

GSA Fall 2023

November Senate Meeting

13 November, 2023 | 11:00am - 1:00pm

I. Attendance [~10 minutes]

- A. In attendance: Trisha De Jesus, Owen Sparr, Joel Tyson, Hamza Umar, Neil Kpamegan, Akila Sampath, Erin Higgins, Sahara Ali, Mona Ahmad, Akash Vartak, Alexi Scheiber, Aminah Amjad, Arya Honraopatil, Atharva Puranik, Charles Waters, Daniel Douglas, Deevyesh Deepak Upadhyaya, Emily Faber, Grace De Oro, Gurpreet Kaur Saluja, Hannah Seppala, Harshal Chauhan, Jackson Tucker, Jennifer Artis, Jessica Burstrem, Nirandi Jayasinghe, Ridwan Islam Sifat, Sayali Satish Dhavale, Sreevikas Edukulla, Zach Nichols.
- B. Roll call and Quorum, as of starting the meeting (Secretary) - Quorum requirement 66%. Quorum present = 15/16
- C. Meeting called to order by Senate Speaker (Atharva): 11:05am
- D. Approval of [October Senate Meeting Minutes](#):
 - 1. Emily Faber motioned to approve.
 - a) Atharva seconded the motion.
 - b) Motion passed with Yes = 14 , No = 0
 - c) Minutes have been approved.
- E. Meeting agenda approval
 - 1. Atharva motioned to approve.
 - a) Hannah Seppala seconded the motion.
 - b) Motion passed with Yes = 14, No = 0
 - c) Agenda has been approved.

II. Land Acknowledgement: [~5 minutes]

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. Old Business

- A. Special Committee on Departmental Hiring (Atharva) [~2 minutes]



1. Atharva withdrew his last motion to setup a Special Committee on Departmental Hiring.

IV. New Business

- A. Senators making statements or statements from GSA regarding issues on campus (Grace) [~15 minutes]
 1. Grace echoed the E-Council's discussion of GSA's stand of not making or signing a statement regarding the ongoing Israel-Palestine conflict and related on-campus protests.
 2. GSO's represent interest of specific sections of the general grad student population. Grace said we should point students towards such GSOs where students can seek guidance, relief, attention and helping hand regarding such and other conflicts and issues.
 3. Alexi, JT, and Emily have put out an open offer to help.
- B. Process of approving GSO (Grace) [~20 minutes]
 1. GSO approvals process is changing and the process is paused for now pending a few road bumps.
 2. GSA is now reverting back to the old process:
 - a) 1 representative of GSO attends the Senate meeting.
 - b) The rep gives a brief overview of the GSO, their work, mission, and planned graduate student activities.
 - c) GSA members in attendance can ask questions to the GSO reps.
 - d) Following this, the Senate moves on to vote for the GSO. Upon counting, the GSO is either approved or rejected.
 - e) After rejection, GSOs can reapply.
- C. Name change of NA Senators (Grace) [~10 minutes]
 1. Grace is proposing to change the name of the Non-academic Senators group to 'At-Large Senators'.
 2. Alexi suggested the name 'Student Life Senators'.
 3. Deevyesh echoed Alexi's sentiment that 'At-large' could be possibly mis-understood or even unclear to new students unfamiliar with the term.
 4. Akash suggests 'Senators At Large' or 'Non-collegiate Senators'
 5. Atharva motioned to change the name of NA Senators. However we will revisit what names to use.
 - a) JT seconded the motion
 - b) Motion passes with Yes = 15, No = 0



- c) Motion passed. NA Senators group will undergo a name change soon, however we are yet to figure out what name should be used.
 - 6. GSA plans to put out a survey for graduate students to vote on various things. NA Senator's new name is a possible poll GSA can do. Another way is to ask attendees in town halls.
 - 7. All possible options: 'At-large senators', 'senators at Large', 'Student Life Senators', 'Non-collegiate Senators', 'General Senators', 'Graduate Senators', 'Senators'
- D. Changes to UMBC plan of organization (Jessica) [~10 minutes]
 - 1. Jessica is working on updating the UMBC Plan of Organization as a part of the University Steering Committee. She shared her proposed changes and sought views and opinions from the GSA member.
 - 2. Emily Faber motion to let Jessica go ahead and make the necessary changes to the Plan of Organization
 - a) Atharva seconded the motion.
 - b) Motion passed with Yes = 15, No = 0
 - c) Jessica can now go ahead and make the necessary changes.
- E. UMBC Transit concerns (Sreevikas) [~10 minutes]
 - 1. Students have faced inconvenience regarding bus changes when going between places serviced by UMBC Transit. Students have Bus A to come to UMBC and then have to wait a substantial amount of time to take Bus B to their final destination.
 - 2. Transit should try and coordinate the buses. Transit seems to be either slow or reluctant to do this or it just hasn't occurred to them to try and examine, analyze and coordinate the bus timetables.
 - 3. Because they don't coordinate the time tables for different routes. Some routes are not used efficiently by students or see a very small footfall, which is a wastage of resources.
 - 4. A short delay is not a problem, but students often end up wasting time and end up waiting for 30 minutes to an hour or more.
 - 5. Non-Academic Cohort wants to lead this and meet with Transit
 - 6. Dr. Kersh has said she wants to have a meeting with transit and graduate students. These ideas could be presented there.
- F. GSO Proposals [~40 minutes]
 - 1. Social Hub - Academic and Social Organization for IS Dept
 - a) Representative: Neil Kpamegan



- b) This group has the IS department's backing in terms of recognition as an official student group until they get approved by GSA as a GSO.
 - c) This GSO would be a departmental GSO. Being a departmental GSO the future leadership would also be from IS, however events, meetups (catered to IS students) would be open to other departments also?
 - d) Atharva motioned to approve the GSO.
 - (1) JT seconded the motion.
 - (2) Motion approved with Yes = 15, No = 0
 - (3) Motion passed and Social Hub - Academic and Social Organization for IS Dept is an official IS departmental GSO
2. GPSO - Graduate Pakistani Student Organization
- a) Rep: Sahara Ali
 - b) GSO plans to have all future leadership composed of representatives from all the various departments in UMBC.
 - c) Atharva motioned to approve the GSO.
 - (1) JT seconded the motion.
 - (2) Motion approved with Yes = 15, No = 0
 - (3) Motion passed and GPSO - Graduate Pakistani Student Organization is an official GSO.
3. SKY Campus Happiness
- a) Rep: Akila Sampath
 - b) SKY stands for Sudarshan Kriya Yoga. It is a health wellness and spiritual club.
 - c) The group plans to have future leadership based on selection instead of election. Current leadership would select who the next panel of representatives would be.
 - d) This GSO is a chapter of the parent organization: <https://us.iahv.org/>.
 - e) Other maryland campuses also have these chapters. Grace solicited information of links to other campuses chapters.
 - f) Atharva motioned to table the discussion of the GSO.
 - (1) Nirandi seconded the motion.
 - (2) Motion approved with Yes = 14, No = 1
 - (3) Motion passed and discussion regarding this GSO is tabled and is warranted before approving the GSO.



- G. Proposal for a committee for divestment of UMBC from companies like 'Northrop Grumman' and 'Lockheed Martin' (Alexi) [~10 minutes]
 - 1. A few very important points we need to ask if we are proposing UMBC to divest - The reason - not just why but with examples as to what these companies are.

V. Announcements [~20 minutes]

- A. Town Halls (Jennifer)
- B. Contact your Senators Google forms (Akash)
 - 1. I have created google form templates [here](#) which students can use to contact and send messages to senators.
 - 2. Each senator group needs to update those forms according to their liking and format and setup the way they prefer to receive responses.
- C. Important Dates:
 - 1. COEIT Town Hall - November 17th - 2pm - 3pm - ITE 231.

VI. Adjourn

- A. Meeting was adjourned at 1:20pm.

