



University
of Vermont



Tuesday, March 19, 2024, Time: 7:00 pm

Recording Link: [Graduate Student Senate Meeting Recording](#)

In attendance

Senators: Alison Hall, Anthony Barrows, Carlos Amissah, Daniel Peipert, Diego Javier-Jimenez, Emily McDonnell, Gift Omoruyi, Goodness Rex Nze-Igwe, Jenan Husain, Joy Emmanuel, Matthew Breunig, Mona Davoudimehr, Muhammad Adil, Niara Hicks, Pawan Bastola, Shashank Poudel, Taylor Kocian, Vanessa Ballard.

Guests: Baxter Worthing, Jacob Dearborn, Mandy Nix, Neil Traft, Paola Pena, Rigo Melgar, Rubaina Anjum

Sam Brewer,

Executive Council Attendees: Cara Simone, Ijaz Ul Haq, Masoumeh Khodaverdi, Omid Sedighi, Yasaman Pedari.

25 total numbers attended.

Agenda:

GSS Senate Agenda for the Second Spring Meeting: March 19th, 2024

- I. Roll Call
- II. Call to Order

The meeting at 7:00 pm was called to order by Vice-President, Cara Simone

- III. **Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes (Feb 27, 2024)**

Goodness Nze-Igwe moved the motion to approve the previous minutes, it was seconded by Daniel Peipert and Diego Javier-Jimenez.

- IV. Officers Reports
 - a. **President**

The President of GSS and Chair of the Student Affairs Committee, Ijaz UI Haq provided updates regarding the upcoming 2024-2025 Graduate Student Senate (GSS) Executive Council elections, encouraging participation and healthy competition. He mentioned plans to print posters to attract diverse nominees for Executive Council roles. Additionally, he highlighted the responsibilities of Eboard members and the transition to a new office space. Ijaz emphasized the importance of supporting the incoming Eboard with funds and addressing graduate students' needs. He also discussed the upcoming GSU union elections, stressing the significance of voting and absentee options. He urged active participation and making a difference through engagement in the democratic process.

b. Vice President

Cara Simone provided updates on survey results, mentioning the closure of the survey on March 18th and ongoing work on data representation. She discussed the success of the survey, noting the response rate. Cara also discussed the diversity in names and budgets of other graduate student organizations from other universities suggesting that GSS might consider changing their name to better represent the students they serve. She also highlighted these organizations' interesting allocation of funds, including support for childcare and conference attendance. Additionally, Cara presented some key findings from the survey, such as housing satisfaction rates, advisor support, post-graduation resources, and mental health concerns among students. She mentioned plans to analyze the survey data further and emphasized the importance of addressing these issues. Cara suggested making the survey an annual event and emphasized the importance of tailoring questions to better understand graduate students' needs. She also mentioned sharing the survey data with the next GSS Executive Board for better analysis. Finally, she mentioned meeting with the UVM Foundation to explore fundraising opportunities for clubs in the upcoming year.

Cara encouraged participation in upcoming events, such as the annual awards ceremony on April 27 and a trivia event (April 3) for the graduate and professional student appreciation week. She provided details about these events and expressed enthusiasm for participation. Cara also gave an overview of other upcoming events, including Orlando's night (March 22), coffee breaks 6 (April 2), and a ladies' bowling night at Spare Time (April 5).

Cara also addressed logistical matters, including communication protocols for submitting resolutions beforehand to her for presentation at the Senate. She emphasized the commitment of the current Executive Council to facilitate a smooth transition to the next board (2024-2025).

c. Treasurer

Yasaman Pedari, the GSS Treasurer, provided an overview of the GSS budget, stating that GSS generates nearly \$16,000 per semester, with approximately \$14,000 rolling over from the previous year. She detailed the expenditures, including coffee hours, retreats, professional development series, events such as trivia night and the GSS award ceremony, and stipends. She mentioned funding for student organization sponsorships and highlighted an upcoming vote

on funding for the Career Mobility Club Workshop, which would exceed the proposed budget for sponsorships (asking for \$1000-see Table 1). Yasaman emphasized the need for careful consideration due to the expenditure of all revenue for the semester and the use of rollover funds from the previous year.

Table 1. GSS Spring Budget

Social events	
Coffee hours 1	\$449.92
Coffee hours 2	\$449.92
Coffee hours 3	\$449.92
Coffee hours 4	\$495.92
Coffee hours 5	\$495.92
Coffee hours 6	\$495.92
Coffee hours 7	\$495.92
GSS Spring retreat	\$1268
Board room cafe	\$853.58
Orlando's March 22	\$1200
Yoga event	\$70
Ladies Night Bowling	\$485.5
Trivia Lunch	\$300
GSS Awards Ceremony	\$1500
Club Sponsorship	
Professional developmental series	\$362.4
CMC club &MRS	\$98.67
SOTA club	\$104.69
MSA Iftar	\$250
Public forum	\$500
Rethinking Economics	\$500
Grades give back	\$250
Career Mobility	\$150
Career Mobility Annual workshop	\$1000
Wellness and engagement funds	\$500
Food sharing	\$250
Stipends	\$4250
Student organization sponsorship	\$2000
Office Supplies	\$1000
Proposed budget	\$15837.42
Revenue	\$160077
Spent so far	\$15622.92
Remaining Balance	\$14614.08

Taylor Kocian asked about the rollover budget, questioning if it indicated that GSS didn't spend \$14,000 of its budget last year. Yasaman clarified that the majority of the rollover was due to the impact of COVID-19, explaining that fewer events were held during that period, resulting in accumulated funds. She acknowledged uncertainty but speculated that COVID-related circumstances contributed to the surplus.

Daniel Peipert asked about the previous expenditure on GSS coffee breaks before transitioning to Sodexo. Yasaman confirmed that they used to spend \$300 per coffee break but are currently spending \$500 per event. She explained that the increase occurred during a transition period so that Eboard members no longer need to concern themselves with this aspect.

Anthony Barrows moved the motion to approve the reports, it was seconded by Jenan Husain.

VI. Committee Reports

a. Standing Committee reports

Events Committee

Niara Hicks from the Events Committee has announced two upcoming events. The first event is Orlando's event, scheduled for Friday, March 22nd, from 6 to 9 PM at downtown Orlando. Food will be provided, catered by American Flatbread. The second event is Ladies Bowling Night at Spare Time in Colchester, scheduled for Friday, April 5th. This event includes appetizers and access to arcade games. It is open to the first 30 grad students who sign up via the provided link.

Emily McDonnell asked if it's possible to bring partners, significant others, or friends to the upcoming events, expressing uncertainty about the eligibility beyond grad students. Yasaman clarified that since the events are paid for from the GSS budget on a per-person basis, attendees can bring guests, but for certain events like bowling night, separate tickets might be required for guests. Emily further inquired about events like Orlando's, noting that many peers might prefer attending with a partner. Yasaman agreed, acknowledging the likelihood of attendees bringing partners to such events.

VI. Club Reports

a. **SACNAS Club**

Paola Pena, Ph.D. Candidate in the CMB program and the current President of UVM SACNAS (Society for the Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science) provided an overview of UVM SACNAS activities over the past year, emphasizing its inclusivity and goal of increasing diversity in STEM. Paola highlighted the organization's growth and diverse membership, including graduate students, postdocs, staff, faculty, and undergraduates. She discussed various events and collaborations aimed at community building and professional development, such as recruiting events, general body meetings, workshops, and attendance at the SACNAS National Diversity in STEM conference. Paola also outlined upcoming events and future directions for the organization, expressing optimism about its continued success under the next Eboard.

VI. Club Reports

a. **Career Mobility Club Funding Request**

Jacob Dearborn presented the proposal for funding for the Career Mobility Club's annual workshop, emphasizing the need to convey soft skills for professional development. The funding request amounted to \$1000. He outlined the budget, which allocated \$250 each for speaker honorariums, aiming to attract established speakers like Lindsey Goodwin from Champlain College and Beth Martell, who conducts a Communication Skills Workshop series. Additionally, the budget included provisions for snacks, refreshments, and prizes as incentives to encourage student attendance. Jacob noted that the workshop was a collaborative effort with the Professional Development Committee.

Anthony Barrows highlighted the collaborative efforts between the Career Mobility Committee and the GSS Professional Development Committee, emphasizing the alignment of their missions. He expressed optimism about achieving a healthy turnout of 60 participants and urged consideration of the request, despite its relatively large amount.

Cara initiated the voting process for the funding request of \$1000 for the Career Mobility Committee. Senators and voting Executive Council members (Secretary, Treasurer, and communications director) were asked to raise their hands if they were in favor of the funding. After a count by Masoumeh Khodaverdi, it was determined that 15 individuals supported the funding out of a total of 18 Senators present. However, there was a discussion about the requirement for approval, with Anthony Barrows suggesting a clarification of whether it required two-thirds of the quorum or two-thirds of the voting members present at the meeting. Ijaz provided clarification that it should be two-thirds of the voting members present at the meeting. Cara then confirmed that there were 18 Senators present, and Masoumeh Khodaverdi reconfirmed the count of 15 individuals in favor of the funding request for the GSS Career Mobility Club.

III. New Business:

a. Voting on the Resolution 2024-2-06

Cara announced [Resolution 2024-2-06](#) resolution during the meeting, she proceeded to explain the resolution, which involved increasing the fee for graduate students each semester to hire a half-time employee for logistics support. She emphasized the importance of stability and continuity for the organization. After clarifying the details of the resolution, she called for a vote, asking Senators to raise their hands if they were in favor of the resolution. Finally, Masoumeh Khodaverdi noted the positive response to the fee increase, with 16 out of 18 present senators raising their hands in support, and no opposition, indicating its passage.

The meeting was suggested to be extended by Taylor Kocian for 10 minutes and was seconded by Diego Javier-Jimenez, Matthew Breunig, and Daniel Peipert.

b. Resolution 2024-3-19

Resolution 2024-3-19 was sent to the Senate today (March 19), by senators Shshank Poudel, Toyib Aremu, and Alison Hall. The resolution is a call upon the University of Vermont's President and Board of Trustees to release a public report detailing the progress made toward its fossil fuel divestment commitments.

Furthermore, Shshank Poudel mentioned that the only information available from UVM so far is a 2020 report detailing their actions during that year. Since then, there have been no updates except for a brief mention on their website stating that they have either exceeded or reached their commitment sooner than expected, without providing any further details. As a student in the Department of Sustainable Development Policy, Economics, and Governance, Shshank emphasized our right to know how our university is committed to its goals, particularly given recent expenditures such as the \$150,000 spent on a new logo, which should align with its dedication to people and the planet. This serves as the rationale for raising the issue, and it also builds upon a previous GSS bill that was approved by the Senate.

The Senate voted on the bill to hold the board of trustees responsible for their commitment to divest from fossil fuels. 14 senators voted out of 18.

Ijaz moved a motion to increase the time. Diego Javier-Jimenez: Motion to extend the meeting by 10 minutes, seconded by Taylor Kocian.

c. Statement in Support of GSU

Anthony Barrows emphasized his support for GSU by stating that “The Graduate Student Senate (GSS) has a responsibility to act in the best interests of all UVM graduate students. Graduate students with academic appointments at the University of Vermont can vote on Wednesday, March 26th, and Thursday, March 27th, 2024, to be represented by UAW as a collective bargaining unit. We submit that the right to collective bargaining is fundamentally in the best interests of graduate student workers.

Therefore, we support UVM Graduate Students United (GSU-UAW2322) and encourage all eligible voters to vote YES to both questions on March 26th and March 27th.

Anthony recommended reviewing the Union’s FAQ website and contacting a member of the organizing committee for further information. Finally, he requested the Senate’s approval to distribute the statement to the student body, particularly graduate students, by the end of the week.”

Cara mentioned that the GSS has a resolution from 2020 supporting the Union, which is on record on the [GSS website](#). Anthony Barrows expressed his willingness to provide an abbreviated version of the GSU support resolution for distribution to the Senators via email. Daniel Peipert raised concerns about the optics of voting by email, emphasizing the importance of upholding Senate attendance and adherence to the organization’s laws. However, Ijaz UI Haq emphasized the urgency of swift action due to the upcoming GSU elections on March 26 and 27. Ijaz suggested conducting the vote via email, considering that many senators had already departed from the meeting due to its extension.

d. Resolution 2024-4-09

Rigo Melgar from the Rubenstein School has proposed **Resolution 2024-4-09**, which is attached here. The resolution underscores the significance of open-access publications in fostering the professional growth of graduate students at the University of Vermont. It emphasizes the necessity to finance open-access publications to eliminate obstacles to information access, advance inclusive education, and disseminate knowledge worldwide.

Cara will email it out to the Senators so that they can consider it, and we’ll put it to a vote on April 9th.

e. Upcoming GSU Election

Mandy Nix and Baxter Worthing discussed the GSU election, which, as they stated, represents the culmination of nearly four years of organizing since 2020. It culminates on Tuesday, March

26th, and Wednesday, March 27th, in person on the 2nd floor of the Davis Center. They mentioned that graduate student workers can walk in and vote in a fully anonymous official election conducted by the Vermont Labor Relations Board. There will be two questions on the ballot, addressing not only the unionization of students but also ensuring organizational support and legal resources through an affiliate union, which have contributed to the successes of staff and faculties at the bargaining table. They encouraged everyone to vote yes on both questions.

Adjournment

Adjournment 8:44 pm

Next Meeting: April 9, 2024, 7:00 - 8:00 PM

Mode: Online, Microsoft Teams

Adopted unanimously by the Graduate Student Senate on March 19, 2024

Bill: Resolution 3.19.2024

Resolution: To Call Upon the University of Vermont's President and Board of Trustees to Release a Public Report Detailing the Progress Made Towards its Fossil Fuel Divestment Commitments as Per GSS Bill 2 (see Appendix) of 2020.

Sponsors: Shashank Poudel (SDPEG), Toyib Aremu (SDPEG), Alison Hall (Biology), Rigo Melgar (RSENr), Rosie Chapina (RSENr)

Co-sponsors: Rethinking Economics UVM, Rubenstein Graduate Student Association (RGSA), Sustainable Development Policy Economics and Governance (SDPEG) Student Club, Society for the Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS)

Whereas, the Graduate Student Senate passed a resolution (Bill 2) on March 4th of 2020 calling for fossil fuel divestment of the University of Vermont's endowment, which included a request that the President and the Board of Trustees release public bi-annual updates "detailing progress made towards full divestment and ensuring that divestment is sustained through future administrations," and;

Whereas, the University of Vermont's Board of Trustees voted unanimously in favor of divesting its endowment from fossil fuels on July 14th of 2020,¹ and;

¹ Wakefield, J.R. 2020. UVM Divests from Fossil Fuels. Available at: <https://www.uvm.edu/news/story/uvm-divests-fossil-fuels>

Whereas, the University of Vermont’s Socially Responsible Investing Advisory Council posted an update on fossil fuel divestment on its website page² in the Spring of 2023, however, they did not release any figures or public reports necessary for transparency and accountability, and;

Whereas, the University of Vermont is undergoing a “brand refresh” with an explicit positioning of “for people and planet” beginning in February 2024,³ and;

Therefore, be it RESOLVED that the graduate students of the university of Vermont call upon the president and the board of trustees to demonstrate their progress towards the climate goals of the university by releasing and presenting a public report detailing how the investment portfolio of the endowment is being divested from fossil fuels. Because the administration has indicated they have the data prepared, we ask that the report be made available by Earth day (April 22 2024), and;

Be it further RESOLVED that the University of Vermont Graduate Student Senate urges the President and Board of Trustees to release bi-annual updates (Spring and Fall), available to the public, detailing progress made towards full divestment and ensuring that divestment is sustained through future administrations.

Appendix: Final Resolution Passed by the Graduate Student Senate on March 4th of 2020

Bill: 2

Resolution: To Call Upon the University of Vermont to Divest its Endowment from the Top 200 Publicly Traded Fossil Fuel Companies.

Sponsors: Rosie Chapina (RSEN), Chris Halstead (RSEN), Rigo Melgar (RSEN)

Whereas, the University of Vermont’s President’s recent visit to Antarctica, as a member of the National Science Board, confirms the serious consequences of the climate emergency by stating, “understanding how—and how fast—the glaciers and ice sheets are moving, melting and growing in this remote part of the planet is of great consequence for all of us,”^[1] and;

Whereas, climate scientists worldwide overwhelmingly agree that disruptive climate change is happening due to anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions,^[2] and that the burning of fossil fuels is by far the largest current source of these emissions,^[3,4] and;

Whereas, global average annual temperatures are already 1°C above pre-industrial temperatures^[5] and the Northeastern United States is projected to reach 2°C above pre-industrial average annual temperatures by 2035 if anthropogenic emissions are not reduced,^[6] and;

Whereas, projected, unmitigated climate change is expected to have negative economic impacts on the outdoor recreation, agriculture, fishing, forestry, and other resource-based industries in the Northeastern United States,^[7] and;

² https://www.uvm.edu/sriac/past_actions#:-:text=Fossil%20Fuel%20Divestment%20Update%20Spring,allowed%20us%20to%20do%20so.

³ <https://www.uvm.edu/stratcomm/2024-brand-refresh>

Whereas, production and consumption of fossil fuel products disproportionately pollute communities of color,^[8] and climate change itself disproportionately harms communities of color,^[9] and;

Whereas, the vision statement of the University of Vermont holds a commitment to the environment, incorporates as its mission to educate students on responsibility to the global community and ethical behavior, and;

Whereas, the University of Vermont’s Board of Trustees has repeatedly recognized respect, integrity, justice, and responsibility as core values of its mission,^[10] yet;

Whereas, the University of Vermont has continued to invest its endowment in fossil fuels resulting in a break from its mission statement, and thus tarnishing its reputation as a sustainable and just educational institution, and;

Whereas, as of 2020, more than 1176 institutions and 58,000 individuals worldwide, including major educational institutions in the U.S. – such as University of California, Boston University, Columbia University, Georgetown University, Yale University, University of Maryland, University of Washington, Syracuse University and Middlebury College, among many others, – have already committed to divest approximately \$12 trillion of their investments in fossil fuels to mitigate the negative effects of climate change,^[11] and;

Whereas, climate mitigation and adaptation require institutional suppression of the fossil fuel industry,^[12] not individual action alone, and;

Whereas, as Bill McKibben stated it in 2012, at the beginning of what has now become a global divestment campaign backed by the UNFCCC,^[13, 14] “it just doesn’t make sense for universities to invest in a system that will leave their students no livable planet to use their degrees on.”^[15]

Therefore, be it RESOLVED that the graduate students of the University of Vermont call upon university administration to extend their leadership on climate change to the university’s investment portfolio and call upon the Board of Trustees to immediately stop any new investment in fossil fuel companies and ensure that within 3 years none of its directly held or commingled assets include holdings of either public equities or corporate bonds in fossil fuel companies as determined by the Fossil Free Indexes list,^[16] and;

Be it further RESOLVED that the University of Vermont Graduate Student Senate urges the President and Board of Trustees to prepare a report and options for investing the endowment in a way that further maximizes the positive impact of the fund by seeking out investments in opportunities to limit the effects of burning fossil fuels or help to mitigate its effects including, but not limited to, green bonds, mass transportation systems, renewable energy, sustainable companies or projects, and sustainable communities, and;

Be it further RESOLVED that the University of Vermont Graduate Student Senate urges the President and Board of Trustees to release bi-annual updates, available to the public, detailing progress made towards full divestment and ensuring that divestment is sustained through future administrations.

References

[1] <https://www.uvm.edu/uvmnews/news/science-south-pole>

- [2] Cook, J., Oresekes, N., Doran, P.T., et al., 2016, Consensus on consensus: a synthesis of consensus estimates on human-caused global warming. *Environmental Research Letters*, v. 11, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1088/1748-9326/11/4/048002>
- [3] Boden, T.A., Marland, G., Andres, R.J., 2015, Global, Regional, and National Fossil-Fuel CO2 Emissions, Carbon Dioxide Information Analysis Center, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, U.S. Department of Energy, Oak Ridge, Tenn, U.S.A.
- [4] Le Quere, C., Andrew, R.M., Canadell, J.G., et al., 2016, Global Carbon Budget 2016, *Earth System Science Data*, v. 8, p. 605-649, doi:10.5194/essd-8-605-2016.
- [5] NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information, State of the Climate: Global Climate Report for Annual 2019, published online, January 2020, retrieved on January 30, 2020.
- [6] Karmalkar, A.V., and Bradley, R.S., 2017, Consequences of global warming of 1.5C and 2C for regional temperature and precipitation changes in the contiguous United States. *PLOS ONE*, v. 12, n. 1, doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0168697.
- [7] Dupigny-Giroux, L.A., Mecray, E.L., Lemcke-Stampone, G.A., et al., 2018, Northeast. In *Impacts, Risks, and Adaptation in the United States: Fourth National Climate Assessment, Volume II* [Reidmiller, D.R., Avery, C.W., Easterling, D.R., Kunkel, K.E., Lewis, K.L.M., Maycock, T.K., and Stewart, B.C. (eds.)]. U.S. Global Change Research Program, Washington, DC, USA, pp. 669-742, doi:10.7930/NCA4.2018.CH18
- [8] <https://www.pnas.org/content/116/13/6001>
- [9] <https://www.naacp.org/issues/environmental-justice/>
- [10] <https://www.uvm.edu/trustees/policymanual/VIII%20B%20Diversity.pdf>
- [11] <https://gofossilfree.org/divestment/commitments/>
- [12] Klein, N., 2015. *This changes everything: Capitalism vs. the climate*. Simon and Schuster.
- [13] <https://gofossilfree.org>
- [14] <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/mar/15/climate-change-un-backs-divestment-campaign-paris-summit-fossil-fuels>
- [15] <http://math.350.org/>
- [16] <http://fossilfreeindexes.com/research/the-carbon-underground>

Bill: Resolution 4.9.2024

Resolution: To Call Upon the University of Vermont's President, Board of Trustees, and Graduate College to set up an open access publication fund for graduate students.

Sponsors: Toyib Aremu (SDPEG), Alison Hall (Biology), Rigo Melgar (RSENr), Mandy Nix (RSENr), Shashank Poudel (SDPEG)

Co-sponsors: Rethinking Economics UVM, Rubenstein Graduate Student Association (RGSA), Sustainable Development Policy Economics and Governance (SDPEG) Student Club, Society for the Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS), Indian Subcontinental Student Association (ISSA)

Whereas, open access publications are an essential requisite for the professional development and advancement of today's and tomorrow's graduate students at the University of Vermont, and;

Whereas, there is a growing need to fund open access publication to reduce critical barriers to information access, reimagine the onto-epistemological foundations of exclusion in higher education, and share knowledge emerging from the University of Vermont with the world, and;

Whereas, knowledge improves with access and use, not in isolation but in communities of learning, making it imperative to collectively fund open access journals and publications at the University of Vermont,^{4,5} and;

Whereas, as Donella Meadows, a pioneer of systems thinking and sustainability, stated: "Missing information flows is one of the most common causes of system malfunction. Adding or restoring information can be a powerful intervention, usually much easier and cheaper than rebuilding physical infrastructure,"⁶ and;

Whereas, the Covid-19 pandemic and the intertwined social and ecological crises that we now face require us to rethink and overcome the privatization of knowledge because "treating knowledge as a commons and a public good is much more likely to deliver efficient outcomes for the entire global population,"⁷ and;

Whereas, the mission of the University of Vermont states that its goal is: "To create, evaluate, share, and apply knowledge and to prepare students to be accountable leaders who will bring to their work dedication to the global community, a grasp of complexity, effective problem-solving and communication skills, and an enduring commitment to learning and ethical conduct,"⁸ and;

⁴ [Kubiszewski, I., Farley, J., & Costanza, R. \(2010\). The production and allocation of information as a good that is enhanced with increased use. *Ecological Economics*, 69\(6\), 1344-1354.](#)

⁵ [Farley, J., & Kubiszewski, I. \(2015\). The economics of information in a post-carbon economy. In P. W. Elliott & D. H. Hepting \(eds\), *Free Knowledge: Confronting the Commodification of Human Discovery* \(pp. 199–222\). University of Regina Press.](#)

⁶ Meadows, D. H. (2008). *Thinking in systems: A primer*. Chelsea green publishing.

⁷ [Hensher, M., Kish, K., Farley, J., Quilley, S., & Zywert, K. \(2020\). Open knowledge commons versus privatized gain in a fractured information ecology: lessons from COVID-19 for the future of sustainability. *Global Sustainability*, 3, e26.](#)

⁸ University of Vermont's Mission and Vision: <https://www.uvm.edu/mission-and-vision>

Whereas, the University of Vermont has repeatedly recognized respect, integrity, justice, and responsibility as core values of its mission, and;

Whereas, providing funding for open access publications will enable the University of Vermont to fulfill its mission by helping heal the information inequity associated with closed-system publications and privatized knowledge, which gatekeeps peoples around the world from accessing information blocked by paywalls, and;

Whereas, graduate students come from and conduct research in parts of the world where information inequity issues are prevalent, and both the graduate student researchers and the communities they conduct collaborative research with will benefit from open access to the research and knowledge that we co-create, and;

Therefore, be it RESOLVED that the graduate students of the University of Vermont call upon the President, the Board of Trustees, and Graduate College to establish an open access publication fund, through which graduate students can cover fees to publish their open access research without resource constraints; and develop, deepen, and disperse our and the university's knowledge for the interconnected well-being of people and planet locally to globally, and;

Be it further RESOLVED that the University of Vermont Graduate Student Senate urges the President, Board of Trustees, and Graduate College to engage in public discussions with relevant stakeholders from across the university, including but not limited to UVM graduate students, faculty, research staff, and libraries, to collaboratively (1) explore the critical need for the co-creation of an open access publication fund, and (2) establish open access journals that can be funded in the short- and long-term.