**The Graduate and Professional Student Senate**

Meeting of 27 November 2024 at 5:00pm

In-person and remotely via Zoom

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

Richard Schure, GPSS President

Kana Saarni, GPSS Vice President of Internal Affairs

Mykhail Lembke, GPSS Vice President of External Affairs

Edith Dale, GPSS Vice President of Equity & Inclusion

Noah Hough, GPSS Vice President of Administration

Ryan Wicklund, GPSS Vice President of Finance

Annika Peterson, Senate Director

~~Franco Carlos, GPSS Office and Budget Director, Executive Senator~~

Vidya Venkappa, GPSS Web Developer

Ella Spurlock, Executive Senator

Francis Cho, Executive Senator

Beth Fawcett, Executive Senator

Pavandeep Josan, Executive Senator

Hannah Shipman, Executive Senator

Gaurav Joshi, Executive Senator

~~Renee Infelise, SAO Advisor~~

~~Christina Cook, SAO Advisor~~

~~Carrie Moore, SAO Advisor~~

Bill Mahoney, Associate Dean of Student and Postdoctoral Affairs

~~Marshall Traverse, SAO Advisor~~

# 1. [Action] Call to Order 5:32 pm

**Richard Schure** called the meeting to order at 5:35pm.

# 2. [Action] Approval of the 25 September Executive Meeting Minutes 5:35pm

**Mykhail Lembke** moved to approve the minutes. Seconded by **Edith Dale**. No objections.

# 2. [Action] Approval of the 6 November Executive Meeting Minutes 5:35pm

**Mykhail Lembke** moved to approve the minutes. Seconded by **Edith Dale**. No objections.

# 3. [Action] Approval of the Agenda 5:35pm

**Mykhail Lembke** moved to approve the minutes. Seconded by **Ryan Wicklund**. No objections.

4. [Information] Announcements 5:35pm

**Mykhail Lembke** said that the RSVP form for Huskies on the Hill will be sent out soon. The event is on February 3rd 8am-5pm; lunch and transportation will be provided. He mentioned that anyone interested in attending should RSVP as soon as possible, as space fills quickly. He spoke about the survey about sharing stories and participation in the Graduate Action Committee. There are various opportunities through the survey, and he encouraged all executive members to share and attend themselves.

**Noah Hough** shared events going on the last week of the quarter. On December 4th, the hot cocoa social, speed friending, and sustained dialogue committee will all be happening right before senate. The winter formal is the following Saturday on December 7th. She mentioned that executive members may send the latest GPSS Newsletter to people in their department.

# 5. [Information] STF Annual Funding Plan

**Richard Schure** said that Kevin Wang, Director of Administration, Tirth Mehta, STF Chair, and Nick Oh, Director of Operations were visiting to speak on the STF Annual Funding Plan.

**Tirth Mehta** introduced himself and his colleagues and provided a background on STF and its Annual Funding Plan.

**Ryan Wicklund** asked if they can track the impact of single versus block awards.

**Tirth Mehta** answered the staff team can track that data and impact. He said that they can talk more during committee meetings, and he explained what the staff team is. He said that they haven’t funded anything this year; student body must pass the funding plan before they can fund anything. He can send over the previous year’s plan if desired.

**Nick Oh** explained the first table on the funding plan; he elaborated on the different in total allocations and expenditures. He spoke on the difference between single and block awards.

**Tirth Mehta** spoke about quarterly fees; he said they are set by the prior year’s committee, then approved by the student body and Board if Regents.

**Nick Oh** continued presenting the table

**Tirth Mehta** brought attention to fee increases. He said that much of these go to paying student employee wages; they have increased because they have added positions and an overall increase in costs. He said that the key takeaway from the funding plan is a goal of giving out $4 million in new awards and grants for FY2025.

**Mykhail Lembke** asked about operating reserves covering a year of block awards and operations. He said he saw an increase by $250,000; he asked if there should be a greater increase since they are trying to pull $500,000.

**Tirth Mehta** answered with a description of their decision making process with how they will use the $500,000.

**Mykhail Lembke** clarified that he worries they’ll spend that money but then the Board of Regents decides to reduce their funding.

**Nick Oh** said that the operating reserve is because of how their revenue comes in—most of it in autumn quarter.

**Mykhail Lembke** asked if intent is to provide vast amount of single awards, it might be premature to offer $50 million in leeway. He pointed out that this approach may not be financially secure.

**Tirth Mehta** said that by expending more than necessary, can tell students they are doing enough to meet their needs

[Action] **Hanna Shipman** moved to extend time by 10 minutes. **Gaurav Joshi** seconded. No objections. 6:02pm

**Gaurav Joshi** asked about benchmarks for the effectiveness of these allocations.

**Tirth Mehta** responded that they have set up committee-approved rubrics and benchmarks.

**Ella Spurlock** said that the language of wanting to spend down the reserve stood out to her. She asked how they will ensure that they do not prioritize spending money to prove increasing the fee is effective and just allocate awards that will impact the community.

**Tirth Mehta** said that the people who make that decision are the committee, not them. He said that $4 million was the standard expenditure level before COVID; he will see if the committee thinks there are proposals that won’t fit in the $4 million budget. He also said that they are not trying to cut into the reserves just to prove that they can.

**Nick Oh** said that they are expecting more proposals, and they already have 20-25 proposals that total $1.2-1.5 million. If they exceed the $4 million figure, then they expect to cut into reserves.

**Kevin Wang** said that more context would be good for this topic if they moved into the rest of the document. Responding to Ella, he said that the goal is to make most impact on campus in a meaningful manner If the $4 million is awarded, that shows strong demand that justifies maintaining and increasing fee in future years. If demand is not there, then there would be no justification.

**Ella Spurlock** cautioned the committee against using the rhetoric of “using the $4 million to raise the fee.” She also followed up on the comment about established demand, and she asked what they plan is for outreach to solicit requests for STF funding allocation requests from people who may not know about it.

**Kevin Wang** said that it is covered later.

**Tirth Mehta** read through the rest of the document.

**Kevin Wang** pointed out that the FY24 in review reward allocation section answers Mykhail’s earlier question.

**Tirth Mehta** said that the biggest goal is proactively and intentionally conducting outreach with measurable outcomes; they hope to enhance student professional readiness. STF is dedicated to funding research and doubling down on graduate student priorities; this may be funding microscopes and other research tools. It is estimated that operation costs are $300k, most of which funds wages and benefits.

**Kevin Wang** spoke about next year and beyond; he mentioned demand through the next two quarters that will inform their presentation to the Board of Regents in the spring. Historically, the STF fee has been $38 per quarter per student; to return to this amount, STF has taken steps as a committee of spending down on reserves. Those funds help to predict demand. He explained allocations tiers and block awards; this shows that STF has a strong and consistent impact through back funding.

**Ella Spurlock** asked about block awards and how they can expand on their process.

**Tirth Mehta** elaborated on this point, discussing annual awards.

[Action] **Mykhail Lembke** moved to extend the time by 5 minutes. **Hannah Shipman** seconded. No objections

**Mykhail Lembke** asked if there were any proposals awarded in Autumn 24

**Tirth Mehta** answered yes.

**Kevin Wang** pointed it out in the doc.

**Mykhail Lembke** asked about funding around administration, speaking on last year’s total cost. He asked why that amount was increasing.

**Tirth Mehta** answered that it is going up because of more staff positions

[Action] motion to approve.

**Hannah Shipman** motioned to approve the STF Funding Allocation Plan. **Beth Fawcett** seconded. No objections. Richard Schure moved it to a vote. No objections. One abstention.

# 6. [Information] GPSS Senate Agenda for December 4

**Noah Hough** shared the senate agenda.

**Richard Schure** opened the floor for discussion.

**Beth Fawcett** said that they need 10 minutes for judicial committee formation since it requires a vote.

**Ella Spurlock** said that she is sponsoring a resolution (co resolution with ASUW). There is a request from Brian for us to have a guest speaker or two to talk in conjunction with the reading of the resolution. They are waiting to give it time, as it is not a topic to be rushed.

[Action] **Mykahil Lembke** moved to approve the December 4 Senate Meeting Agenda. **Gaurav Joshi** seconded. No objections. Richard Schure brought the motion to a vote. No opposition. No abstentions. Motion passed unanimously. 6:32pm

# 7. [Information] Officer Updates 6:35pm

**Edith Dale** said that the Football night and DEI workshop went well. She is now planning a series of workshops that extend beyond DEI. They will involve other schools (ex. Publishing 101, presentation work), job preparation in collaboration with the Foster School and others. The diversity committee met earlier in the day; the first presentation was over zoom for diversity funds, which were approved. She requested anyone wanting funds for a DEI-related event to be put in contact with her. She spoke about future events: yoga relaxation, culture showcase, and a drag brunch.

**Mykhail Lembke** spoke about the now passed legislative agenda, and he said that the legislative reception from the previous week went well. The majority leader and deputy majority leader attended. Upcoming events include Huskies on the Hill (RSVP ASAP). The last LAB meeting of the quarter was held on Monday; the expectation is to set them up again in winter quarter on Mondays.

**Noah Hough** asked for elaboration on jobs available for shadow and interview. She asked who the best people to apply may be.

**Mykhail Lembke** said the job shadow must be in person.

**Noah Hough** shared that she attended the HUB Board of Representatives meeting with Kana; they spoke about how the HUB will upgrade technology in all rooms. There was also discussion on more financial prospects of the HUB. She said that Arts Council Craft and Complain went well with a fun, full table. She spoke about the new senator composition form and that there was another new senator orientation that day; there are currently 94 senators. She said she is working on senate agenda materials and putting together parliamentary procedure materials. She also spoke about working with DEI workshops and scheduling winter events. The website is currently constructed at bare bones; she is putting together content and hopeful for a beta version soon. She also spoke about working on finding more funding resources for GPSS MORE. She would like things to show donors. She has been doing a lot of administrative work lately, but there are a lot of events next week.

**Richard Schure** asked about the form Noah had mentioned.

**Noah Hough** said it is the annual senator composition form. It asks about senator information like their program and career goals. This year, it will include what they have achieved as a member of GPSS.

**Richard Schure** said that the grad school dean is looking to put together something about where grad students ended up after earning their degrees, and he thought the form may be helpful.

**Ryan Wicklund** said that he interviewed all candidates for F&B committee; all are good senators and seemed well-prepared. He said they all had a background in finance, informing his confidence, but they will all need to be individually approved.

Christian Ball; Mykhail moved to confirm; Hannah seconded. No objections. Vote taken. Unanimously in favor. Confirmed.

Franco Carlos; Hannah moved to confirm; Mykhail seconded; No objections. Vote taken. Unanimously in favor. Confirmed.

Pavandeep Josan; Noah moved to confirm; Ella seconded; No objections. Vote taken. Unanimously in favor. Pavandeep Josan abstained. Confirmed.

Henry M.; Hannah moved to confirm; Edith seconded; No objections. Vote taken. Unanimously in favor. Confirmed.

Janet Olaolu; Ella moved to confirm; Pav seconded; No objections. Vote taken. Unanimously in favor. Confirmed.

Abu Bakar; Hannah moved to confirm; Gaurav seconded; No objections. Vote taken. Unanimously in favor. Confirmed.

Kokou Tighankpa; Edith moved to confirm; Mykhail seconded; No objections. Vote taken. Unanimously in favor. Confirmed.

**Ryan Wicklund** said he arranged a meeting with leadership without borders and the purple group. They spoke about how GPSS can fund them in support of the resolution supporting undocumented students.

**Richard Schure** said he is working on ways they can diversify their revenues. He met with Maria Barios to speak about the funding arm of the graduate school. They talked about ways to get GPSS more of an interesting organization to be the recipient of philanthropy and donations from the community. He would like to engage officers in figuring out how they can expand funding and what they would do with it. He spoke about a possible gala event that would speak on what GPSS does for the grad student community. It would expand on the current grants programs and talk about the culture they can build in the graduate community. He said that donors would be interested in the graduate research symposium; he would like to put together a group after winter break.

**Ella Spurlock** said that is a great idea. She said she thinks that GPSS would do well with fundraising, and she loves the idea of inviting potential donors to the research symposium.

**Mykhail Lembke** asked if they are doing senator of the month for November and if it should be included in Richard’s officer updates. He suggested Charles since he is a recently-departed executive senator.

[Action] **Mykhail Lembke** moved to nominate Charles Bugre as November senator of the month. **Ella Spurlock** seconded. No objections. Richard Schure moved the motion to a vote. No opposition. No abstentions.

**Edith Dale** said that she will create a document, so she would like additions to the proclamation.

**Mykhail Lembke** suggested looking at the website since he probably has a profile for being an executive senator.

# 8. [Information] Executive Senator Updates

**Hannah Shipman** said that she has been swamped for a few weeks, but she is working on a resolution to be presented in the new year. This discusses the proposed dock renovations supporting the Washington Yacht Club. The document is in progress, and she hopes to have it ready by the first senate meeting in winter quarter. She also shared that the knitting and book clubs are going well.

**Beth Fawcett** said that she has been working with Alec on a resolution that is specific to request facilities for bidet services on campus to not discriminate against religious requirements. She has created a list of people to reach out to regarding this. She is focusing on training for judicial committee and sent out a When2Meet for scheduling, but she has been buried by academic obligations. She mentioned attending the campus climate survey committee a few weeks ago; the survey committee is trying to come up with a better version of the 2019 survey. This will include updating language, focusing on eliminating items that identify students as international. She shared that she has completed her Sustained Dialogue moderator training; the next committee meeting will be next week before senate.

**Ella Spurlock** mentioned that the Science and Policy Committee has been doing a lot of work and have been meeting every Tuesday from 1-2 in the GPSS office. They set goals: professional development, committee development, and policy work. They hope to collaborate with as many entities as possible; one mentioned example was hosting a workshop on policy writing. She mentioned yhay this could fall in the same vein as the diversity workshop, potentially becoming a broad GPSS workshop series. Involved senators are excited for involvement in the legislative process; Ella and committee members will be looking at relevant bills when prefiling opens on Monday. Once they know the landscape, they will narrow their goals. She also shared that she has been working on two resolutions—one with Alec on using preferred names from DrS communications and another with Joe Rogge involved through the union.

**Pavandeep Josan** spoke about his and Gaurav’s international student work; they have had a couple of meetings so far to seek more resources for international students. He has been working with ASUW and CIRCLE and other student support for input; they have also been working with UW emergency management teams. This is to discuss emergency preparedness for international students (e.g., active shooters and active shooter drills don’t occur outside the U.S.)

**Hannah Shipman** asked if the training and preparedness classes include CPR classes or if they are more focused on an active shooter or evacuation drill.

**Pavandeep Josan** responded that it will be more focussed on active shooter/ evacuation; but he sees that as a good scope to for expansion to help international students to be as prepared as possible.

**Richard Schure** suggested earthquake preparedness.

**Pavandeep Josan** said that the UW Emergency Management page provides a variety of different drills. He will be speaking with them to see which of those they’d be willing to offer as a program for international students.

**Edith Dale** mentioned that there are signs on campus about women’s defense training. She suggested reaching out to have one for anyone, not just women.

**Gaurav Joshi** mentioned that Pavandeep shared most of what they’ve been working together lately. He said he is working to set up an interactive webpage for GPSS, he is pulling up ideas to do so.

**Richard Schure** asked if he is working with Vidya.

**Guarav Joshi** answered that they’ve been working with Noah on it. He mentioned that he will begin working with CIRCLE after the break, and they are yet to approach the UW Alumni Association—they hope to include them in grad student assistance. His notes on emergency preparedness is developing a quick survey on what students need. He plans to read federal guidelines on how to extract data from people and to work on branching support to childcare wellness.

**Mykhail Lembke** said that if it covers stuff like basic needs, a resource would be WASAC’s recent study 2023 into 24.

# 10. [Action] Adjournment 7:40pm

**Mykhail Lembke** motioned to adjourn the meeting. Gaurav Joshiseconded. No objections. **Richard Schure** declared the meeting adjourned at 7:40pm.

Meeting minutes prepared by **Annika Peterson** GPSS Senate Director.