



**Graduate Student Organization  
Senate Meeting Agenda  
May 18th, 2021  
Zoom Meeting @ 5:30-7p.m.**

\*\* Reminder: Alternate senators cannot vote if the primary senator is present.

1. Call to order
  - a. 5:36 PM
2. Adoption of the Agenda
  - a. Motion to amend agenda to move items 12 and 13 to top of agenda
  - b. Motion seconded, and approved
  - c. Agenda adopted with ammendendments
3. Approval of [minutes from previous Senate meeting](#).
  - a. Since this is just a transcript with errors, and not summarized it is difficult to approve
  - b. This gets to a more fundamental issue of minute taking this semester; loop back to this when we get to number 5 on the agenda.
  - c. Tabled until after item 5
4. President's Report: Anand Aiyer
  - a. Meetings with GSO Senators from 17 departments
    - i. Can hold town halls over the summer so that grad students can learn about reimbursement opportunities available to them and utilize funds available this fiscal year
  - b. Board of Appeals Vacancy : Baxter has resigned. Please apply to [president@sbgso.org](mailto:president@sbgso.org) if interested in serving on the BoA.
    - i. Maryam will interview
  - c. Broad based fees meeting
    - i. Await student usage statistics
    - ii. Zared working with Rick Gatteau to try and create that data collection mechanism
  - d. New Covid Testing Center at Chapin Apartments MPR for Graduate Students one day a week.
  - e. Permaculture Gardens
    - i. Volunteer to help grow herbs and vegetables with FSA experts
  - f. Trying to get short term affordable housing for recent graduates

- g. Working with Emily Snyder to get international students to get SSNs
  - h. GRA approval
  - i. GSO Website Redesign : Erik Rasmussen
    - i. Proposal to focus on getting information easily
    - ii. Mobile and tablet support
    - iii. Accessibility
    - iv. Ease of update
    - v. New EC will work with Erik
5. Vice President's Report: Alexia Cosby
- a. Great semester of events including mental health focused events!
  - b. Storytelling event recording is available; Alexia has Zoom links, but will be putting on YouTube
  - c. Shout out to Carol Garcia and other members of EC who have helped!
  - d. Created a line of communication with CPO that future ECs can use to advertise mental health outreach events
  - e. Carol handed out boxed lunches to grad students way to go!
  - f. Order for limited edition GSO T-shirts are being ordered! Thanks to Priscilla Wong for designs
  - g. STEM Mentorship Network program interest forms coming out
6. Treasurer's Report: RJ Wuagneux
- a. State of finances
    - i. Current budget
      - 1. Processed a lot of vouchers since last meeting (April 20th meeting, not emergency meeting)
        - a. Many of these are in the Rec: Cultural and Sporting Lines and Professional Development
        - b. CRF Applications being processed and most already uploaded into CampusVine
      - 2. Feel free to ask any questions
    - ii. Electronic transfer
      - 1. Fully up and running; now doing batch transfers
      - 2. Recipient's info is stored in CSV doc for future use and seamless future dispersal
      - 3. Recipients of funds must have a US bank account AND US phone number
      - 4. If recipient does not have US bank account AND US phone number, then a check is issued; maintaining previous processes with the addition of electronic transfer

5. Charles (Speaking as Office Manager): point of clarification; students also need current email address for this electronic transfer (phone and email serve as authentication for each other)
6. What is the extent of the information being stored in the CSV?
  - a. Phone number, and email
7. How do we correlate the bank details with the phone number and email?
  - a. The fiscal agent/Chase Bank takes care of this step
8. Can people be reimbursed via paper check if preferred?
  - a. Yes, students or speakers can request a paper check instead
- iii. Raised \$1478 on Giving Day! Thank you to all the EC members who helped with this, and it will be continued and a fairly hands off process moving forward; number will hopefully be going up from here on out
- b. New fiscal agent: Dan Cronin
  - i. Instilling new processes because the old fiscal agent was not an accountant and was misleading us
  - ii. If you are the steward of the funds for speakers as outlined in the ICP, it is advised that each speaker has their own W9 or W8 to be able to disperse those funds to them directly
- c. CampusVine shutting down in Sept. 2021
- d. Office managers: Division of labor
- e. Reimbursement applications - Please submit by June 5, 2021!
- f. Update on MOU: food pantry and Emma Mumper Award
7. Speaker's report: Helena van Nieuwenhuizen
  - a. Sprintax usage: 596/999 codes used as of Monday, 05/17 @ 3 p.m.: Indicates next season we can order less codes as they were under-utilized.
  - b. Met with admin on repurposing the GSO office/lounge space.
    - i. Current couches/chairs will be unbolted, and rebranding will occur in the next few weeks to make the space usable.
    - ii. Meeting again on Tuesday, 06/01 for an hour to discuss longer-term plans - please let me know if you are interested in attending.
  - c. GSO grad radio hour is looking for a new social media manager, as Omkar is graduating. You would be responsible for podcast-ifying and posting to youtube the live broadcasts/interviews (we receive the recordings from the radio station every few weeks). You are welcome to help interview/host as well - let me know if you are interested.
    - i. Radio hour every other Friday from 3-5
8. Officer Reports
9. State Policy Action
  - a. Vaccines are required for participating in in-person classes in Fall 2021

- i. Still not clear on policy regarding international students vaccinated with non-FDA approved vaccines; working with SUNY to advocate on these issues

#### 10. Federal Policy Action

- a. Proposed: [Family Accommodation Policy](#)
  - i. Ask the GSO to vote to support this when it makes it to graduate council
    - 1. Approved
  - ii. Does this cost GSO any money? No it is a policy change at the graduate school level
  - iii. Rewriting parental leave policy which currently only recognizes birth mothers to be more inclusive of parents
  - iv. Does this cover international students?
    - 1. Yes, it should apply to all matriculated graduate students
  - v. Vamiq voices his support for this policy
  - vi. Apply for this [SUNY Advocacy Fellowship!](#)

#### 11. Graduate Student Advocate/Assistant Treasurer

- a. Grad School addressing concerns w/ in-person Fall classes
  - i. Administration seeking to find out issues with coming back
  - ii. Admin encouraging programs to work with their students who can not come back to campus
- b. COVID-19 Relief Fund Update (fall and spring)
  - i. Still have applications from the fall that are being finished processing. Gave them a deadline to get us documents to complete processing
  - ii. Spring applications moving along more quickly

#### 12. Resolution of No Confidence

- a. Amended to item 4
- b. Resolution read aloud by RJ Wuagneux
- c. Questions
  - i. What is meant by doctoring evidence for the BoA?
    - 1. Alexia summarizes: Filed official complaints with BoA (documented in cover letter); asked Anand to provide minutes and recordings from minutes; it was delayed and the video was cut out at certain times
    - 2. Baxter, BoA member mentions that it could have been a pause of the recording, but was provided no evidence to prove it and this is a serious charge
    - 3. Helena brings up that when we do pause recordings we discuss it before hand, and that if we had the Zoom links rather than MP4 files this would be evident
  - ii. If Anand does resign who fills in?

1. Alexia, as VP until Maryam is sworn in
- iii. Does the entire EC providing witness testimony count as acceptable evidence?
    1. Baxter, BoA member states that being mean is not a violation of the rules
    2. RJ- Questions BoA fairness in statement and position appointment by Anand
    3. Helena wants to emphasize that we are not accuse the BoA of misconduct here
    4. Zared emphasizes verbal testimony as evidence, and questions why the BoA didn't email Eric Wertheimer or Katy Ehm, or make the allegations apparent to the senators, Aditya would not provide
    5. Sean Mascarenhas brings up that his entire team quit before he did, and then he resigned all due to pressure and bullying by Anand (e.g. Anand telling him we don't negotiate with terrorists, told Sean to make a Title IX complaint about him if he had a problem with him, told Anand to file a complaint with the BoA); it was challenging for all of us, and the current EC shouldn't be
    6. this has Baxter, BoA says that there was not enough time to conduct this investigation, and asks why this wasn't brought up earlier
  - iv. Reminder that BoA is only advisory; Tristan C voices that in his experience that these claims are believable
  - v. John Klecker urges people to approve, and suggests that pausing the recording without a motion to move into executive session would be an act of misconduct in itself
  - vi. Carol Garcia brings up Baxter's response about mental health being insensitive in emails especially
  - vii. Daniella Alva asks what vote of no confidence will do?
    1. Zared: We present this vote of no confidence as assertion of proof, and asking for senate to resolve our vote of no confidence available to grad student body paying GSO dues; asking also that the senate counter-sign and and made available to to student body; it is not the best time in the semester, but no less important for these claims to be made
    2. RJ: Call senate to action to demand Anand to resign.
  - viii. Alexia: Everyone has made good points, do not want to belabor the point. This is not personal, I signed this because I want the future ECs bring up these problems earlier.

- ix. Noele Certain: On BoA, wants to point out she would not be supporting Anand just because he appointed them. The allegations about the BoA are ridiculous. All the emails back and forth should stop because they are all aggressive. The treatment for the BoA was disrespectful and we should all have more respect for one another in our communications.
  - 1. Helena adds that we all have passionate personalities and that we all need to work on
- d. Charles moves to vote, seconded
- e. Resolution passed
- f. Anand response: Respects senate's decision, but states that the allegations against him should have been brought to the BoA and that he did not have a chance to see them first; Anand will not step down without speaking to Dean of Graduate School first. No resignation

### 13. Resolution of Disqualification

- a. Amended to item 5
- b. Helena reads aloud
- c. RJ provides context about this motion being specific to prevent Anand from training the new EC;
- d. Technical Questions
  - i. Is this motion legal?
    - 1. We can change the constitution
  - ii. Do we need to amend the constitution first before we vote on this motion?
    - 1. RJ: lack of language, lack of precedent does not constitute illegality, we can set the precedent now
  - iii. How does this benefit the new EC?
    - 1. There is a training period in the summer that we don't want Anand
  - iv. Missed Q
    - 1. The president is paid over the summer to be a resource/advisor over the summer; this move is to prevent the current president from being this advisor so that bad leadership is not passed on.
  - v. How is the advisor paid in this case?
    - 1. There would be an advisor, but it would be the current EC team serving in an advisory capacity without the president
    - 2. Sean Mascarenhas clarifies that the previous EC does train, and the advisor is the only member who gets paid
  - vi. Are we asking for the advisor position to be filled? What happens to that money?
    - 1. It will be absorbed into the budget--not asking for someone else to be paid
  - vii. When does the new EC swear in?

1. Tonight
- viii. Why is there the second resolution if we have asked for resignation?
  1. As foresight since Anand did not resign
- ix. Does the new EC have a say in who will be the advisor?
  1. Faculty advising remains the same, and current EC advises in a non-paying role, just removing Anand from an advisory role
  2. Anand wouldn't be taken out of being paid even if the new EC doesn't want him to be the advisor. The only way he will be taken from payroll, he will be if he resigns, is impeached, or fired. Sean adds that President is the supervisor to the payment system
- x. Is this \$1000 for a month or for the year for advisory?
  1. Per year
- e. Pros/Cons
  - i. Spencer Austin suggests an immediate amendment of the constitution before voting
    1. Tristan comments that if there isn't a constitutional precedent for something, we can still vote on it. They can be made later, the vote can be changed later in light of a constitutional amendment
    2. If the claims are that we don't have a constitutional point allowing this to be done, with that as a requirement for everything we would come to a standstill as a legislative body
    3. Helena questions what is the difference between the vote between this and the election extension
  - ii. Spencer Austin brings up that this is a backdoor to an impeachment process, and since we can't do that on our own. We can pass a resolution as the senate to bar involvement with this position.
    1. Since this advisory position isn't in the constitution, and it is only past practice that the president has gone into the advisory role.
    2. We should add this into the constitution so that the advisory role is reflected in it, and a language on how to remove/approve the role
    3. We could vote to remove the budget line for this
  - iii. Dealing with 2 issues here: budget line, and incoming EC not being adequately trained
    1. The Vice President is supposed to head the training for the incoming EC according to the constitution; Sean Mascarenhas suggests that the advisory role is a corruption hold-over from previous president and Anand as treasurer
  - iv. When the budget is approved later we can move to remove the line for the advisory position
  - v. Resolution tabled

14. Swearing in of new GSO executive committee members (congratulations!)

15. Unfinished business

- a. Revisiting tabled resolutions regarding elections processes proposed by Senator Chuankai Chen at last emergency Senate meeting
  - i. Proposal for senators to vote on behalf on their constituency who do not/cannot vote
- b. Q&A
  - i. How is this equitable for students?
    1. If students want to vote “abstain” then the proxy vote will carry less weight
  - ii. How does this policy work when there is a high voter turnout?
    1. Regardless of the voter turnout the motion the senator votes are proportional
  - iii. What exactly is the proxy vote?
    1. Senator votes once individually, and once on behalf of remaining students in department and tell students who would be voted for
  - iv. Will the proxy vote be something that the students who didn’t vote will need to approve?
    1. The students do not need to approve the proxy vote unless they oppose after the meeting in which they are told who would be voted for
- c. Pros/Cons
  - i. Potentially addressing a problem that does not exist
  - ii. Unfair to students in smaller departments
  - iii. Might incentivize senators to not publicize election
  - iv. Seems more totalitarian than democratic; the senators would hold too much power to cast votes especially in larger departments
  - v. The driving principle is to adjust for low voter turnout as a failsafe mechanism
  - vi. Abstain vote is not clear to students in Solar
- d. Move to vote, seconded
  - i. Proposal not passed

16. New business

- a. John Klecker
  - i. Questions about former secretary Aditya
  - ii. Why were the meetings not captured via recording or meeting minutes?
    1. Sean suggests that Aditya has not made the recordings public or that they have been deleted
  - iii. What has Aditya been doing for the payment he received?



1. If he has not captured meeting minutes and recordings have been deleted, he has been paid for not doing his job
  2. How do we hold him accountable for this?
- iv. Proposes some sort of recourse: bare minimum is sending the recordings to BoA, alternative paying back his salary
  - v. Who can take this action? EC and Treasurer cannot. Fiscal agent?
  - vi. Move for senate to hold Aditya in contempt, and to recognize that his lack of actions are against the integrity of the graduate student body
    1. Passed
- b. Move to remove the E-Board Advisor Line from the budget
    - i. Proposal approved

17. Adjournment: 8:25 PM