



**GRADUATE & PROFESSIONAL
STUDENT SENATE**

SPECIAL ELECTIONS GUIDE

FOR THE
2026
VICE PRESIDENT
OF
ADMINISTRATION
SPECIAL ELECTION

BECOME A GPSS OFFICER!

On December 3, 2025, after the Vice President of Administration position became vacant, the University of Washington Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS) announced a special election to be held on January 14, 2026, to elect a replacement in accordance with GPSS Bylaws (Art. V, Sec. I, cl. V). This guide has been prepared to support the upcoming Vice President of Administration Special Elections.

Thank you for your interest in being the GPSS Vice President of Administration officer. Serving fellow students is a significant responsibility and working to represent the needs and demands of graduate and professional programs at the University of Washington is an extremely rewarding endeavor.

THE SPECIAL ELECTIONS GUIDE

This special election guide was prepared by the Elections Committee to assist you in developing your campaign. Running for an officer position in the GPSS is designed to be as efficient as possible and should require very little of your time and money. Most candidates limit their campaigns to the candidate materials posted on the GPSS website and a speech at the election meeting, although candidates are free to do more within the limits outlined below.

The GPSS Elections Committee is charged with creating, implementing, and monitoring the election procedures to ensure that this process is fair for all participants. These GPSS Special Elections Rules are derived from the GPSS Constitution and Bylaws. If any material in this packet conflicts with the GPSS Constitution or Bylaws, the Constitution and Bylaws prevail.

Complaints or challenges regarding the Officer Special Elections process or results must be submitted in writing to the Elections Committee Chair (gpsselect@uw.edu) within 72 calendar hours of the adjournment of the Special Elections Meeting on January 14, 2025.

OVERVIEW

The GPSS, composed of approximately 70 registered Senators from a vast array of graduate and professional programs at the UW, is an advocacy organization dedicated to improving graduate and professional student life at the University of Washington. The Senate works to maintain academic freedom for graduate and professional students, improve the quality of graduate instruction, develop and strengthen the University's diversity programs, maintain graduate and professional student representation through appointments to University committees, and ensure that quality student services are maintained at the UW.

The GPSS officers set the organization's goals, implement Senate directives, communicate goals and actions to the University and students, and report on progress toward achieving these directives. To that end, the GPSS Officers hold regular meetings of the Senate, a forum for graduate and professional students to voice their concerns and give direction to the GPSS. GPSS officers are accountable for managing a budget of nearly half a million dollars and ensuring GPSS representation on over 70 University committees. GPSS officers also provide a critical link connecting students, administrators, faculty, community, the state legislature, Congress, and state and national associations such as the Washington Student Association (WSA) and Student Advocates for Graduate Education (SAGE).

To ensure that all officers have the capacity to complete these responsibilities, each position is compensated for working 19.5 hours a week for the entire year, starting in June. Officers earn a wage equivalent to the salary of a TA or RA, receive graduate appointment health insurance, and their tuition is paid by the GPSS. Due to the significant obligations of the positions, officers may not concurrently hold a TA/RA appointment.

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§ 1.1: ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

The Elections Committee plans and orchestrates the annual GPSS Officer Elections.

It currently consists of the following Senators:

- Kylie Jones, **Elections Committee Chair**, School of Public Health, kjones03@uw.edu

- Muhammad Abu Bakar Tariq, **Executive Senator**, College of Built Environments, matariq@uw.edu
- Eli Drake, **Student Senator**, College of Arts and Sciences, Drakeel3@uw.edu
- Andrew Kramer, **Student Senator**, Jackson School of International Studies, awjskr@uw.edu
- Ayush Goyal, **Student Senator**, Foster School of Business, ayush87@uw.edu

The purpose of the Elections Committee is to ensure a fair process for all participants. Please submit all questions or concerns about the elections process to the Elections Committee Chair, gpsselect@uw.edu. Please do NOT contact the GPSS Officers regarding elections procedures; you will be referred to the Elections Committee.

The 2025-26 Elections Committee developed these Special Elections rules based on the rules and experiences of past Elections, the Bylaws and Constitution of GPSS, and a set of values and principles developed by the committee. The rules and processes in this Elections Guide are intended to:

- I. Facilitate legitimacy and transparency for the election itself and for GPSS;
- II. Be fair for candidates and GPSS as an institution;
- III. Be clear and simple to understand, follow, and enforce;
- IV. Be realistic considering GPSS's resources and institutional capacity;
- V. Integrate lessons learned from previous elections to improve upon the Elections process;
- VI. Be generally permissive, prohibiting or limiting conduct only to the extent necessary to serve the Constitution, Bylaws, and these values and principles.

§ 1.2: INDEPENDENT WITNESSES

To ensure complete fairness for all candidates participating in the elections process, the GPSS enlists independent witnesses. For the 2025-26 GPSS Officer Elections, the independent witnesses will be advisors designated by the Associated Director for Student Activities:

- **Christina Coop**, SAO advisor
- **Alan Galvez**, SAO advisor

Challenges to the impartiality of the witnesses must be submitted in writing to the Judicial Committee at least **48 hours** before the Elections Meeting on **January 14, 2026**. To contact the Judicial Committee, communicate with VP of Equity and Inclusion, Pavandeep Josan, at gpssvpei@uw.edu or to the Judicial Committee at gpssjudi@uw.edu.

§2.1: GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

Read the entire Elections Guide, paying particular attention to the GPSS Election Rules.

Familiarize yourself with the agendas and minutes of past GPSS meetings, as well as the GPSS Constitution, By-Laws, Memoranda, and Resolutions. All of these materials are available on the GPSS website (<http://depts.washington.edu/gpss/>) under the About GPSS section.

Attend at least three GPSS chaired meetings during the 2025-26 academic year prior

to the Elections Meeting. At least one of the meetings attended must have been governed by rules of parliamentary procedure. The requirement to attend at least one meeting governed by rules of parliamentary procedure can be satisfied by attending Senate meetings, Executive Committee meetings, and Finance & Budget Committee meetings.

Contact the following GPSS committees for the current meeting times:

- Diversity Committee: contact: gpssvpei@uw.edu
- Judicial Committee: contact: gpssvpei@uw.edu
- Legislative Advisory Board: contact: gpssvpex@uw.edu

§ 2.2: KEY DATES & DEADLINES

For Special Elections, nominations will be received from the floor during the Special Elections Senate meeting. This means there is no nomination deadline until nominations close on the night of the Special Elections.

Reminder: **Special Elections allow for nominations from the floor**, even when there are early candidates for the position up for special election. This differs from the standard GPSS Officer Election procedures.

- **Wednesday, January 14, 2026, 5:30 PM – in HUB 337/Zoom – GPSS Vice President of Administration Special Elections**
The Special Elections will occur at the immediate beginning of the Senate meeting.
- **Wednesday, January 14, 2026** - Digital ballots will be made available online by the GPSS Elections Committee.

All candidates must attend the Special Elections meeting in person or via online conference. After nominations on the floor for the position close, all candidates will participate in a moderated forum to present their qualifications and platform, alongside answer questions from the Senate.

The election results will be announced after the voting window has closed and after the Elections Committee with the two independent witnesses have analyzed the results (within seven (7) days of the Officer Elections Meeting). Any results that are determined to be final during the Officer Elections Meeting will be announced at the end of the meeting.

- **Saturday, January 17, 2026** - Last day to file challenges to the election.

Challenges to the election must occur within **72 hours** of the **adjournment of the election meeting**. All challenges must be submitted to the Elections Committee in a written form (preferably email: gpsselect@uw.edu). Complaints will initially be adjudicated by the Elections Committee, and if necessary, by the Judicial Committee as per the GPSS Bylaws.

§ 3.1: DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS

The GPSS Bylaws, Article V, Section B, outline the general duties of all officers. All the officers are responsible for setting GPSS goals and implementing specific actions based on the directives of the GPSS and the Executive Committee. Officers communicate these directives,

goals, and actions to the graduate and professional student body, University administrators, University faculty, and the community at large. Officers make reports to the Executive Committee and the Senate on progress made toward achieving these directives. A year-end summary report is presented to the Senate. Officers meet with each other on a weekly basis to keep current on the status of GPSS projects.

All officers are paid to work 19.5 hours per week with a minimum of 8 hours in the office (4 hours for the President) between the standard business hours of 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday. The remaining hours may be spent attending meetings and holding appointments outside of the office. The office hours requirement does not apply to the Vice President of External Affairs during the months in which the State Legislature is in session. Officers may not hold any other Graduate Student Service Appointment (herein referred to as a GSSA) while in office. The GPSS Officers typically serve a 12-month term, which begins June 23, 2025 and continues until the end of the 2026 Spring Quarter,, however as this election is to fill a recently vacanted position, this officer term will serve from the 2nd half of January until the end of the 2026 Spring Quarter.

A graduate or professional student may only serve three (3) consecutive terms as an elected GPSS officer, of any officer position. All GPSS officers must attend an orientation by the GPSS advisors, held during the first month of their term. Additionally, the GPSS Bylaws outline the specific duties of each officer.

§ 3.1.1: VICE PRESIDENT OF ADMINISTRATION

Overview of the Role within the Organization: The primary roles of the Vice President of Administration are: 1) to produce and oversee the GPSS records and publications; 2) to facilitate communication among the GPSS, Senators, and their constituents; and 3) to regulate the GPSS Senate membership.

Responsibilities:

- The Vice President of Administration oversees the application for Senate representation as described in the Bylaws.
- The Vice President of Administration maintains the GPSS mailing list through a Senator registration process.
- As the Parliamentarian of the Senate, the Vice President of Administration ensures that GPSS meetings are run in accordance with the procedures set forth in the most recent edition of Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure by Alice Sturgis.
- The Vice President of Administration administers official records and documents associated with the GPSS operations accurately with a uniform filing and archiving system.
- The Vice President of Administration assists senators and other graduate students in submitting resolutions, presenting resolutions for readings at Senate meetings, and forwarding passed resolutions to UW and external parties.
- The Vice President of Administration manages internal and external communications from the GPSS office. These forms of communication include but are not limited to: distributing minutes, agendas, and resolutions timely to Senators; sending updates and announcements from GPSS on events and activities; and developing publications for internal and external audiences from the GPSS.

Internal Committees: Executive Committee

University/External Committees/Affiliates: Board of Student Publications, Committee of Student Records, Office of Ombud

§ 4.1: GPSS SPECIAL ELECTIONS RULES FOR VICE PRESIDENT OF ADMINISTRATION OFFICER CANDIDATES

The GPSS Elections are governed by the GPSS Bylaws. Elections regulations are covered in Article V, Section I, Clause 1-7. A brief summary of these regulations is provided here for your convenience. In the event of any conflict between the rules as published here and the rules published in the Bylaws, those published in the Bylaws take precedence.

§ 4.2: TIME & PLACE

GPSS Officer Elections will be held on **January 14, 2026, at 5:30 PM, HUB 337/Zoom.**

Subject to change in the event of scheduling conflicts. Any changes will be announced by the Elections Committee.

§ 4.3: ELIGIBILITY FOR CANDIDACY

- A candidate must be in good academic standing as defined by the graduate school as maintaining a cumulative 3.00 GPA.
- A candidate need not be a current Senator to be eligible to run, but all candidates must have attended at least three GPSS Senate, Executive, or qualifying committee meetings during the 2025-26 academic year prior to the Elections Meeting.
- A candidate must intend to maintain their status as a graduate or professional student and be on campus throughout the rest of the 2025-26 academic year.
- A candidate cannot be a member of the Judicial or Elections Committee.
- A candidate must be able to work for GPSS for 19.5 hours per week during the remainder of the 2025-26 academic year, including 8 hours per week in the office (4 hours for the President) between the standard business hours of 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday.
- A candidate must be available to attend Senate and Executive meetings and other required meetings.
- Incoming students in a graduate or professional program are also eligible to run for office, but they must provide either proof of registration or proof of enrollment in the upcoming Summer or Fall term to the Elections Committee.

§ 4.4: FILING FOR CANDIDACY

Nominations for the GPSS Vice President of Administration Officer position will be accepted exclusively from the floor during the Special Elections meeting on January 14th. Early submissions and nominations outside of this meeting will not be accepted. All eligible candidates must be nominated from the floor at the meeting.

§ 4.5: CAMPAIGNING

For this Special Election, nominations will not be accepted prior to floor nominations at the Elections Meeting on January 14, 2026. As a result, no individual may be considered a candidate, and no campaigning of any kind may occur, before a nomination is made from the floor on January 14, 2026.

Campaigning may not begin until after a candidate has been formally nominated from the floor at the Elections Meeting. Any activity that could reasonably be interpreted as campaigning prior to nomination, including solicitation of support, endorsements, or promotional activity, is prohibited.

All campaigning from candidates will be conducted with respect for all candidates involved. GPSS holds its officers and elected officials to the highest ethical standards and expects candidates to conduct themselves accordingly.

GPSS, for purposes of publishing and managing elections, does not indicate candidates' affiliated relationships.

Once a candidate has been nominated from the floor, campaigning may include, but is not limited to, the following activities, when undertaken by a candidate or a candidate's affiliates:

- A. Distributing flyers or other printed materials to promote a candidate.
- B. Addressing individuals and/or groups of students to promote a candidate.
- C. Placing signs, sandwich boards, and/or lawn signs with the intent of promoting a candidate.
- D. Use of electronic or social media to promote a candidate.
- E. Any other public activity intended to promote a candidate.
- F. Campaign in the ASUW or GPSS offices;

No candidate or candidate's affiliate may, in the course of campaigning:

- G. Campaign in the HUB;
- H. Store campaign materials within ASUW or GPSS offices;
- I. Campaign at any event or meeting that is conducted, funded, or sponsored by GPSS, with the exception of election forums;
- J. Violate the Facility Services Policy, the Residence Hall Solicitation Policy, or any UW IT policies, including improper posting of campaign signage;
- K. Interfere with the neutrality of the ballot;
- L. Remove or deface any lawfully placed political advertising without authorization;
- M. Interfere with the academic instruction and mission of the University, including:
- N. Campaigning in University buildings without permission of the building supervisor;
- O. Campaigning in a classroom without permission of the instructor; or
- P. Violating any applicable federal, state, or local laws;

Q. Offer unfair advantages or privileges in exchange for support.

Candidates will not appeal to prejudices based on race, creed, sex, caste, national origin, sexual orientation, age, veteran status, disability, or citizenship status. Candidates will not participate in personal vilification, defamation, or other attacks on any opposing candidate, party, or ballot measure advocate.

Candidates will not use their current position within GPSS, including but not limited to Senators, Executive Senators, GPSS Officers, GPSS office employees, and GPSS Committee Chairs, to solicit votes through bribery, threats, or any other improper inducement.

For this Special Election, candidates must not seek or imply endorsements prior to being nominated from the floor at the Elections Meeting on January 14, 2026. Candidates must not imply or refer to the endorsement of a person, group, or entity without that party's consent.

GPSS Senators may endorse candidates in either their official or personal capacity.

Sitting GPSS Officers, Executive Senators, members of the Judicial Committee, and members of the Elections Committee may not endorse candidates in an official capacity, defined as the use of titles or GPSS email, and are strongly discouraged from doing so in a private capacity.

GPSS employees, volunteers, appointees, entities, and committees may not endorse a candidate in an official capacity.

No GPSS equipment or supplies, including employment time or office hours, phones, office machines, office space, or email accounts, may be used for campaign purposes.

§ 4.6: THE BALLOT AND REQUIRED VOTES

The Elections Committee will prepare a digital ballot with the officer positions and ability to rank candidates. Names of candidates running from the floor will be presented at the election meeting and available for voters. All names of candidates will be displayed for senators in randomized order by the position they are running for. The ballot will allow for ranking of the candidates so that an instant run-off can be made until the person with a simple majority of the GPSS Senators who vote synchronously or asynchronously has been determined. Exact details of this process are given in the By-Laws (Article V, Section I, Clause 4). In the event that there is still a tie after the instant run-off, the winner will be determined by a tiebreaker process detailed in the By-Laws.

§ 4.7: ELIGIBLE VOTERS

Senators who have registered with the GPSS Vice President of Administration (gpssvpadmin@uw.edu) by **Monday, January 12, 2026**, and who are in good standing, will be allowed to vote in the Officer Elections. Voters eligible to vote in Officer Elections include

sitting GPSS Officers and all registered Senators, including Executive Senators and all Senators sitting on the Judicial and Elections Committees. Voters can vote at the Elections Meeting synchronously or asynchronously.

Proxies may attend the Elections Meeting, but proxies are not allowed to vote.

§ 4.8: ABSENTEE VOTE

Any registered senator who is unable to attend the elections meeting in real-time may submit their vote through the digital ballot link that will be provided to them via their registered email.

The Elections Committee will keep the identity of each voter confidential; it will only be used to verify that the voter was an eligible voter. The Senate may elect to change the process for determining a winner in the event of a tie by amending the Bylaws before the Elections Meeting.

§ 4.9: THE ELECTIONS MEETING

The Elections Meeting shall convene **January 14, 2026, at 5:30 PM, HUB 337/Zoom**. The Elections Chair shall preside over the Elections portion of the Elections Meeting.

Nominations for the position will only be accepted from the floor after the elections meeting has been opened. No early or pre-filed nominations will be permitted. All candidates nominated from the floor will be ordered alphabetically by last name and will have the same amount of time to deliver a campaign speech. The Elections Committee Chair has discretion in special circumstances.

Prior to the candidate forum, each candidate will receive a set period of time, ranging from 1.5 to 3 minutes, depending on the number of candidates, to deliver an introductory statement. During the candidate forum, each candidate will be given the same amount of time to answer each question. For each question, the order in which candidates respond will be determined in advance by randomization. The Elections Committee will conduct a moderated session by soliciting questions from the Senate via an online platform. The Elections Committee Chair may limit the time that candidates have to answer.

Following the candidate forum session, the Senate will enter deliberations. The Elections Committee Chair will ask all candidates to leave the room. Once all candidates have left the room, the Elections Committee Chair will conduct a moderated deliberation of candidates. During the deliberations, senators and executive officers may discuss the quality and merits of each candidate. Privileged information about candidates will not be permitted by the Elections Committee Chair.

Following a deliberation session, candidates will be invited to return to the senate meeting. The Elections Committee will announce the opening of the ballot and when the ballot is set to close. The Elections Committee will distribute digital ballots to all eligible voters present and will collect complete digital ballots as outlined in the By-Laws. For this Special Election, the Elections Committee has elected to use the voting procedure set forth for standard elections. All eligible voters will receive a link to enter the digital voting platform. Candidates who are eligible to vote are allowed to participate in the vote to represent their constituency.

Voters must rank their preferences for all candidates in each position. Once the Elections Committee has collected the ballots, they will immediately count the votes. The officers are elected by ranked-choice tabulation, as outlined in the By-Laws, where, upon rounds of ranked-choice tabulation resulting in two candidates, a simple majority is needed to secure the position.

The GPSS President will preside over the Senate Meeting while the Elections Committee counts the votes. During this time, the President may not entertain any motions that would interfere with the ability of the Elections Committee to count votes and report results to the Senate before the meeting adjourns. The Elections Committee Chair will continue presiding over the meeting when the Elections Committee is finished counting votes. In the event that no candidate for a particular office receives the required majority vote in a race with three or more candidates, Instant Run-Off Vote Counting procedures will be used, as outlined in Article V, Section H, Clause 4, of the Bylaws. In the event that a winner cannot be determined through Instant Run-Off Vote Counting, the tie shall be resolved by the process prescribed in the Bylaws.

Candidates will respect the privacy of individual voters while ballots are being completed and will not interfere with voters' ability to complete their ballot privately and in a timely manner. Candidates will respect the neutrality of the vote counting process and the role of the Elections Committee to administer the elections process. Candidates will not in any way interfere with the ability of the Elections Committee to count the votes accurately, fairly, and according to the processes prescribed in this Elections Guide, or the Constitution and By-Laws of GPSS.

After the election results have been announced, candidates may challenge the election procedures or results in the process described in Section 4.11 of this Elections Guide.

§ 4.10: ELECTIONS RESULTS

Once the Elections Committee has counted all votes and verified the winner, they will announce the results in person at the Elections Meeting, via email to all Senators, and on the GPSS website.

§ 4.11: ELECTIONS CHALLENGES

Any challenge of the elections procedures or results must be received by the Elections Committee Chair in a written form (including an email) within 48 hours of the adjournment of the Elections Meeting. Challenges are to be sent to the Elections Committee for consideration by the Elections Committee. The Elections Committee will respond to the complaint within seven (7) calendar days and release a written decision to all involved parties as well as the Senate. Further challenges to the elections process must be addressed to the GPSS Judicial Committee within 48 hours following the Elections Committee's decision.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST IN A GPSS OFFICER POSITION. WE LOOK FORWARD TO FAIR AND ORGANIZED ELECTIONS AND WISH YOU THE BEST OF LUCK.