

GSA Senate Meeting

October 6th, 2022

12 pm- 2 pm

[Meeting will be recorded]

[Meeting Link](#)

1. Attendance and Role Call: [5 mins]

- Ethan Post
- Alexi
- Aminah Amjad
- Akash Vartak
- Amy Cruz
- Anuja Yawar
- CHARlie Waters
- Daniel Teage
- Emily Faber
- Grace De Oro
- Hemanth Gopal
- Jameer Robinson
- Janerra Allen
- Jeffrey Halverson
- Jennifer Artis
- Jessica Burstrem
- Joel Tyson
- Joyce Padela
- Kara Seidel
- Kulin
- Lydia Sannella
- Max Aifer
- Mehrshad Fahim Devin
- Michele Berry
- Neil Kpamegan
- Omkar Kulkarni
- Sahara Ali
- Tahereh Hematian Pour Fard
- Taylor West
- Shiridinath Konduru
- Lydia Stamato (12-1)
- Zane P.

2. [Group Norms](#) [5 mins]

- transparency - clarification regarding the meaning/messaging behind exactly what it means within this context (Jessica B.)
- Kara: transparency both ways in terms of ECouncil toward Senate and vice versa
- Charlie Waters- full coverage of information should be delivered when discussing a topic, and not having information withheld
- Ethan P-- better communication between all involved stakeholders
- Jessica B→ asking what-if questions to explore implications/ramifications; being attentive to the other side of the coin was what Grace De Oro meant in that context (understanding and validating others POVs)
- Omkar K→ better communication between ECouncil and the Senate
- Does everyone in the group have access to the GSA Drive (reach out to Dawn Galindo to receive access to the Drive)--> meeting minutes published on the website

3. Motion: Add Land Acknowledgement to Senate Meetings

- Motion brought and seconded→ within Senate recordings
- UMBC was established upon the land of the Piscataway and Susquehannock peoples. Over time, citizens of many more Indigenous nations have come to reside in this region. We humbly offer our respect to all past, present, and future Indigenous people connected to this place. → land acknowledgement text
- Will be added to the ECouncil meetings as well

3. Reports [40 mins]:

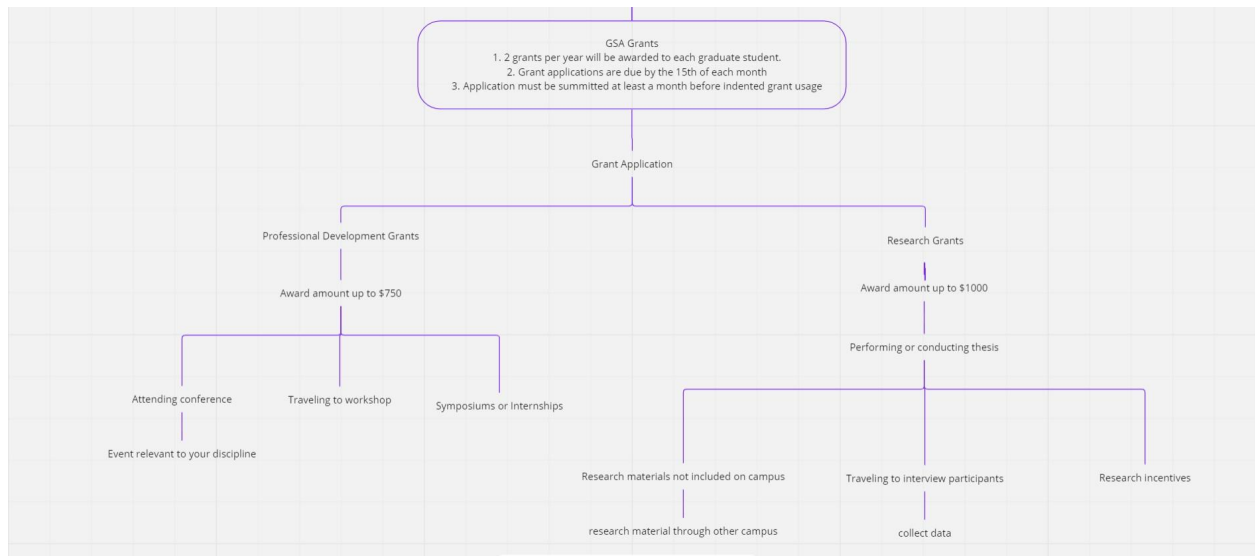
- Motion to move to the reports seconded by Emily F.

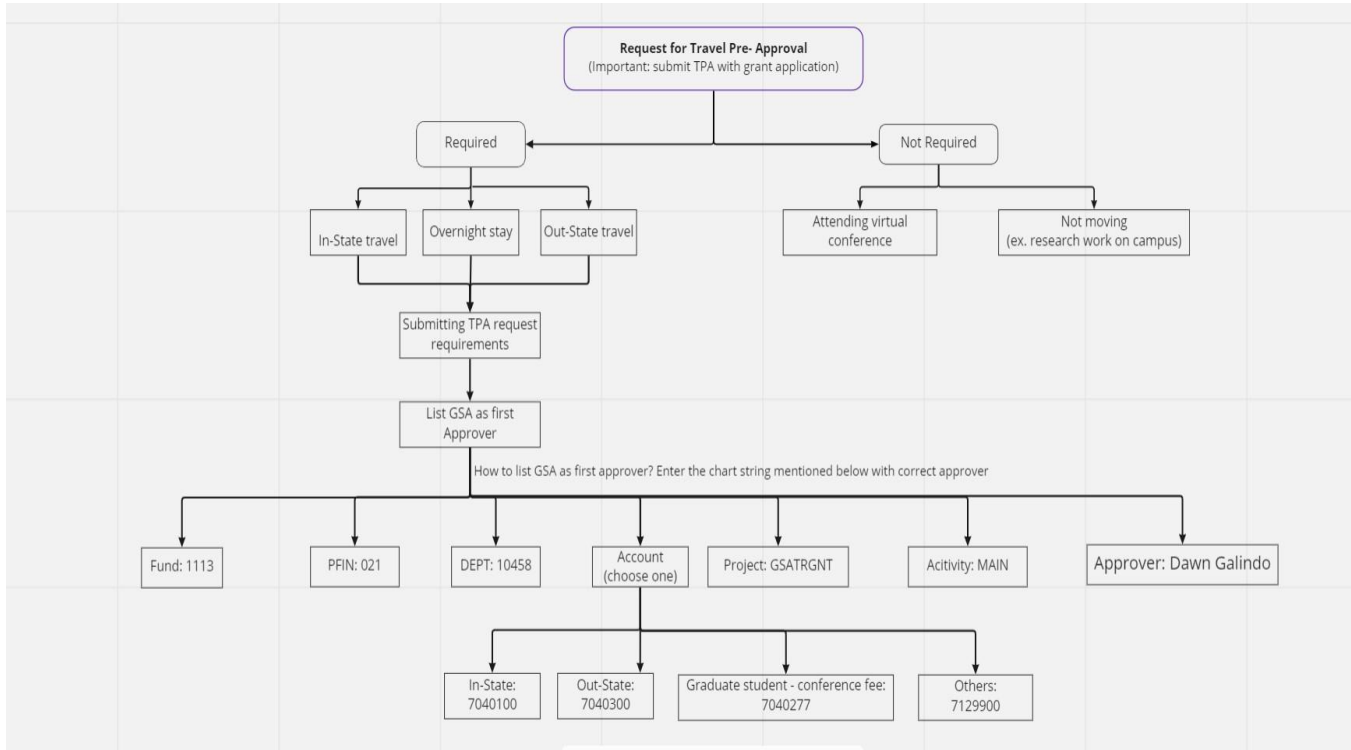
Treasurer: Anuja Yawar

- Clarification and Summary of Travel Pre-Approval/Grant Process → first part of the presentation (required by university and is not GSA guidelines specific)
 - We need to provide clarification on what is a travel Pre-Approval document.
 - PreApproval Travel Form is Required. GSA chart string is required to be mentioned first.
 - Please read the instructions on our grants website carefully.
 - [Video](#) with example
- Lack of representatives on GRP, Last resort is suspending the grants program until we have the representatives
 - Update: ****I believe we are one Senator away now!**** - Ethan
 - Yes, Ethan. - Anuja

- Flow Chart presentation for Anuja to go through
 - First one: goes over what kinds of grant applications there are
 - Had some technical difficulties accessing this
- GRP related question from Taylor W→ for people who wanted to be part of the GRP committee; Anuja will reach out to Taylor re: when she can loop back about getting Taylor on the GRP committee
 - Anuja: will check with Amy re: which department needs representation (**CAHSS needs one more rep**)
 - Prof development application
 - (<https://gsa.umbc.edu/conference-grants/>)
 - Related to internships/conference postings, etc.
 - Up to 2 \$750 dollars for students
 - Research applications (<https://gsa.umbc.edu/research-grants/>)
 - Research not available to be done with materials on campus, travel for data collection, etc.
 - Different categories for travel pre-approval as explained by Anuja
 - in -state without overnight→ no travel preapproval needed
 - Virtual work or work on campus→ no travel pre-approval form needed
 - When you submit travel pre approval→ GSA is the first approval on the chartstring (mention Dawn G. as the approver) → this step is trying to be clarified by the actual flow charts
 - Dawn receives the travel pre-approval request and will loop in Anuja & the rest of the GRP thereafter
 - Max Aifer→ received notice that he received the prof. Grant which was apparently rescinded after his travel
 - GPDs were looped in at their meeting and these flow charts come @ their suggestions
 - Anuja: is this clearer than what is on the website
 - Max A. concurred
 - Emily F→ every other activity on campus doesn't require chartstrings (can this be manually sorted by administrative end on the GSA end?)
 - Travel Coordinator position as a suggestion?
 - Jessica B→ drop down menus supposed to be selected from each drop-down; she was able to easily follow with photographic description of exactly how to do chartstrings
 - Including visual images in each example (?)
 - Grace: Dawn really helped clarify the process when there wasn't links to aspects of the process to help find where everything is
 - Akash V-- potentially a section of a "real world example" for each grant type/different case

- Or any official office hours to help with this process?
- Ethan P-or some kind of a workshop?
- Kara S→ screen recording of the actual website process of the process
- GPCs have quite a bit of workload already→ office hours and/or videos
- Encouraging folks not to wait until the last minute
 - Especially given the process keeps evolving





OGSL:

- **Writing Advisor: Michele had no updates**
- **Community Liaison: Jameer R.-->**
 - **First day of GSO training has been completed**
 - **Second day is coming up and the remaining GSOs will be trained in the upcoming weeks**
 - **Two new prospective GSO's that would like to propose their new groups to the Senate in Nov. Meeting**
- **Communications Manager:**

Historian:

No new updates

- Continuing to update the website as needed→ please email me if you need any support in that!

Gears:

- Planning Trivia Night (11/07/2022)

GAAC:

- Upcoming GA Town Hall to hear their queries and concerns - 10/21
- We would like to add an Ad-Hoc Committee for the Collective Bargaining Bill (CBB) with 5-8 members
- Resource pack from last year on CBB: [Google Drive](#)

GSSC:

- WAG Kickoff Event Update
 - Matched up and doing the process of selecting facilitators now
 - Discord-held: so that there is openness about allowing folks to join
- Grad Student Fest Oct 12th from 3-7 PM Update
 - Charmery will be there
 - Sign up to help out! This is an all hands on deck event! (also free food and swag) <https://forms.gle/VHqyUnsRzY3dAdao7>
 - Advertise with your networks
 - Did senators want to do an “Ask Me Anything?”
 - Ethan P: reach out to Senators to give them their own projects regarding solidarity-raising projects
 - And we can use GS Fest to put information out there about these
 - Emily F: what are we allowed/not allowed to do with pointing grad students to issues going on in the world
 - Be specifically for graduate students-- Ethan P
 - How to specifically provide resources to them (Dr. H→ benefit all graduate students as possible but there's no harm in disseminating information if its benefiting people)
 - Come and get a free tshirt for GSA folks !!
 - schedule for GS Fest [☰ GS FEST WORKING AGENDA](#)
- Transit issue-- Emily F:
 - Alleviate some of the overcrowding on buses and it becomes na unsafe situation→ transit meeting didn't go as well as hoped
 - ECouncil is working on drafting a letter to Dr. Ashby
 - Improving slightly→ “Changes are coming” to the Paradise bus route
 - Please spread the word about the transit survey that has been going out
 - Transit issues→ get plugged into the conversation; reach out to Emily F and Kara S.
 - Working group that Lydia Stamato knows (transportation WG) on the Climate Action Steering Committee→ electric buses as a driving issue that may be in the works

- Work to make these improvements as environmentally friendly as possible

LC:

- Candidates in our Backyard Forum occurred on Sept 27th (Del Ruth mentioned the collective bargaining bill!)
 - Well attended, free food→ state delegates all the way down to county council came and were represented
- Events with the Center for Democracy and Civic Life (Election Night Extravaganza, Dinner with Friends, Debate watch party)
 - Election day event; dinner with friends→ stakeholders within the policy-making process (virtual) and more information on Center for Democracy and Civic Life; Debate watch party is open to all (local and state level affects UMBC grad students quite a bit even for people who aren't eligible to vote)
- Working with Anoosha and Sahara on collective bargaining bill (organize students to write testimony, lobby lawmakers in person)
 - Del Ruth mentioned the collective bargaining bill
 - Go over the process of what can be done by GAAC in terms of written testimony, in-person testimony
 - Support in-person in Annapolis to bring a vote on the bill
 - Connected to USM group including UMD students; meeting on Monday to get more information
 - LINK FOR BILL: [Collective Bargaining](#)
 - Usually gets stuck in committee→ has multiple pieces of favorable testimony from GAs but opposed testimony from USM and similar stakeholders
 - Zane wants to get folks involved in this process!
 - What happened with UMBC? -- Emily F
 - Did UMBC switch in favor last year?
 - UMBC: neutral 2 years ago, last year was favorable but no representatives sent or written testimony given
 - UMD: administrative pushback towards GAs
 - Important to coordinate with other USM GA stakeholders and other unis to make this happen and can remain cordial working relationships with all other stakeholders
 - Charlie W→ got clarification re: who were the opposing voices and not really the grad students opposing this bill
- Create list of other bills that students are interested in/would like to work with GSA to support
- Kara→ when we take a stance; us as GSA members versus the university stance versus personal stances when discussing such matters.
- Zane: we can submit testimony as GSA and you can submit personal testimony (there is a difference between the endorsement of GSA as an organization)

- GAAC committee: Zane will do presentations and evolve into workshop sessions and will loop Senate and ECouncil etc.

Equity of Funds Committee:

- Chair on this?
 - Hasn't met this year -- TBD from Amy C.
- More transparency of graduate student funds (particularly about travel)
 - Ethan-- where these funds are going and increased transparency about this
 - Joel T: thought the committee was just chartered for last year and not this specific year
 - Emily F→ concurred and thought that's why the processes changed

University Committees:

-Sustainability event 10.24 11:30-1:30 GSA table (Lydia Sannella will be at the event with Retriever Essentials not with GSA)

- Physically located in Commons Main Street (where the Bookstore and OCSS are located)
- Requesting or stating that we have a table?
- Claire R→ Office of Sustainability i(crunquis@umbc.edu) s the contact for this
- Grace De Oro-- was told outright that her chosen U.S.C wasn't meeting and that she could "take it on" (Land Stewardship and Sustainability committee)
 - Normal but not okay → as stated by Joel, Kara and Emily F
 - Will be a point of ECouncil
 - Jess Wyatt could have more information for specific contacts for individual committees (jwy@umbc.edu)
- Mehrshad: dining committee update (m160@umbc.edu)
 - Talked mostly about updates to dining meal plans
 - Donating swipes to retriever essentials → ended this program of Save a Swipe ([Save-A-Swipe - Retriever Essentials - UMBC](#))
 - System needs to know who's donating by when in order to utilize them by the end of the semester
 - Lydia Sannella→ hasn't been getting movement re: pushing back the dates when RE can be used the swipes
 - There won't be enough swipes to basically get through all the people who would need it → no swipes even available over Summer despite need
 - Omkar: who decides the menu for student choice?
 - Whatever vendor is selected will decide the menu

- Majority vote used for both groups of undergrad and grad
 - Mehrshad will send out the form once that's finalized in order to mobilize grad student votes
- Skylight room is open for use for all groups
- Student choice in the context of dining
 - One booth changes every semester → students can request specific cuisines to request
 - Different vendors will come in and advertise for students
- Mehrshad will help facilitate Lydia and RE's to help push for this
- Monday, October 24th at 4 PM → next meeting that Mehrshad won't be able to attend due to class → could someone fill in?
- RE → based on meal plan can donate swipes directly to folks experiencing food insecurity and the deadline for this semester was October 4th
- Omkar: why do only the other meal plans have expiry for their meal plan swipes versus other meal plans?
- Transparency of student funds conversation
- Kara: didn't even know grad students could opt into meal plans

5. Reports President:

- Please send the GSA your Town Hall plans (two this semester) in the next two weeks (from 10/6)
 - Deadline of 10/21 of Friday
- Covid Protocol Coordinating Committee (CPCC) looking for a GSA representative.
 - Reach out to Ethan to get connected to this committee
- Apply for [Graduate Student Regent](#) if interested

Vice President:

- ✚ University Steering Committees 2022-2023
 - Who still needs contact with their committee?
 - If not already done so → Emily S can help facilitate this process
 - Jessica B → Library Renovation Committee
 - Max Aifer hasn't heard back from Athletics Policy Committee (Kara S will help facilitate this)
- Oct 6 [Day of Student Action for Bodily Autonomy](#)
 - Walk out across campuses within USA; didn't have capacity to organize in time
 - GS Fest → information there about voter registration

- GSAN- Graduate Student Action Network and the work they do to raise awareness (reach out to Emily S to be put into contact with Emily F and Kara)
- Senate Speaker Proposal (from Mehrshad Fahim Devin)
 - Will be introduced again in new business
- Diversity Initiative video
 - Showcasing the diversity of student population
 - Joining that -> email Omkar K and Emily S to get linked into this
 - Collect ideas from this group as a starting point

3. Old Business: [30 mins] --

- a. Six New Positions to consider. Deemed necessary for GSA by Dawn and GSA leadership. The increase in graduate student pop. means the need for more support
 1. Co-Vice Presidency
 - a. Shremily→ what the role of another vice president would do
 - b. Goals need refining
 - i. internal → internally within the Graduate Student/Senate/committees
 - ii. External→ involvement with university as a whole
 - c. Ethan- would divide the responsibilities up fairly well
 - d. Urgency of both of Co-VPs and Assist' Treasurer position
 - i. Grace De Oro→ is there interest from outside folks b/c Senate as of current, some Senators are stretched
 - ii. Do we have people and can we recruit people to fill these roles?
 - iii. Ethan→ Amy is already serving as of right now
 2. ****Assistant Treasurer**** (Amy)- We need help due to the new travel system. Currently, a 40 hour a week position, when it is supposed to be 10-hour position a week, under Points of Policy
 - a. Work this out hopefully in this meeting since Amy C is already doing this work
 - b. Co-Treasurer vs Assist. Treasurer position vs GRP
 - i. Can be broadly assisting with anything that Anuja needs help in
 - ii. GRP meetings and the student fee meetings
 - iii. Amy C. was the Treasurer last year and understands how crazy it can get and is working with Anuja as a team
 - iv. \$7K stipend (\$1K less than what Anuja is getting)--> and can work with Anuja to work through how complicated this whole system is
 - v. Emily F→ yearlong appointment of the Assist. Treasurer instead of a fully incorporating this

1. Emily F → is iffy about how to get people who are actually qualified to fill these roles
- vi. Kara → why are we in these positions to have to fill these heavy roles?
 1. Does quite a bit of work already → especially since there already is a lot of work
 2. What do we need b/c we're putting bandages instead of actually addressing why we're doing this
- vii. Grace: we need full time staff devoted to GSA → Emily F and Kara S. concur
3. GSA Summer GA → to handle the summer transition time period
 - a. Description
4. Student Affairs Liaison (staff member to facilitate between orgs)
 - a. Staff position.
 - b. Hypothetical: If we have to fund this, partially or completely, would we be willing to? - Ethan P
 - i. Kara- if this is something you don't want → what is the reason for not wanting it?
 - ii. Restructuring roles only work to a certain point
 - iii. Jessica B → grad students who would be interested in doing this for pay
 1. If this is advertised with a stipend or some sort of pay, people would jump on roles and have them build as resume builders
 2. Budget meeting before Nov. meeting → so this aspect could be ironed out
5. [Travel Coordinator](#) (Student Position) e

**Essential to approve so we can begin searching for a Co-VP candidate and pay Amy Cruz as Assistant Treasurer

- Advocate for Amy getting paid - Ethan P
- Treasurer -- > is the heaviest workload
 - We could use the support
- Budget meeting upcoming in the weeks to come

4. New Business: [20 mins]

- a. [Senate Speaker & Assistant Speaker](#) (Proposed by Mehrshad Fahim Devin)
- b. Vote on forming Ad-hoc committee
- c. Quorum is achieved with 11/16 Senators (Mehrshad, Taylor, Omkar, Max, Jessica B, Hemanth Gopal, Grace De Oro, Emily Faber, Charlie Water, Amy Cruz)
 - i. Creation of the Asst' Treasurer position brought up by Emily F. (understanding that \$7K stipend with a yearlong position until end of FY)

- ii. Voting upon a year-long appointment specifically for Amy C (who will also be CAHSS senator) with an estimated \$7K stipend
- iii. Mehrshad: open position for Assist. Treasurer so that GSA can be transparent with grad student population
 - 1. Charlie W→ seems to not be necessary because we're triaging a specific concern for this FY
 - 2. Ethan P-- Amy C is basically interim Asst. Treasurer
 - 3. Anuja P-- and we need someone who is experienced in the position
 - 4. Where does price come from? Specifics of position
- iv. Seconded
- v. Yea- Emily, Jessica, Charlie, Hemanth, Taylor, Grace, Omkar
- vi. 2 abstains- (Mehrshad and Amy)
- vii. Quorum is not met
- viii. Will be done through Google Forms to do the vote
- ix. Ethan P-- motions to table this for a meeting later
- x. Jesssica- put votes at the beginning and put the reports at the end
- xi. Notification of why folks are leaving and when they're leaving when they exit the virtual space for the Senate meetings

5. Open Discussion [20 mins]

- All hands on deck for GS Fest 10/12
 - Letters of Solidarity, resources, action steps
 - Iranian students, women, and protestors
 - Tahereh's ideas
 - Solidarity with Ukraine
 - Solidarity with Florida
 - Abortion and bodily autonomy rights (We have materials from the Graduate Student Action Network to use as resources)
 - Voting Resources
 - LGBTQ+ Resources
 - Please suggest more
- Mehrshad's proposal to have a Graduate Senate Speaker
 - Read the proposal before the next emergency meeting
 - Omkar: current senators would elect a Speaker and Assistant Speaker
- Anuja proposed that there is too much work for Treasurer to handle on their own and Amy has experience doing it before
- Ethan P will loop back about how the emergency meeting to make sure Amy C gets to have the Assist. Treasurer position voted on is done

6. Adjourn

- Adjourned meeting
- Seconded that