

GSA Fall 2023

Executive Council of the GSA Meeting

30 November, 2023

I. Attendance

- A. In attendance: Achala Denagamage, Akash Vartak, Atharva Puranik, Charles Waters, Daniel Douglas, Emily Faber, Grace De Oro, Jennifer Artis, Jessica Burstrem, Kara Seidel, Nirandi Jayasinghe, Sayali Satish Dhavale.
- B. Meeting called to order at (President): 11:35 am

II. Land Acknowledgement:

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.

III. Updates

- A. Vice-President:
 - 1. On Nov 15, attended the USM Joint Councils meeting at UMBC. A focus this year is student-centeredness, so discussions revolved around ways to do that better. Some interesting outtakes: CUSF (the system-wide faculty council) is creating a research portal for connecting researchers across the system. CUSS (staff) are working for an ombudsperson and a waiver of some fees for staff attending as students at their home institutions. Got a lot of legislative updates which I shared with Dan.
- B. GAAC:
 - 1. GA hiring Transparency survey is on going and will conclude next Monday
 - 2. Insurance Webinar series with RIH and Jennifer Artis is scheduled to happen on Jan 9, 16, 23 in 2024.
 - 3. Upcoming surveys:
 - a) Student Stipend and Mandatory Fees Survey
- C. GSSC:



D. GEARS:

E. Legislative Concerns:

1. Updating the [2024 Voter Dashboard](#) on GSA Website
2. Planning Spring 2024 Voter Registration Days & will be partnered with SGA & CDCL (Dates TBD)
3. Working with UMBC VP of Gov't Relations & Community Affairs for future representation days in Annapolis for Spring 2024 (Dates TBD).
4. Working on CBB Information Video (replacement for "TH")
5. Future Events & Dates
 - a) USM Labor Coalition: Collective Bargaining Rally, Monday, Feb 5 (may change to Wednesday, Feb 7 (outside of UMBC)
 - b) Spring 2024 Center for Democracy and Civic Life Events (Dates TBH)
 - c) Maryland 2024 Legislative Session [January 10 - April 08]
 - d) Maryland 2024 Primary Election Day: May 14, 2024
 - e) Maryland 2024 General Election Day: Nov 5, 2024*

F. GRP

G. OGSL

IV. New Business

A. Grad Student Fee Updates (Charlie Waters)

1. There is an ongoing discussion about raising the per credit "Graduate Program Fee". This is the part of the graduate student's fees that comes directly to GSA.
2. The fee increase is being discussed in the range of \$3-\$4 per credit.
3. The argument that made is that
 - a) We pay salaries and have mandatory COLA increases which we have to cover. And,
 - b) We want to fund more student research & conference travel
 - c) This hike is necessary to be sustainable with the increased number of students.

B. GSA Updates for Student Affairs Leadership Team (SALT) Meeting 12/16 (Grace De Oro)

1. Grace has solicited committee updates that she can present at the SALT meeting.

C. Black Excellence Summit (Grace De Oro)



1. The UMBC Black Excellence Summit is a pivotal gathering that brings together students, faculty, staff, and community members to explore the multifaceted dimensions of the Black experience. Our summit is centered around the themes of Being, Empowering, and Thriving. Through engaging discussions, workshops, and networking opportunities, attendees gain valuable insights and tools to navigate their unique journeys while fostering an inclusive and supportive community.
 2. On 10 Feb 2024, in the UC Ballroom/Commons Skylight. GSA will be sponsoring breakfast.
 3. This event is OPEN TO ALL GRADUATE STUDENTS.
- D. International Focus Group (Jennifer Artis)
1. Jennifer pitched the idea of organizing a possible focus group or discussion to address the issues faced by new incoming international students.
 2. A possible “Buddy system” is being discussed for international students to help new incoming students assimilate to UMBC life and help them in non-UMBC things like housing, food, jobs, etc.
- E. Plan of Organization Ex Officio Members Invites to Senate Meetings (Jessica Burstrem)
1. The Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs (David Dauwalder – Interim), the Vice President for Research & Creative Achievements (Karl Steiner), the Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School (Janet Rutledge), + the Vice President for Student Affairs (Renique Kersh)
 2. There was a discussion on inviting these ex-officio members to listen in on GSA Senate meetings, or potentially at least the first GSA retreat.
- F. Patent information for research students. (Akash Vartak)
1. Currently, there is little information available to research students regarding patents - How to file, who is eligible, cost, requirements, etc.
 2. The information that is available is either difficult to find by navigating the UMBC website or when found is in legalese, which is difficult to understand and interpret.
 3. Kara will start an email chain with Akash, to discuss this with Wendy Martin. Maybe in the future, Wendy or an Office of Technology Development (OTD) rep could be invited to an ECouncil/Senate meeting to educate people about IP policies.



V. Announcements

- A. December Senate Meeting 12/11

VI. General Information

A. GSA Contacts:

1. **President:** Grace De Oro, (gsapresident@umbc.edu)
2. **Vice president:** Jessica Burstrem, (gsavicepresident@umbc.edu)
3. **Treasurer:** Charlie Waters, (gsatreasurer@umbc.edu)
4. **Secretary:** Akash Vartak, (gsasecretary@umbc.edu)

B. OGSL Contacts

1. **Community Liaison:** Jameer Robinson, (gsa@umbc.edu with “ATTN Community Liaison” as the subject)
2. **Communications Manager:** Nia Staples, (gsa@umbc.edu)
3. **Writing Advisor:** Ben Marino, (gsawa@umbc.edu)

VII. Adjourn

