about grant allocations requiring a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote. He said Senators would then vote on whether to approve a \$3,000 from Special Allocations to Travel Grants requiring a simple majority.

A.J. Balatico said GPSS is not expecting enough applications for Special Allocations to spend all the funds.

Raj Dewangan (Real Estate) moved to suspend the bylaw. **Mykhail Lembke (Public Administration)** seconded. No objections. Motion passed. 6:52pm

Jack Flesher clarified the bylaw being suspended.

31-0-0 resolution passed.

10. [Action] Spring 2024 VP of Finance Position 6:55pm

Jack Flesher explained that in the event an Officer resigns, a Special Election must be held at the following Senate meeting managed by the Elections Committee. He said the Senate has the power to approve or reject the Executive Committee's recommendations.

A.J. Balatico explained that the Executive Committee recommends suspending a GPSS bylaw to allow the President, VP of External Affairs, and Budget Specialist to continue completing the remaining tasks of the VP of Finance, and increasing the Budget Specialist's hours from 15 to 19 per week. He said it would be easier to change the Budget Specialist's hours versus changing the pay rate. He said the alternative would be to hold a Special Election and have candidates run from the floor.

Pratima KC asked if the Senate needs to pass both Executive Committee recommendations or if the Senate could pass only 1 of them.

A.J. Balatico said the recommendations are sequential, and that to pass recommendations 2 and 3, the Senate would need to pass recommendation 1.

Pratima KC (Environmental and Forest Sciences) asked for clarification on the bylaw being suspended.

Jack Flesher explained that the bylaw being suspended requires GPSS to hold a Special Election to replace the resigned Senator within the next 2 Senate meetings. He said this procedure would require the Elections Committee to develop and distribute the rules for the Special Election. He said that if the Senate fails to elect a replacement Officer, the Executive Committee will appoint one. He said the Executive Committee recommends not making the Senate hold a Special Election or replace the Officer, which would help GPSS save money. He said the Executive Committee does not believe it is in the best interest of the Senate to go right into the Special Elections procedures.

A.J. Balatico said GPSS would save \$24,000 in personnel costs.

Tobin Wainer (Astronomy) asked if a specially elected VP of Finance would only serve the rest of this academic year, or if the specially elected VP of Finance would continue serving into the next academic year.

A.J. Balatico said the specially elected VP of Finance would only stay serve the end of this academic year.

Mykhail Lembke (Public Administration) voiced support for the Executive Committee's recommendations. He said rejecting the recommendations would mean that the Senate would hold a special election and the general election at the same meeting.

A.J. Balatico said the Executive Committee is recommending that the VP of Finance position remain vacant until the Summer.

Pratima KC said she recommends permanently increasing Budget Specialist position hours from 15 to 19 hours.

A.J. Balatico said the issue of hours and pay of office staff was already voted on in the GPSS budget.

Matthew Moran discussed the logistical issues of holding a special election. He explained that Officer salary and the tuition waiver are complicated issues.

A.J. Balatico said that the specially elected VP of Finance's salary would need to be pro-rated.

Daniel Cook (History) moved to vote on the Executive Committee's recommendations. **Maeve Riley (Drama)** seconded. No objections. Motion passed. 7:07pm

Jack Flesher explained the voting procedures.

30-0-1 recommendations passed. 7:09pm

11. [Information] Senator of the Month 7:09pm

Matthew Moran announced Jasper Bang as Senator of the Month for February 2024.

Noah Nguyen (Materials Science and Engineering) mentioned that the Senator of the Month proclamations are on the website.

Matthew Moran announced Derek Crescenti as Senator of the Month for March 2024.

Matthew Moran said that Senators can nominate for Senator of the Month on the GPSS website.

12. [Information] GPSS Workshop 7:15pm

Jack Flesher explained the workshop and Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis.

Raj Dewangan (Real Estate) said community is a strength in GPSS.

Ella Spurlock (Chemistry) said a weakness is a lack of incentives for Senators.

Mykhail Lembke (Public Administration) said an opportunity was Senator outreach to departments.

George Fennell (Material Science and Engineering) said a lack of institutional knowledge is a threat.

Gillian Whelan (MLIS) said that the hybrid format made Senate meetings more accessible. She said faulty links to Senate meetings and communicating the scope of Senator responsibilities were weaknesses. She said hearing more from other Senators in different programs is an opportunity. She said Senator turnover is a threat.

Raj Dewangan (Real Estate) said the shortage of future funds due to restricted funding from the Student Activities Fee (SAF) is a threat.

Hannah Shipman (Aeronautics and Astronautics) said the Diversity Committee and existing interdepartmental groups were strengths. She said the inability of committees to meet quorum was a weakness. She said putting events on website calendar is an opportunity.

Beth Fawcett (Chemistry) said the ability to make decisions that impact what graduate students pay for education is an opportunity. She said the lack of a training method for regular Senators and committee positions is a threat.

Maeve Riley (Drama) said friendship is a strength.

13. [Information] Adjournment 7:59pm

The Senate motioned to adjourn the meeting through unanimous proclamation. No objections. Motion passed. 7:59pm

Meeting minutes prepared by Daniel Cook, GPSS Senate Clerk.