

# GSA Spring 2022 Senate Meeting

09 March, 2022 | 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

- I. **Check-In & Attendance [5 mins]**
  - A. In attendance: Akash Vartak, Joel Tyson, Alyssa Schick, Amy Cruz, Elle Kreiner, Emily Faber, Ethan Post, Grace De Oro, Gracie Chaney, Jeffery Halverson, Kara Seidel, Nirandi Jayasinghe, Samantha Berg, Scott Hirabayashi, Sahara Ali, Maurice Roots, Sandesh Ennakonda.
- II. **Collective bargaining update [10 min]**
- III. **Town halls [10 min]**
- IV. **Old Business: [30 mins]**
  - A. Vote on bylaw amendments discussed in the March meeting
    1. Motion to table this for the next meeting was presented and set and it passed with a vote of Yes = 9 and Abstain = 1.
- V. **New Business: [80 mins]**
  - A. Motion: Formation of new GSO: Psychology Graduate Student Organization - Human Services Division.
    1. This motion was set and passed with a vote of Yes = 10.
  - B. Motion to create a GSA video featuring our diverse graduate student body. [10 min].
    1. There was a lot of discussion and brainstorming about ideas for videos, posters, weekly/biweekly (every 2 weeks) instagram posts, etc.
    2. It was decided that video production would be done in house and a call would be taken later, if needed, to get in touch with a video company like CommonsVision within UMBC to help us or do it for us.
    3. This motion was set and passed with a vote of Yes = 10
  - C. Motion: revised amendments to the bylaws to improve the process of holding elected GSA members accountable to the senate. [30 min].
    - ☰ Bylaws Changes Workspace
      1. Regarding the Whistleblower policy amendment, there was a lot of discussion regarding the definition of Retaliation and the verbiage that can be used to define retaliation.
      2. When asked, Jefferey Halverson also presented his view about the language.
- VI. **Reports and Open Discussion**
  - A. President:

1. The GSA senate voted to submit testimony in favor of SB0118 (HB0751) to allow collective bargaining rights to University System of Maryland Graduate Assistants. Post hearing testimony has been sent to all members of the MD Senate Finance Committee. The testimony bases its support on advocacy from almost 100 UMBC graduate students in addition to support for graduate assistants on other campuses who have not reaped much benefit from the current meet and confer process. The written testimony can be found here: [■ UMBC TESTIMONY ON SB0118 \(1\).pdf](#)
2. Elections for next year will be held at 12:00 PM on [Apr 13, 2022](#) .
3. The Fearless Student Employees will be having a rally in Annapolis to advocate for collective bargaining rights. On March 15th, at 12:00 PM. Carpooling and RSVP here: <https://forms.gle/qTq9Ktb7GCEZMYJr5>
4. The UMBC steering committee will have a mental health community action day on April 7th. The GSA's Graduate Student Success Committee has agreed to host a listening session and panel with the purpose of bringing a discussion on what UMBC can do better to support the specific mental health needs of graduate students.
5. The GSA along with the SGA have formally asked leaders at Retriever Integrated Health to address the concerns on how mental health is being handled for students on campus. We are asking for more student collaboration and more transparency in order to help meet student mental health needs. We have not received any substantive response to date.
6. The GSA will be hosting the annual 3MT/Gritty Talks on March 31, 2022 from 12:00-3:00 PM featuring graduate student research effectively communicated in minutes.
7. GSA's graduate student week will be held on the week of April 4th, starting with a Meet and Greet with the Graduate School followed by a Virtual Writing Workshop, and other activities, culminating with a Graduate Student Mania fair event held in the Retrievers Activities
8. GSA will be hosting an Awards Gala celebrating exceptional graduate students, faculty and organizations on May 4th.

B. Vice-President:

1. Ukrainian Relief Drive in Commons
  - a) Working with two UMBC alumni who have been organizing and volunteering to ship supplies to Ukrainian refugees who are currently in dire need of our assistance. Possible Date: 3/18, 3/25
  - b) If we can set up a table in the Commons with a poster that has basic info and a QR code, Natalea will provide small

Ukrainian flags and stickers to those who donate! She will also bring a cart for transporting the donations to her vehicle.

- c) Natalea will also provide info on the logistical company that they have been using to ship donations to Ukraine, as well as their volunteer efforts so far, to show their legitimacy.
  2. [Volunteers Needed for Meet and Greet](#) (4/4 12-2). This event is meant to connect the GSA and Senate to the UMBC community. If you are a senator or on e-council and do not have class or other responsibilities we highly encourage your participation in this event.
  3. [Awards Gala Attendance](#), [3MT Attendance](#), [Meet and Greet Attendance](#) . If you do not respond by 3/11 (Friday) you will be unable to attend these events.
  4. Working with SGA on a "Mask Policy: Ask a President Day." The Presidents and VP's of SGA and GSA will set up a booth in the commons with an informal, one-on-one Q&A regarding the updated mask policy
  5. Could we possibly put up a Grad Student Week Flier in between the Commons and BIO Building? How do we go about that?
- C. Treasurer:
1. 22 grants for this GRP
- D. OGSL:
- E. GAAC:
- F. GSSC:
1. We are planning a grad student listening session for Mental Health Day on April 7.
  2. Grad Student Mania is April 8 so please plan on attending! We need senators' help!
  3. We also have been working with SGA to have conversations at a higher level regarding mental and overall health
- G. LC:
1. Equity of Funds Committee: Currently working on investigating GSA budget and Grant Database to further investigate how we could make them more equitable.
- H. Steering Committees:
1. Dining Committee:
    - a) New additions:
      - (1) MTO Pasta and smoothies (after Spring Break) at Student Choice. They are still deciding if smoothies will be available daily or weekly.
      - (2) Deep dish pizza at 2Mato.Wraps at Wild Greens.
      - (3) New bowl recipes, additional vegan options and more hand fruit at True Grit's.
      - (4) Second food truck in Lot 8 on Tuesday and Thursdays.

- b) Spring Opening:
  - (1) The staff and supply chain were affected by the pandemic and the shortages. They are starting to get back on track.
- c) Events:
  - (1) The “-ful” (thankful, grateful, etc.) events were very successful. They will continue to organize them, and the next one is expected to be in April.
  - (2) March is the National Nutrition Month, so Adam will organize some related events.
- d) Meal Deals and Bottled Water:
  - (1) Water fountains are available in several locations as part of the meal deal, and as an alternative to bottled water

VII. **Adjourn**