



**GSO Senate
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 7, 2024 | 5:30 PM - 8:30 PM EST
Authored by: Abiodun Adeoye**

Executive Summary

On February 7, 2024, the GSO Senate met for the fifth regular meeting of the 2023 - 2024 academic year. At the meeting, the Graduate Student Food Service Workers presented on the state of food service workers on campus. They shared summaries and results of a campus-wide survey that they conducted in April 2023, and also spoke at length about general testimonies on the condition of food service workers and their treatment at their jobs.

The Senate considered two resolutions: Resolution 24.05, “A Resolution to Amend the GSO Constitution (Recommendations of the R&A Constitutional Convention)” and Resolution 24.07, “A Resolution Establishing the GSO’s Recognition and Support of Syracuse University’s Hourly Food Service Worker Union Campaign”. Resolution 24.07 passed with 29 Yes, 2 No, and 0 Abstentions. Resolution 24.05 was tabled and sent back to the Rules and Administration Committee for reconsideration.

The Senate also approved two special funding requests: the African Graduate Student Network and the Mathematics Graduate Organization, voted to allocate the remainder of the resigned Communications Secretary’s stipend to another budget line determined by the President, Comptroller, and Finance Committee, and also voted to excuse the Financial Secretary from the monthly GSO meetings for the first hour of each meeting for the rest of the Spring 2024 semester.

The 56th GSO Senate Regular Meeting 6 will be on March 6, 2024, at 5:30 PM in HBC Kittredge.



*Call to Order (5:53PM).....CJ A (Chair).
Quorum Reached (28 present)*

*Approval of Minutes (5:54 PM).....CJ A (Chair).
Approved without correction*

Land Acknowledgement & Opening Remarks (5:54 PM).....CJ A (Chair).

Begin Senate Proceedings (5:55 PM)

- View agenda [here](#)
- Special Guests.....Open Floor
 - Graduate Student Food Service Workers (GSFSW)
 - Approximately 750 graduate student food service workers at Syracuse University
 - Estimated 350 work across five dining halls, in food courts in Schine and Goldstein, on all 15 cafes across campus
 - Pay rate in spring 2023 was \$15.30 and now it is currently \$15.75 for general employees.
 - Committee distributed a survey in April 2023.
 - 54 people completed the survey; 48 were general employees and 6 were supervisors. 100% of them were international graduate students, all from India.
 - Questions
 - President thanked the GEIC for helping with the survey and thanked the FSW for putting together this recommendation. Hopes to see the resolution passed and hopes to work alongside the committee to address the issue.
 - Jocelyn McKinnon-Crowley, APS Mass Communications: Do you have a general timeline of when you are looking to formalize the union if you can share?
 - The first step is getting support. A majority has gotten the union card signed. Probably trying to conduct an election this semester and decide democratically again whether to join a union or remain independent.
 - Egor Zhukov, University Senator: the university may just decide to offer less jobs
 - We are essential workers and I am not afraid that the university will cut jobs. I believe that the university cannot do without international students, especially when we make up over 90% of the workforce.
 - Brinda Kumar, APS Computer & Information Science and Engineering: Speaking on behalf of me and my friends, I came here in the fall of 2023 and I still haven't gotten a job so I also worry about the university cutting jobs.



- *The university has already reached the bare minimum of students working shifts. Cutting down on more shifts would hurt them more than us. The commercial staff who work at the dining halls are unionized and they have perfect voices of what they can and cannot do. We need the union so we can do the same. They have cut down jobs because they want to save more money.*
- *Joe Beckmann, APS Mathematics: To add to what you are saying, cutting jobs in response to unionization efforts is expressly illegal, and typically it has stopped the university from doing the same in the past.*
- *Soham Sinha, APS Creative Writing: As a fellow international student also from India, I feel proud to see you all standing up for yourself. Have you communicated your wishes?*
 - *There is no channel of communication between the student employees and food services. We have tried to express concern but since we are not unionized, it becomes more challenging and the university does not take it well. We try to stand up for ourselves but it is not taken seriously.*
- *Daniel J. Kimmel, President: Ever since the GEIC passed the survey last year, we have been trying efforts to get these things communicated upwardly. We finally secured a meeting with John Papazoglou but he said some of these reforms are harder to implement.*
 - *GSFSW: Thank you for communicating these concerns, but things have gotten worse this semester. For example, we are supposed to be entitled to 15 minute breaks if we work four or more hours. To tackle that, they took away 4 hour shifts.*
- *Anna-Blessing Merife, APS Bioengineering: Are you going to be implementing proper training standards to avoid the situations you described?*
 - *GSFSW: Absolutely. When I came in, I learned on the job. Just a week ago, a student spilled boiling water on his feet and he had blisters all over. He missed his shift and took an entire week off, when he came back, nobody had an answer.*
 - *Is there a protocol or a workbook?*
 - *GSFSW: There is an incident report form but he does not know about it, nor do many other students. As a supervisor I know about it and if he had told me the situation, I would have been able to assist him properly,*
 - *GSFSW: They give us training for understanding the rulebook, plus it is not paid. The current manager made changes to the rulebook. He said I could give you an orientation, but it is not paid for and you have to take time out of your calendar. Tomorrow they will wake up and say “we tried to give an*



orientation” but we should not have to take time out of our schedules, unpaid, to do that.

- *JT Paustian, APS Physics: When you are bargaining, who are you bargaining against?*
 - *Probably the food service directors. As an add-on, the lines are also blurry between who manages who. There are no boundaries here.*
- *Question from Zoom: are student workers required to have a servsafe certificate?*
 - *No. No certificates, no proper training, no paid training. There are instances where I burned myself but there was nothing in the first aid box. They [management] said they ordered them but they did not arrive.*

Motions and Amendments

- *(6:36 PM) Motion from CJ Arnell, Chair: Excuse the Financial Secretary from 5:30 PM to 6:35 PM for the rest of the Spring 2024 semester for a Data Management System class required for their degree.*
 - *Vote result: PASSED 26 Yes, 2 No, 0 Abstain*
- *(7:18 PM) Amendment motion from APS Philosophy : Motion to have a strict 3 hour meeting. Seconded by Egor Zhukov. University Senator.*
 - *Motion automatically tables the resolution and sends it back to the Rules and Administration committee.*
- *(7:31 PM) Amendment motion from Jocelyn McKinney-Crowley, APS Mass Communications : Motion to amend Section 10A: “or who miss three meetings total” and “attendance shall be understood as the Senator being present for the majority of the Meeting’s duration.”*
- *(7:41 PM) Motion from Jocelyn McKinney-Crowley, APS Mass Communications: Motion to waive the right to read Resolution 24.07. Seconded by multiple senators.*

Old Business (6:40 PM)

- *[Resolution 24.05](#): A Resolution to Amend the GSO Constitution (Recommendations of the R&A Constitutional Convention).....CJ Arnell (Chair)*
 - *Questions*
 - *Jocelyn McKinnon-Crowley, APS Mass Communications: I need clarification on the changing of the title.*
 - *Daniel J. Kimmel, President: This helps streamline the way the executive board functions; declassifying gives the executive board leeway to allow secretaries to not attend so many meetings as the other members. Gives them more leeway to carry out their executive duties. It is a way of bringing the secretary positions in line with their duties in administrative posts.*



- *Jocelyn McKinnon-Crowley, APS Mass Communications : Why would they be losing voting rights?*
 - *Daniel J. Kimmel: They would not be losing voting rights in the entire Senate. It is not to say their feedback or opinions would not be taken seriously.*
- *Senator: What is meant by being here for the majority of the meeting?*
 - *Daniel J. Kimmel, President: One of the things we are trying to solve for is that there have been in the past where Senators who miss every other meeting or only stay for the first 30 minutes and then leave. We do not think this rule affects most senators.*
- *Same Senator; the time length is a significant ask for most graduate students.*
 - *CJ Arnell (Chair): I do my best to push the meetings forward and get everyone out in due time.*
 - *President: I think this is one of the most important things. As the chair has mentioned, they do not want to step on people's toes. The responsibility is more on the Senators than the chair.*
- *Kothe Viswanath, APS Computer Engineering: If the meeting was planned for 6:30 M to 8:30 PM. If the meeting goes all the way to 9:30 PM, what time would count?*
 - *CJ Arnell, Chair: Senators can make amendments to the resolution. They can make a motion to do so.*
 - *[6:59 PM] I was just told it would be very tricky to do because of the variability of the exact meeting times.*
- *Daniel J. Kimmel, President: Can a member of the R&A explain the rationale behind the stricter attendance policy?*
 - *Daniel: The attendance policies were only changed to include the language "or", and the reason is because we have had senators attend every other meeting. I think it is a bad idea to specify in the constitution that the limit for the meetings should be 3 hours. It actually limits the Senate's powers. The only changes to the attendance are "three meetings" and "a majority of meetings".*

New Business (7:40 PM)

- [Resolution 24.07](#), *"A Resolution Establishing the GSO's Recognition and Support of Syracuse University's Hourly Food Service Worker Union Campaign"* (7:44 PM).....CJ Arnell (Chair)
 - *Questions and debate*
 - *None*
 - *Vote result: PASSED 29 Yes 2 No 0 Abstain*
- *Executive Board Officer Vacancy Appointment Motion (7:54 PM)*
 - *The Executive Board has determined the following and submits it to the Senate for confirmation (GSOC 2.2(d)): that*



- *The Communications Secretary position shall remain vacant for the remainder of the 2023-2024 Academic Year, and that*
 - *The Vice President of External Affairs, with the assistance of the Executive Board (GSOC 2.3(c)(i)), shall perform all duties of the Communications Secretary during that time, and that*
 - *The remainder of the GSO Communications Secretary's stipend shall be transferred to another budget line determined by the President, Comptroller, and Finance Committee.*
- *Vote result: PASSED 25 Yes 1 No 2 Abstain*

Elections (7:58 PM)

- *None; skipped*

Executive Reports (7:59 PM)

- *President's Report*
 - *View report [here](#).*
- *Vice President of Internal Affairs' Report*
 - *State of the Senate*
 - *Confirmed senate seats:*
 - *46 (147) academic program senators*
 - *6 (10) - university senators*
 - *8 (10) at-large senators*
 - *Representation*
 - *3,922 full-time main campus graduate students*
 - *1907 students currently represented (48.62%)*
 - *Currently, 107 committee members across all committees*
 - *7 Senators do not have committee assignments.*
 - *State of the RSOs*
 - *Academic: 26*
 - *Good Standing: 24*
 - *Non-Academic: 23*
 - *Good Standing: 22*
- *Parliamentarian's Report*
- *External Vice President's Report*
 - *View report [here](#).*
- *Comptroller's Report*
 - *View report [here](#).*

Special Funding Requests (8:28 PM)

- *African Graduate Students Network (\$1,362)*



- *Vote Result: Approved 19 Yes 1 No, 1 Abstain*
- *Mathematics Graduate Organization (\$2,810)*
 - *Vote Result: Approved 19 Yes 1 No 2 Abstain*

Announcements and Remarks for the Record (8:29 PM).....Open Floor.

Adjournment (8:29 PM).....CJ Arnell (Chair).