

GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE MEETING MINUTES



The University of Vermont

Date: 11-05-2021

Time: 1500 - 1624

Facilitator: Graduate Student Senate, Microsoft Teams

Approval of Minutes

Minutes from 10/18/21 GSS Meeting were approved

Motion to approve minutes by *Daniel Munteanu*, Seconded by *Michelle Saunders*; no dissent

Executive Board Updates

- ❖ President, Rosie Chapina
 - Discussion of why UVM shuttle cannot continue until midnight. Administration stated that UVM shuttle service is currently experiencing a staff shortage
 - Request for GSS senator to serve on the following external committee(s)
 - Social Responsible Investing Advisory Committee
- ❖ Vice President, Miki Beach
 - Call for senate to focus on promoting a safe space for meetings
 - Provided an overview of the rules of engagement
- ❖ Treasurer, Alison Hall
 - Overview of the 2021-2022 Academic Year GSS Budget, reflected changes voted on by senate at previous meeting
 - Motion to vote on the aforementioned budget (attached) as presented – Motion by Mitchell Joseph, Seconded by Daniel Munteanu
 - Vote approved by general consent, no dissent
- ❖ Communications Director, Irfan Tahir
 - Provided overview of material needed for a club to advertise in the GSS newsletter

Old Business

- ❖ Union Resolution
 - Speakers and discussion limited to 20 minutes as per agenda
 - Amended resolution was distributed to the Senate body prior to meeting, no reading
 - Floor yielded to Baxter Worthing

- Baxter Worthing was not present at the meeting as of 1509
- Floor yielded to Justin Salsbury
 - Discussion of challenges related to the involvement of GSS in union work
- Floor opened to discussion from the General Body
- Motion to bring the resolution to Vote – Motioned by Daniel Munteanu, Seconded by Colin Giles, no dissent
 - Role call vote conducted – **20 yea**, 5 nay, 3 abstain
 - **Vote passes**

New Business

❖ Club Recognition

- Indian Students Association
 - Representative - Danial Waleed
 - No objections from Senate → **Approved**
- Nepali Students Association
 - Representative – Suraj Bhattarai
 - No objections from Senate → **Approved**
- Women in STEM
 - Representative – Rusul Mustafa
 - No objections from Senate → **Approved**
- Career Mobility Committee
 - Representative – Montana Lara
 - No objections from Senate → **Approved**
- Materials Research Society
 - Representative – David Allemeier
 - No objections from Senate → **Approved**
- Rubenstein Graduate Student Association
 - Representative – Abigail Rec
 - No objections from Senate → **Approved**
- SACNAS (Society for the Advancement of Hispanic/Chicanos and Native Americans in Science)
 - Representative – Montana Lara
 - No objections from Senate → **Approved**
- **English Graduate Student Association**
 - Representative – Oliver Creech
 - No objections from Senate → **Approved**
- UVM Cellular Agriculture Club
 - Representative – Irfan Tahir
 - No objections from Senate → **Approved**
- Iranian Students Association
 - Representative – Yasaman Pedari
 - No objections from Senate → **Approved**

Committee Updates

- ❖ Student Affairs
 - No updates – meets as needed
- ❖ Finance Committee
 - Meets to review mini-grant applications (approved those for Fall Semester)
 - Applications open for Spring round of mini-grants
- ❖ Compensation and Benefits Committee
 - Discussion of committee goals/mission
- ❖ Housing Committee
 - Discussion of what was accomplished in 2020-2021
 - Discussion of committee goals/mission
- ❖ Sexual Assault Prevention & Education
 - Discussion of committee goals/mission
 - Promotion of a GSS culture that emphasizes safety and support
- ❖ Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee
 - First meeting on 11/09, update at following meeting
- ❖ Graduate Student Advocacy & Experience Committee
 - Discussion of committee goals/mission
- ❖ Graduate Experience & Connection Committee
 - Discussion of upcoming events, along with goals/mission of committee
 - Inquiry of developing a chair/co-chair directory
 - ACTION ITEM – Patrick Payne, collate the list of committee chairs and cochairs on the website and send a list of the chairs/cochairs to the committees.

Announcements

- ❖ Upcoming professional events
 - Imposter Syndrome Panel (11/17 @ 1730)
- ❖ Senate Meeting Schedule & Modality Survey Results
 - Majority of senators preferred a hybrid option for the meetings
 - Days and times varied among the student body
 - Fall semester schedule been readjusted to reflect the availability that was submitted
 - Open discussion on the challenges of hybrid setting
 - Possible to have a single individual that is responsible for maintaining the online chat
 - Can be challenging to meet during the 7-8pm window for students that are parents, especially of young children
 - Shifting to virtual meetings needs to be ahead of time because of fees associated with canceling meeting spaces

Committee Reports

Committee reports

- Membership
- Volunteers
- Newsletter
- Computer Support

Announcements

Enter Announcements

Next Meeting

Friday, December 3rd | 0900 am, MS Teams

Motion to adjourn the meeting made at 1624, no dissent. Meeting adjourned at 1624

	Budget	Actual	Activity Description		Budget
Senate Meeting (5)				Senate Meeting (5)	
Senate Meeting 1	400	60		Senate Meeting 1	150
Senate Meeting 2	400	250		Senate Meeting 2	150
Senate Meeting 3	150			Senate Meeting 3	150
Senate Meeting 4	150			Senate Meeting 4	150
Senate Meeting 5	150			Senate Meeting 5	150
Coffee Break (3)				Coffee Break (3)	
Coffee Break 1	500	427.85		Coffee Break 1	500
Coffee Break 2	500	422.24		Coffee Break 2	500
Coffee Break 3	500			Coffee Break 3	500
Professional Development Series	500			Professional Development S	500
Hooding Ceremony	1000			Hooding Ceremony	1000
Fall Senators Retreat	1,200	851.08		Spring Senators Retreat	1,200
Fall Social Events (6)				Spring Social Events (6)	
Fall social event 1	1000	1000	Ax Throwing	Spring social event 1	1000
Fall social event 2	500	896.97	BBQ	Spring social event 2	500
Fall social event 3	500	148.48	Soccer	Spring social event 3	500
Fall social event 4	500	486	Apple Picking	Spring social event 4	500
Fall social event 5	500	420	Corn Maze	Spring social event 5	500
Fall social event 6	500		Movie Night	Spring social event 6	500
GSS public forum	500			GSS public forum	500
Grads Give Back (3)	250			Grads Give Back (3)	250
Wellness and Engagement fund	1,000			Wellness and Engagement f	1,000
food sharing	5500			food sharing	5500
resource fair	1000	1384		resource fair	1000
stipends (fall)	4250			stipends (spring)	4250
Student org sponsorships	2000			Student org sponsorships	2000
gss diversity enhancement fund	500			gss diversity enhancement f	500
office supplies	1000			office supplies	1000

Attachment 1: Graduate Student Senate budget for 2021-2022 academic year

Resolution in Support of Graduate Assistant Unionization

Whereas, graduate assistants provide critical work to the University of Vermont through excellent teaching of thousands of undergraduate students and innovative research that helps to win more than \$191 million per year in grants and contracts [1].

Whereas, the ability of the University of Vermont to achieve R1 status depends on UVM's ability to recruit and retain the best and brightest graduate assistants , as well as provide competitive and stable funding and benefits.

Whereas, the minimum graduate assistant (PhD) stipend at the University of Vermont does not constitute a living wage [2] in Burlington; and the University of Vermont ranks in the bottom third among PhD granting institutions when cost of living is taken into account [3].

Whereas, the cost of the comprehensive fee charged to graduate assistants ranks among the highest when compared to University of Vermont's peer and peer-aspirant institutions [3].

Whereas, 63% of all graduate students receive no stipend at all [3].

Whereas, the results of a survey conducted by the UVM Office of Student and Community Relations in 2017 found that roughly 20% of surveyed UVM graduate students are experiencing food insecurity [4].

Whereas, available data on the impacts of graduate unions support that unionization does not negatively impact on the University's bottom line and increased satisfaction in the relationships between advisors and their students [5].

Whereas, existing data also suggests that graduate unionization results in improvements in health care coverage for all graduate assistants, increased funding for childcare and parental leave, lower fees, and higher stipends that include yearly salary increases tied to costs of living [5].

Whereas, unionized graduate assistants report higher levels of personal and professional support, are better compensated, and report similar perceptions of academic freedom compared to non-unionized graduate assistants [5].

Attachment 2: Passed version of the GSS unionization resolution; this is a PDF attachment that can be accessed through a double click.