

GSA Spring 2022 Senate Meeting

11 May, 2022 | 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

I. Check-In & Attendance [5 mins]

A. In attendance: Akash Vartak, Joel Tyson, Achala Denagamage, Aishwarya Kale, Alexander Getachew, Alyssa Schick, Aminah Amjad, Amy Cruz, Anoosha Fayyaz, Anuja Yawar, Britany Evans, Cristina Gomez, Elle Kreiner, Emily Faber, Emily Shrope, Ethan Post, Grace De Oro, Gracie Chaney, Jaeed Bin Saif, Jeffery Halverson, Jennifer Artis, Kara Seidel, Lydia, Masud, Nirandi, Sahara, Sai Sri KT, Scott Hirabayashi, Sravanthi Reddy, Zane Poffenberger

II. E-council Elections [75 min]

A. Will take place according to this election procedure:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1nzivfJAqaCqGUXM6iTe4_O1ldpEhi4z-FSh6t_wvipo/edit?usp=sharing

B. President candidates:

1. Shahin spoke about why he can fulfill the duties of the role. He also spoke a little about the past work he has done for the graduate community.
2. Alexander spoke about the past work he has done and why he would be a good candidate.
3. Elle spoke about her current role in the review board and in the equity of funds committee. She spoke about what she is passionate about for he GSA.
4. Ethan spoke about the graduate student of the week he started when Alex was the president. He spoke about what he envisions the role entails.

C. Vice-president candidates:

1. Shahin spoke about why he is experienced as a VP - since he was the vice-president for a half-term in the AY 2021-2022.
2. Alexander withdrew their nomination for VP.
3. Elle spoke about how her qualifications for president and vice-president merge together. She spoke about the graduate community she cares for and her passion to be a successful leader and that she will try to do the best job possible.
4. Emily Shrope said she is looking for opportunities to practice what she learns on campus - promoting and maintaining diversity, equity and inclusion.

D. Treasurer candidates:

1. Elle forfeited her time since she spoke about her eligibility in general for a role in the GSA during her talk for her role of President and Vice-president.

- E. Historian candidates:
 - 1. Jaeed spoke about how he will ensure they will maintain an accurate record of the meetings, the document and spoke about their knowledge of website maintenance showing they have the requisite qualifications.
 - 2. Geeta spoke about how she was a past Historian but had to step down. She spoke about how her previous experience as Historian and other communications-related background makes her a strong candidate for the role.
- F. GAAC candidates:
 - 1. Anuja had joined the meeting but when was not present it was time for her speech.
 - 2. Sahara and Anooja laid out specific points about how she would improve the GAAC's work.
- G. GEARS candidates:
 - 1. Aminah spoke about how she would improve the GEARS events and how she plans to improve the GEARS outreach to the larger graduate community.
 - 2. Sravanthi spoke about her past experiences in organizing events. She spoke about her plans to resume the events that had been canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic and how she would increase event outreach for GEARS.
- H. LCC candidates:
 - 1. Zane spoke about his passion to empower the graduate students and his enthusiasm to help the community grow.
 - 2. Anuja had joined the meeting but when was not present it was time for her speech.
 - 3. Geeta spoke about her passion for furthering the legislative concerns of the graduate community.

III. Notes:

- A. Nirandi handed over her voting duties to Achala and that means Achala is the stand-in for Nirandi for the rest of the meeting, till she comes back into the meeting.
- B. Before the new budget approval, Aishwary left and transferred her votes to Sandesh and Alyssa left and transferred her votes to Cristina Gomez.

IV. Q&A Session:

- A. Gracie questioned Shahin why he deserves to re-run for the GSA after last year's Shahin's mistakes which involved his threatening to destroy the GSA when he was impeached.
- B. Sahara asked: if you are elected the president/vp and you are accused of harassment, how would you make sure everyone is held accountable. Shahin answered first and then Ethan had the floor.

1. Shahin expressed that he is a changed person and has learnt a lot since the past.
 2. Ethan expressed he was and will be ready to hold anyone accountable and in-turn expects the rest of the GSA to hold him accountable.
 3. Elle said she would first try to stop any and all harassment, if any, that happens within the GSA. Next she said she takes it really seriously and will do everything in her power to root it out and deal with it by holding the perpetrators responsible.
- C. Acha asked on behalf of Nirandi:
- D. Emily asked: Specific to Shahin - Several people in the senate have noticed you have a habit of posting internal GSA matters on LinkedIn, several times to talk about points of policy concerning voting. Once was a post about how GSA was acting as a syndicate to oust you specifically from GSA office (and yet you are here free to run). Your argument centered around the process for a vote of no confidence against you and how that process is outlined in the bylaws. In a more recent post you voiced concern over the bylaws again for how the vote for e council members is run. This argument centered around wanting to go outside the bylaws. It seems to me that these two arguments are conflicting. I state that you can not have it both ways and would like you to rectify these two thoughts publicly before the senate and detail what your opinion is in regards to holding up the bylaws and points of policy if you were elected to e-council.
1. Shahin responded by saying that he has never called GSA a syndicate. He said that during his tenure he would be a most ideal Pres/VPres.
- E. Alyssa asked: Outreach for you is very important, but one concern from CAHSS and international students was regarding inclusivity although UMBC already does its bit. What initiatives would you bring in to promote inclusivity?
- F. Kara asked: Shahin why haven't you been to any GSA event even though he wants to be a GSA leader as a Pres/Vice-Pres.
1. Shahin responded saying he has followed a lot of GSA events and even attended the CAHSS town-hall.
- G. Achala asked: For GEARS, most participants are south-asian students. How would you improve the events and GEARS outreach to include students from other ethnicities and nationalities and origins.
1. Aminah responded by saying that she would improve the individual departmental involvement in GEARS events.
 2. Sravanthi answered via text: I have a network issue, so i would represent gears by connecting to people from different communities especially communities like TANA, we have do have a seperate student community as well from TANA, which is of

diverse culture and this would be of great help in organizing events and activities being part in gears committee.

H. Grace De Oro asked the Pres/Vice-Pres/Treasurer/Historian candidates: One sentences to how or why we can trust you or how you will build a trusting relationship?

1. Shahin responded by saying that he would try and remain busy in serving the whole of the graduate community.
 2. Ethan answered saying it's about accountability and its the actions that will build trust.
 3. Elle said building a culture is the way to go since culture sustains the GSA.
 4. Emily said she will try to negate any negative effects she might have on the workings of the GSa and will be open to feedback.
- I. Joel asked Shahin directly whether he understood that he struck fear in the hearts of the women and non-binary identifying members fo the GSA.
1. Shahin refused to give a clear yes or no answer and said that he is sorry that he was mis-understood, his personality and character was mis-understood.

V. New E-Council:

- A. President: Ethan Post and Elle Kreiner (Co-chairs for President)
- B. Vice-president: Emily Shrope
- C. Treasurer: Vacant since we had no valid candidates
- D. Historian: Geeta Shanbag
- E. GAAC: Anoosha Fayyaz and Sahara Ali (Co-chairs for President)
- F. GEARS: Aminah Amjad
- G. LCC: Zane Poffenberger
- H. GSSC: Achala Denagamage and Kara Seidel

VI. New Business: [80 mins]

- A. New Budget Approval.
1. Amy went over the new proposed budget and explained the individual items briefly.
 2. She explained the various increases like the events budget and the increase in the Treasurer stipend and committee budgets.
 3. Motion to increase GAAC stipend to include a Co-chair and reduce the number of GAAC committee members to 2.
 - a) Motion was set and passed with Yes = 12.
 4. Motion to increase the members for GEARS
 - a) The motion was set and passed with Yes = 10, No = 1.
 5. Motion to increase the president's stipend budget.
 - a) This could not be voted on due to loss of quorum.

Loss of Quorum, all further business has been tabled.

- B. Approval of executive council compensation change.
- C. New International Student Connection GSO.

VII. **Reports and Open Discussion**

A. President:

1. UMBC is officially a member of the Student Advocates For Graduate Education (SAGE) Coalition of Public, R1 Institutions.
2. Congratulations to Sahara Ali for competing in the Northeastern Association of Graduate Schools 3 Minute Thesis Competition.
3. Congratulations to GSA Award winners!:
 - a) **Outstanding Senator:**
 - (1) Nicole Telfer
 - (2) Emily Faber
 - b) **Outstanding Staff:**
 - (1) Renee Decker
 - (2) Andrea Miler
 - c) **Faculty:**
 - (1) Francis Hult
 - (2) Derek Musgrove
 - (3) Zane Berge
 - d) **Jessica Soto Perez:**
 - (1) Priyanshu Banerjee
 - (2) Hilary Budinski-Betley
 - (3) Devonique Brissett
 - (4) Kara Seidel
 - (5) Shonda Campbell
 - e) **GSO:**
 - (1) Climate Action
 - (2) EKTA
 - (3) BGSO
 - (4) BSA
 - f) **Special Recognition Award:**
 - (1) Roy Prouty

B. Vice-President:

C. Treasurer:

D. Historian:

E. OGSL:

F. GAAC:

G. GSSC:

H. LC:

I. Steering Committees:

VIII. **Adjourn**