***Sixth Regular GSO Senate Meeting of 2024-2025***

***Wednesday, February 26th, 2025***

***Attendance:***

***President****: Daniel J. Kimmel,* ***Vice­ President of Internal Affairs (Chair)****: Roger Rosena,* ***Director of External Affairs:*** *Becca Vinciquerra (absent),* ***Comptroller:*** *Aditee Malviya,* ***President Pro Tempore:*** *Avery Welna,* ***Parliamentarian:*** *Joseph Beckmann,* ***General Secretary:*** *Cody Van Nostrand,* ***Communications Secretary:*** *Alexis Faison,* ***Financial Secretary:*** *Ian Wilhelm.*

***Call to Order (5:49 PM) –*** *A quorum was reached of22, and the meeting was called to order by Chair VP of Internal Affairs Rosena.*

***Motion #1:*** *(VP Rosena) Motion to accept the minutes at 5:49 PM from First Regular GSO Senate Meeting on September 4th, 2024.*

*All in favor. Motion carries.*

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

***Begin Senate Proceedings -*** *VP Rosena (Chair)*

***Elections – University Senators, At Large University Senators (5:51 PM) -*** *VP Rosena (Chair)*

*The Chair explains election rules.*

*University Senate Nominations*

*University Senators have seats in GSO Senate and University Senate. Must attend all GSO Senate Meetings and University Senate Meetings. Must serve on one committee in either organization.*

*Nominations:*

*None at the moment.*

*At-Large Senator Nominations*

*Represents entire graduate body, attend all GSO Senate Meetings, and they serve on at least one GSO Committee.*

*Nominations:*

*None at the moment.*

***Confirmation Hearings (5:55 PM)***

*Two vacancies in the Executive Board must be filled. GSO Constitution Section VI is read aloud on the Director of External Affairs role.*

*Director of External Affairs*

*President Kimmel:*

 *Former Director of External Affairs Becca Vinciquerra finished her coursework this Fall 2024. The Dean of the Graduate School thus suspended her role even though only a few months had remained. The GSO Constitution allowed Becca to continue her appointment, but the Dean made a unilateral decision to bar her from the GSO office and from receiving pay immediately. Thus, we are nominating Communications Secretary Alexis Faison to the Interim GSO Director of External Affairs Role.*

*Communications Secretary Alexis Faison:*

 *Alexis has worked with Becca in all External Affairs events and has developed a passion for the role and student government. She recognizes this nomination is unprecedented, but she is excited to take on the role. She plans to continue all previous goals such as community service events, social nights, increasing social media interaction, and more. She has a fire in her stomach that will not quit. She is grateful to have your support and is always willing to listen. She thanks Director Vinciquerra for her friendship and leadership.*

*Questions:*

*University Senator Byers: Is there actually going to be a change? Or just carrying on Becca’s role?*

 *Alexis: Hopes to continue Becca’s previous initiatives and increase engagement. She also wants to develop newsletters, update the GSO website, and introduce feedback forms.*

*Biotech Senator: Do you feel prepared in taking over the role?*

 *Alexis: She feels comfortable as she already ran all of the social media initiatives and engagement before.*

*President Kimmel: Part of the responsibility is increasing awareness on campus of GSO. How have and will you continue to innovate ways to increase engagement?*

 *Alexis: Writing press releases and interacting with independent media such as the Daily Orange will help increase engagement. Continued student takeovers of the GSO Instagram account are also planned.*

*MassComm Senator: Do you have any ideas on how to approach the press?*

 *Alexis: We have a Daily Orange reporter here with us at every meeting. We hope to continue this interaction with these media groups.*

*The floor is opened for debate (6:15 PM).*

*Vote for Alexis Faison (6:16 PM): 34 vote yes - 0 vote no - 0 abstain. Role is confirmed.*

*Communications Secretary*

*Prasad Ranka for Interim GSO Communications Secretary was recommended by Alexis Faison. GSO Constitution Section V is read aloud on the Communications Secretary role. Prasad was appointed unanimously today.*

*University Senator Prasad Ranka:*

 *This is a meaningful moment for Prasad. He hopes that every graduate student feels seen, heard, and valued, and he wants to ensure every graduate student’s voice is amplified. He will focus on three pillars in his work: amplifying awareness, expanding reach, and transferring of trust. He hopes to help develop fresh ideas to help propel GSO forward. He thanks Former Director Vinciquerra and Director Faison for their help.*

*Questions:*

*University Senator Byers: How was the Senator nominated?*

 *President Kimmel: The Constitution explains that the branch that loses a role must find another replacement. After gathering applications, Alexis and Becca interviewed the top three candidates.*

*President Kimmel: They feel that outlining recruitment strategies will be important in the future. Do you have any ideas for these strategies?*

 *Prasad: Targeting social media platforms.*

*Senator Agathe: Is this a long-term position?*

 *Prasad: He will graduate this May, so he can only be involved for this interim period.*

*Senator Byers: What is your major?*

 *Prasad: Engineering Management.*

*Biotech Senator: Is there concern in appointing a new Secretary concerning the Dean’s actions?*

 *President Kimmel: The arguments on*

*The floor is opened for debate (6:35 PM).*

*Senator Byers: This process felt very weird, and it did not feel transparent. His answer for future strategies was not comprehensive.*

*Pro Tempore Welna: The application was emailed to all graduate students, and equal access was deliberated thoroughly. Pro Tempore Welna can speak to his ability and communications skills.*

*President Kimmel: The confirmation process is present in the Constitution of the GSO. If you do not like the Executive Board’s nomination, they can be voted down, and the Senate may continue their own process. There were approximately 30 applications, and we were transparent to the whole process.*

*Biotech Senator Hellman: Clarifies that a new role will be continued in the new Fall.*

***Motion #3:*** *(Director Faison) Motion to add 7 minutes to debate. 23 in favor, 7 no, 0 abstain. Motion passes.*

*Senator Byers: They have no qualms with the nominee themselves. This confirmation just feels like it is coming from nowhere.*

 *Director Faison: Director Vinciquerra did not want to disclose what was happening until the realization that her role was fully unrecoverable. This was not until the meeting with the Dean this past Friday 2/21/2025.*

*Vote for Prasad Ranka (6:48 PM): 33 vote yes - 0 vote no - 3 abstain. Role is confirmed.*

*GSO Affirmation of Office (6:48 PM) is read by Parliamentarian Joseph Beckmann.*

***Executive Reports:***

***President’s Report (6:49 PM)***

*President Kimmel:*

 *The Senate is a powerful body, and it has priority of appointing candidates. Thank you for bringing your remarks to the debate. We are sure that these new candidates will fulfill these roles faithfully. There will be a lot of turnovers soon for those interested in the Executive Board or Cabinet positions, please reach out if you are interested in these roles.*

 *The Community Review Board, which oversees complaints about the Department of Public Safety, will require an appointment for this two-year term. If you are interested in this appointment, please let me know.*

*The University Agenda Community, including faculty, is gaining a stronger push to develop increased self-governance.*

*President Kimmel sits on a security oversite committee in which the yearly security report is reviewed. If you have any input on campus security, please let President Kimmel know.*

 *A Roman Senator always used to say at the end of his speeches: “and Carthage must be destroyed.” President Kimmel’s version of this is encouraging vigilance of student rights, which are being increasingly infringed upon.*

*Biotech Senator Hellman: Why are rights being infringed upon if not out of malice?*

 *President Kimmel: Tiny decisions such as naming GSO and Registered Student Organization and not a Student Government are decreasing our abilities and infringing on our rights.*

***Vice President of Internal Affairs’ Report (7:01 PM)***

*VP Rosena:*

 *We had a new DEIA Co-Chair named in the Committee, Ethan Jackson. If you are in a RGSO, you will need to re-register starting between mid-March and April. The RGSO Handbooks will also be receiving an update soon. If you have any questions or concerns about this, please let me know.*

***Director of External Affairs Report (7:07 PM)***

*Director Vinciquerra:*

*Here are some potential upcoming events that Incoming Director Faison will take over:*

* *GSO Service Project in March at Inn Complete for charities would allow for service opportunities, job opportunities, etc. Potential collaborators include: We Rise Above the Streets, Samaritan Center, Habitat for Humanity, and Hendricks Chapel.*
* *Grab and Go – Finals week event was successful last semester.*
* *Senate Appreciation Event – Looking for possible venues: Drumlins, Inn Complete, Sheraton, maybe others. We will have awards such as Committee MVPs, Presidential Awards, Perfect Attendance, Superlatives.*

*Strategic GSO Outreach and Engagement:*

 *We have shortened our emails into multiple intermittent emails, instead of just one large one at a time to increase engagement. We are also recruiting senators through departments.*

*Sign up for the Graduate Student “Day in the Life” Media Campaign through the QR code given here.*

*The Outreach Committee works on Wednesdays bi-weekly. If you’re interested in any of our positions for next year, please reach out!*

*Her short year in GSO has been an honor, and she hopes that everyone thinks she led the role with graces. She knows she is leaving this graduate organization with ready leaders. President Kimmel trusted Director Vinciquerra from the beginning for their leadership and honesty. She will be around the community and campus if anyone wants to reach out.*

***Comptroller’s Report (7:15 PM)***

*Comptroller Aditee Malviya:*

 *Shared link with service providers. Two new RGSOs were given start-up funding. The next meetings are on March 19th and in April. Please have any applications in a week before then.*

***Special Funding Request Applications (7:17 pm)***

*Black Graduate Student Organization: $1000*

*Education Grad Council Representative:*

*A planned brunch open to all graduate students, faculty, and staff is being planned. A total of $3,946 of costs is anticipated for a planned 100 attending students. They are requesting $1000 for this social event.*

*Pro Tempore Welna: How many anticipated people are attending?*

 *Representative: There were 93 attendees last year. We plan on reaching these same numbers.*

*Senator Samuel Prescott: Would more money be useful?*

 *Representative: Yes please.*

*Representative leaves room for debate (7:22 PM).*

*President Kimmel: Theoretically, the Senate could increase the $1000 social event cap according to the product of expected students multiplied by the student fee.*

***Motion #3:*** *(Senator At-Large Prescott) Motion to increase funding $1450.*

*Debate on this motion:*

*President Kimmel: A previous cost-sharing idea was mentioned with the Graduate School, so they may be able to help cover these costs.*

*Senator Prescott: After considering discounts, $1450 is the total cost of the event divided by two. This is the justification for this amount.*

*Vote on* ***Motion #3****: 33 vote yes, 0 vote no, 0 abstain. Motion is approved.*

*Vote (on $1450 of funding): 33 vote yes, 0 vote no, 0 abstain. Funding request is approved.*

***Motion #4:*** *(VP Rosena) Motion to have five-minute recess (7:32 PM). Majority votes in favor, passes.*

***DEIA Committee Report (7:40 pm):***

 *Co-Chairs presenting: Pro Tempore Welna and Senator Jackson.*

*Senator Jackson: Seeking out problems regarding race, gender, sex, etcetera.*

*Pro Tempore Welna: Initiatives from last semester include: survey report, bias report link, name change form, DEIA review of emails being sent. These initiatives are completed and/or left.*

*Goals for this semester:*

 *A Rare Disease Day post is coming up in which we will highlight stories on our Instagram page and the DCC account.*

*Senator Jackson:*

 *Pride Month (June, but celebrated in May on campus), Disability Pride Month, Women’s History Month, AAPI Heritage Month, and more are upcoming, and we will help give these light.*

*Pro Tempore Welna:*

 *Consolidating DEIA campus and community resources and institutional knowledge to help people be informed.*

*Senator Jackson:*

 *There is a potential rebrand of the committee to align with college-wide DEI efforts. There is an upcoming collaboration with college DEI Office. We are considering a name change to throw off attention.*

*Questions:*

*President Kimmel: What are some ideas for the name change?*

 *Senator Jackson: No current ideas, will change if needed.*

*Senator Agathe: GradCare may be an idea to change to.*

*Senator Prescott: I am in favor of changing the name to protect the institution.*

***Old Business:***

***Motion #5:*** *Motion to waive reading of GSO Senate Resolution to Override Special Programming Funding Caps Set by the GSO Fiscal Policy (7:56 PM).*

*30 vote yes, 1 votes no, 1 abstain. Motion carries.*

***New Business:***

*None.*

***Announcements and Remarks for the Record*** *- VP Rosena (Chair)*

*PoliSci Senator Koster: The summer stipend level for Maxwell Political Science students has been cut. Now these students will not be able to afford to even pay rent.*

*History Senator Fouts: There is similar pushback in the History department, and he would like to draw attention to their insisting that there is a union representative at future meetings. It seems to have helped generate protection to graduate students in these meetings.*

*VP Rosena: Our next meeting will be back in Lyman Hall March 26th 5:30 PM. He notes that people found pictures directing the location of the meeting to be useful.*

***Motion #8:*** *(VP Rosena) to adjourn meeting at 8:03 PM.*

*33 in favor, 3 opposes, 0 abstain. Motion carries.*