

Graduate Student Senate



GSS Meeting | 9/23/2020 | 4:00 – 5:30 PM | Zoom

1. Bring the Meeting to Session – POGSS 4:07

- a. Meeting called to session at 4:07pm.

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	Present
Allison Giannotti	CEPS	Absent, Sarah serving as proxy
Hamad Zaheer	CEPS	Present
Emily Whalen	COLSA	Absent, inactive
Alix Flinders	CHHS	Absent
Natasha Leuchanka Diessner	PAUL	Present
Cassie Manning	LAW	Absent, Griffin serving as proxy
Griffin Kmon	LAW	Present
Danielle Johnson	MANCHESTER	Absent, Sumeyra serving as proxy
Caroline Kanaskie	GRAD	Present
Sreelekha Dandu	INTERNATIONAL	Present
Sanchari Kundu	HOUSING	Absent

- a. New senators waiting for appointment in attendance: Akhtar Ardakani (Paul), Janie Bright (CHHS), Chelsea Cabral (COLA), Elizabeth Mamros (CEPS), Chika Ugwuodo (Online).

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes – POGSS & COGSS

- a. Hamad made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from 09/09/20, seconded by Caroline.
- b. Minutes were approved unanimously with no changes.

4. Guest Speaker – Cari Moorhead, Graduate School Dean

- a. Thanked GSS for our work and noted that GSS leadership is a direct line to her and the other Grad School administration.
- b. GSS works closely with the Grad School but they are independent entities that can chose to work together or not.

Graduate Student Senate



- c. Health insurance package is one example of a policy that GSS and the Grad School worked together on, along with the Grad Council. Other issues include housing, international student visas, and diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) issues.
 - d. Speaking on the COVID-19 situation: unprecedented times, thanked GSS for their leadership. Grad School has seen record enrollment despite COVID. Grad School advocated for protecting grad students (in labs, classes, etc.) after concerns over grad students being put in harm's way. Flexibility in enrollment – 28% increase in accelerated masters students. Some international students were not able to enroll because of visas. Increase of 18-19% in online students.
 - e. Sees GSS as a “shock absorber” for a lot of student concerns coming up around COVID.
 - f. Questions from the senate: Dom asked about DEI initiatives in the grad school. Cari mentioned the new ABUGS advisory group, mentoring program for underrepresented students. Helping with access to fellowship funds. Hoping for more student exchanges with HBCUs, Hispanic serving institutions (partnership in Puerto Rico) and UNH. Natasha asked about ways to get involved with ABUGS or get updates. Caroline is planning how to distribute this info and it will be coming out soon. Grad school has a history of being supportive of affinity orgs as well (e.g., Stonewall Grads).
- 5. Committee Updates – *Committee Chairs***
- a. No committee updates.
 - b. Need 2 more people in the Governance Committee.
 - c. Everyone should communicate with other committee members to decide on a chair and pick regular meeting times outside of the full senate meetings.
 - d. There will be a DEI Town Hall on Sep. 30th at 4pm. People in the DEI committee should try to join.
 - e. Akhtar is serving on the Spring Planning Committee. They met Monday and will have another meeting tomorrow to make a draft of their plan. They are suggesting starting the spring semester later than normal (early Feb.) and skipping Spring Break, with some scattered days off throughout semester. She is concerned because grad students use Spring Break to catch up on their research. Some people suggested having that week off for grad students. Looking for suggestions.
 - f. Sumeyra said the Faculty Senate is thinking of skipping Spring Break and ending the semester early. They will be passing a resolution soon. Concerned that GSS was never able to give input.

Graduate Student Senate



6. Old Business

a. Position Confirmations

i. Financial Affairs Officer

1. Sreelekha Dandu – Masters in Information Technology at UNHM. Served in similar role during undergrad. Enjoys administrative duties to improve grad students' situation. Karla made a motion to appoint Sreelekha as the Financial Affairs Officer, seconded by Janie. Approved unanimously.

ii. CEPS Senator

1. Elizabeth Mamros – 2nd year PhD in Mech. Engineering. Part of the NH Biomade Project. Wants to represent CEPS and work together with GSS senators on complex issues.
2. Karla made a motion to appoint Elizabeth as a CEPS Senator, seconded by Michael and Sumeyra. Approved unanimously.

7. New Business - *POGSS*

a. New Senator Appointments

- i. Akhtar Ardakani– 7th year PhD student. Interested in Paul College position because she has some friends in Paul so she is familiar with their needs. Natasha made a motion to appoint Akhtar as a Paul Senator, seconded by Sumeyra. Approved unanimously.
- ii. Chika Ugwuodo – representing online students. 1st year PhD student in NRESS. From Nigeria (located there currently and taking classes online). Interested serving on the governing body representing grad students. Karla made a motion to appoint Chika as the Online Senator, seconded by Sumeyra. Approved unanimously.
- iii. Chelsea Cabral – interested in COLA. 1st year MA student in English Studies. A lot of her scholarship is focused on multiethnic literature. Interested in legislative bodies representation of people. Caroline made a motion to appoint Chelsea as a COLA Senator, seconded by Sumeyra. Approved unanimously.
- iv. Janie Bright – interested in CHHS. 1st year student in an online program. Works for a large credit union and is interested in community development. Excited to represent CHHS and learn more about the role. Kendra made a motion to appoint Janie, seconded by Karla. Approved unanimously.

b. COVID Information Act

Graduate Student Senate



- ii. Weekly meetings for 1 hour with specific agenda
 - iii. Likely subcommittees for specific tasks
 - iv. Forming this week
 - c. Griffin asked if other students have been having trouble with the UNH bookstore (a common problem for law students). Bookstore fails to stock materials for the courses.
 - d. Janie asked about having an orientation. Dom is going to share the orientation slides and Sarah will help with orientation for newly appointed senators.
 - e. Natasha asked about external committees and whether the list is up to date. Should be mostly up to date.
 - f. Elizabeth asked about getting updated constituency numbers for departments. Dom said we can reach out to get more up to date enrollment numbers.
- 9. Adjournment**
- a. Karla made motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Sumeyra. Meeting adjourned at 5:25pm.