

GSA Senate Business Meeting - Minutes  
Oct 4, 2023 @ 5:30pm – 6:30pm  
Baker Lab Room 254 and Zoom



## Agenda & Minutes

1. Welcome - Emme
2. Roll Call - Makayla
  - a. Apologies & Proxies
    - i. Makayla Light proxying for Emily Friden
  - b. Quorum
    - i. Confirmation of quorum with 6 members out 9 total Senate members
3. Confirmation of meeting minutes
  - a. Shahadat Hossain motioned to confirm, Amy Owens seconded, unanimous consent for passing
4. Senate Appointments
  - a. Nomination for Macy Carr as Environmental Biology Representative
    - i. Motion for appointment made by Makayla Light, seconded by Taye Muslim - accepted
  - b. Nomination for Laurel Williams as Chief Communications Officer
    - i. Motion for appointment made by Amy Owens, seconded by Shahadat Hossain - accepted
  - c. Nomination for Andrea Cass as Environmental Science Representative
    - i. Motion for appointment made by Amy Owens, seconded by Shahadat Hossain - accepted
  - d. Appointment for Olivia Grogan as Chief Financial Officer
    - i. Motion for appointment made by Makayla Light, seconded by Amy Owens - accepted
    - ii. Olivia Grogan will be added to the GSA's KeyBank account as a cardholder and signatory to checks and other financial matters for the organization.
  - e. **Total Vote - motion to approve above appointments by unanimous consent made by Makayla Light, seconded by Amy Owens and Shahadat Hossain - unanimous consent for passing!**
5. Senate Business
  - a. Previous Business
    - i. Draft budget that has been okayed via email by Senators - sending to graduate student body tomorrow (Thursday 10/5/2023) - allow feedback for 1 week and then get final confirmation and approval via email for the Senators
    - ii. Moving offices from Brave Space - moving to Moon 14 and 15 - presented concerns about accessibility concerns (not open 24/7 and not ADA compliant) - UPD will be turning on swipe access for the students
    - iii. Mandatory Trainings - Bystander Awareness and Title IX
  - b. Committee Updates
    - i. Social Activities and Student Engagement
      1. Fall TG this Friday at Faegan's Pub - 2 free drinks per person, food catered by Wegmans (vegan, vegetarian, and gluten free options)
      2. Any ideas for other fall events can be emailed to Emily ([eifriden@syr.edu](mailto:eifriden@syr.edu))



- ii. Grants & Awards
- iii. Professional Development
  - 1. 10/24/2023 Workshop - Building a Better Future - looking for a partnership with GSA, looking for us to help promote the event - flier should be out in the next week or so
  - 2. Alumni Homecoming last weekend - 60% attendance was current Graduate Students, lacking some Alumni attendance
- iv. Sustainability
  - 1. Survey launching early next week to gauge Graduate Students interest in sustainability and how they want their voices represented - maybe tie in with annual survey - going to see if it fits in nicely)
  - 2. Meeting with Delaney Demro from Sustainability Office about GSA's vision for how Graduate Students can be involved in ESF's Sustainability Action Plan
- v. Research & Scholarship
  - 1. Emme Christie and Makayla Light met with Office of Research about the 2024 CNY CESS for initial planning today (10/4/2023)
  - 2. Only gotten positive reviews so far from administration - happily agreed to fund Year 2
  - 3. Current dates are Thursday 2/29/2024 through Friday 3/1/2024
  - 4. Spotlight on Student Research - maybe going to be included in the conference next year - still have some meetings to attend
  - 5. Going to send out an email by the end of this week to form the conference planning committee
  - 6. **Discussed more funding for Graduate Students - specifically coming from Office of Research and maybe some from the Graduate School**
    - a. **Possible for the Office of Research to match our current \$9,000 for grants and awards - GSA volunteered to happily handle the administrative side of this**
    - b. **Emme Christie has meeting with Dr. Valerie Luzadis to talk about the Graduate School potentially matching this as well**
- vi. Inclusion Diversity & International Affairs
- vii. Department Reps
  - 1. Chemistry
    - a. Going to get a list together of things that returning Graduate Students need to be aware of for the start of each semester - soft deadline is the end of Fall 2023 semester to get this list together (email [eifriden@syr.edu](mailto:eifriden@syr.edu) with any things you want included in this list)
  - 2. Chemical Engineering
    - a. Getting a list of all Chemical Engineering Graduate Students
    - b. Looking for current problems that Graduate Students are facing
      - i. Health insurance was a big problems (most students in Chemical Engineering are International Students and are not aware of the US's health insurance process)
        - 1. Most students are TA's or RA's
        - 2. International students are automatically enrolled in International Student Health Plan - need to

email HR for information regarding this information



- viii. Executive Committee
  - 1. External VP
    - a. Alumni Association aware of situation
    - b. SUNY SA Conference applications opening soon
  - 2. CCO
  - 3. Internal VP
    - a. AG Meeting from 10/3/2023
      - i. **SUNY given ESF permission to raise out-of-state tuition**
      - ii. Kitty McArthur - now in charge of Enrollment and Student Affairs
      - iii. Currently an internal search for a new Dean of Students
      - iv. **Anthony Chefalo and Amelia Hoffman are the new co-chairs of the Committee**
      - v. Talking about student spaces on campus and what it takes to acquire them and how students use them
      - vi. **Talks about graduate student mentorship of undergraduate students**
  - 4. CFO
- 6. Any Other Business
  - a. GSEU Updates
    - i. \$2,000 raise to state-funded Graduate Students - retroactive payment to Aug 21st in next paycheck or the one after
    - ii. Trying to figure out where the money for fee reductions went - applies to fully state-funded students - so far no one is seeing these fee reductions (25%) on their bills (working on a legal request to go to HR)
  - b. RA Union Updates
    - i. Bargaining committee members writing up the contracts - preparing to sit down with the Research Foundation and hit a deal
    - ii. Survey sent to RAs to get a clear picture of what Graduate Students need in their work environments
    - iii. Research Foundation not going to alter the current contract while the bargaining is ongoing for a contract - for RA's wondering why there is no raise for RA's
    - iv. Be on the lookout for the Bargaining Survey - important feedback for the contract bargaining
    - v. 2% of salary spread out over each paycheck will be the dues similarly to GSEU - won't settle on a contract that doesn't put RA's above being able to pay that due fee though
  - c. GPAC - Advisory Committee for Environmental Biology
    - i. Looking to start graduate student club - funding issues (getting access to funding and grants for students to attend conferences), events (Sci-Pi, support groups for various classes) - can address more issues and do more for students if there was a club students
    - ii. 2 Master's, 2 PhD's, 4 Faculty - current structure of GPAP
    - iii. Addressing issues specific to EB Graduate Students



- iv. Coordinate with other clubs and organizations on campus for support to the administration - 4 other graduate students that are currently interested that could not make it to this meeting
- v. Thoughts:
  - 1. GSA happy to engage these ideas through GSA budget - discuss facilities for creating a new club and incorporating them into the budget of GSA as a whole - develop framework for this type of process with a budget based on the number of EB students in the department
    - a. Challenge comes from we cannot fund events specific to one department or group of students - only caveat
    - b. Moving forward - work closely with immediate events that want to happen, budget going out tonight or tomorrow - reflect this in feedback on the budget that we ask for from Graduate Students
    - c. Talk to Silas Chochran from MOSA about their framework for adopting a new club and how their process looks
  - 2. Fundraising is a primary goal of GSA this year as well - tapping into other offices as well as raising funds of our own
  - 3. Executive Meeting next week - hash out time and place via email - going to chat more about what this would look like

7. Adjourn

- a. Motion to adjourn by Andrea Cass and seconded by Laurel Williams and Macy Carr