

Graduate Student Senate



GSS Meeting | 02/03/2021 | 12:00 – 1:30 PM | Zoom

1. Bring the Meeting to Session – POGSS

- a. Meeting called to session at 12:01 pm.

2. Roll Call – COGSS

Name	Role	Attendance
Dominic Payne	President	Present
Karla Oñate Melecio	Vice President	Present
Michael Fazi	External Affairs	Present
Sarah Widlansky	Communications	Present
Nishitha Kamini	Community Coordinator	Present
Sumeyra Gok	COLA	Present
Kendra Bostick	COLA	Absent
Allison Giannotti	CEPS	Absent, Sumeyra serving as proxy
Hamad Zaheer	CEPS	Absent
Emily Whalen	COLSA	Present
Alix Flinders	CHHS	Absent
Natasha Leuchanka Diessner	PAUL	Present
Cassie Manning	LAW	Present
Griffin Kmon	LAW	Present
Danielle Johnson	MANCHESTER	Absent, Sumeyra serving as proxy
Caroline Kanaskie	GRAD	Present
Sreelekha Dandu	Financial Affairs	Absent
Sanchari Kundu	HOUSING	Absent, Dominic serving as proxy
Akhtar Ardakani	PAUL	Absent
Elizabeth Mamros	CEPS	Present
Chika Ugwuodo	ONLINE	Present
Chelsea Cabral	COLA	Present
Janie Bright	CHHS	Present
Chandra Annasamy	INTERNATIONAL	Present
Kamala Nasirova	CHHS	Absent, Sarah serving as proxy

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes – POGSS & COGSS

- a. Karla made a motion to approve the minutes from 12/02/2020, seconded by Sumeyra. Minutes were approved unanimously.

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4. Guest Speaker – Nicholas Fitzgerald, Student Body President

- a. Senior undergraduate. Previously worked in the Campus Living Association. Moved into Student Senate (uSS) this year.
- b. Senate mainly focused on COVID in the fall as well as improving the senate culture and leadership after harassment and grooming issues the previous year. Focused on forming new policies to help fix this.
- c. Spring focus is on diversity and academics. Academic Affairs Council is working on advising changes and diversity requirements in the discovery program. Community Development Council is working on increasing inclusivity and enhancing school pride.
- d. Hopes to integrate student governments (uSS and GSS) more, especially where their interests align. MUB Board of Governors is one place where this can happen. Hopes that grad students will have a seat at the table to help decide on MUB space utilization.
- e. Opened up to questions and ideas:
 - i. Caroline asked who the other voices in the MUB Board of Governors are. Response: Currently Nick, SAFC Chair, some MUB employees (student and staff), faculty members, grad members, and FSL positions. New proposal hopes that GSS (and other student orgs) will have their own representation and be able to select it internally.
 - ii. Dominic has been in discussions with Nick to enhance collaboration between uSS and GSS (e.g., mentorship events). Nick added that the student governance complex in the MUB does have space for GSS to use in addition to the grad student space in T-Hall. Nick is hoping for social events between uSS and GSS, not all business. Agrees with peer mentor-mentee relationship. Could start small with just governments and expand out to all grad and undergrad students later. Also proposed coffee hours between uSS and GSS that would be open to everyone.
 - iii. Janie asked about how online grad students could connect in this opportunity. Nick doesn't have input on this and is open to hearing ideas because uSS is working on engagement for Manchester and online/commuter students also. This is especially important given that post-COVID operations will likely be more hybrid than pre-COVID.
 - iv. Michael asked about Nick's diversity point and mentioned two diversity groups working together this semester for a USNH survey that will be going out. Someone from uSS and GSS will be working together on this.

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Nick said that when the committees/councils start meeting, the two senates can share their updates with each other.

- v. Natasha mentioned that the Grad School hosts writing blocks over Zoom where people share goals, write for 2 hours, and check in again at the end. Wondering whether undergrads could benefit from something similar. Possibly a combined undergrad-grad writing block. Nick asked if they are grouped by majors/themes or open. Caroline added that they are open and people can drop in (usually ~10 people). General support for having a joint undergrad-grad writing block.
- vi. GSS Diversity & Inclusivity Committee will reach out to Nick and the uSS to coordinate more.

5. Committee Updates – *Committee Chairs*

- a. Sumeyra shared that the Diversity & Inclusivity Committee will be helping with the campus climate survey.
- b. Caroline announced the upcoming Critical Dialogue Series (Equity in Education: Meritocracy is a Dirty Word) coming up. Should be ~ 4 – 6 more planned in the semester.
- c. Governance Committee will be enforcing the inactive senatorship policy more this semester. Details can be found in the GSS constitution.

6. New Business – *POGSS*

- a. Student Engagement
 - i. Town Hall
 - 1. Dom is going to coordinate with Amanda Davie to plan a date, probably early March. Format: President will speak, Cari or Dovev will speak, then there will be a panel of people from GSS committees to answer questions and give a 5-10 minute overview of what their group is working on. Likely use a webinar format, but this hasn't been decided.
 - 2. Caroline can also help with scheduling around Deans' schedules. Afternoon/evening should be good.
 - ii. Social Media
 - 1. More social media presence. Sarah requested more information from senators through email previously to help introduce more people to the senate.
 - 2. Proposed Slack channel (senators and open forum) for having direct communication with GSS. Michael asked about whether people would self-add. Karla says yes, but there isn't a difficult

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sign up process. Will likely test it with just GSS members first. Caroline mentioned that we can have different sub-conversations within the slack channel too. Natasha has mixed feelings about Slack (one more thing to pay attention to, but some students might find it easier to engage with).

iii. GSS Programming

1. Town Hall
2. Together Walks (no dates yet). Proposed that we could make them recurring events (e.g., to replace first Thursday).
3. Caroline mentioned that events for the entire semester are listed on the Grad School registration page.
4. Michael added that Saturday March 20 will be the USNH student government meeting. All GSS members can and are encouraged to join.

b. Wellness Day(s) – Request for GSS rep

- i. Request from Stacey Hall. Planning to have Wellness Day(s) during a mid-semester break. Would like a rep from GSS to help with the planning process. Not sure what the timing commitment would be for this.

7. Open Forum – *POGSS*

- a. None

8. Adjournment

- a. Karla made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Sumeyra. Meeting adjourned at 12:47pm.