



**Graduate Student Organization
Senate Meeting Minutes
March 7th, 2023
Meeting @ 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Student Activity Center, Room 305**

1. Meeting called to order at **5:41 PM.**
2. **Announcements:**
 - a. Recordings of GSO Senate Meetings
 - i. *The GSO was advised by the university legal team that it is subject to the New York State Open Meetings Law. Any public body holding a meeting with a virtual component, must record the virtual component and post it publicly. In order to continue holding hybrid meetings, the GSO must therefore make its meeting recordings available in a public place for seven years. Everything that is said in GSO meetings while virtual will be accessible online. Speaker Robert Wadolowski encouraged senators to remain mindful of what they are saying. Unlike minutes, these recordings would not be edited or summarized.*
 - ii. *Speaker Wadolowski adopted a new rule for the floor. Non-voting members must have time yielded to them by one of the voting members in order for them to speak.*
 - b. GSO Lounge
 - i. *Speaker Wadolowski encouraged senators to visit the new GSO lounge in the Student Activities Center. An opening reception is forthcoming.*
 - c. [Sprintax codes](#)
 - i. *Speaker Wadolowski encouraged senators to forward emails regarding Sprintax codes to their constituents in their respective departments. These codes may be particularly useful to international students unfamiliar with tax procedures*
 - ii. Question from floor - *Why are codes released so late, in mid-March?*
 1. *Speaker Wadolowski replied that it has been an atypical year and things should be more organized in future.*
 - d. [Free Tax Preparation Services](#)
 - i. *Treasurer Chrisitne Wang provided details about a tax preparation service offered in partnership with Bethpage Federal Credit Union.*
 - e. [Free Legal Services](#)

- i. *Speaker Wadolowski reminded senators about the legal clinics that the GSO offers to its members. See flier for details.*
 - f. [SBU Recreation Center 1-month gym membership](#)
 - i. *Treasurer Wang announced that graduate students can get a one month membership to the recreation center. Students just need to fill out the form.*
 - g. [LeetCode 1-year subscription](#)
 - h. [Graduate Student Emergency Relief Fund](#)
 - i. *Treasure Wang informed the senate that the emergency relief Fund is running out. Wang encourages senators to spread word about Giving Day (03/29/23), the proceeds of which will be used to replenish the fund.*
 - ii. *Please help us advertise / find donors!! This helps fund students in acute financial emergencies (housing, medical emergencies, etc).*
- 3. Presentation:**
- a. Kaya Turan (Graduate Student Employee Union): Upcoming contract negotiations, Union membership, Parking, Living wage campaign
 - i. *Kaya Turan (Primary, Art History) and GSEU Organizer took the floor and reminded senators of the upcoming contract negotiations between campus student unions and the state. GSEU and RAU will work with a lawyer to advocate for student workers. GSEU sent out a bargaining survey. If you are eligible, fill out the survey to make your voice heard.*
 - ii. *Senator Turan underscored the importance of high union membership in order to demonstrate power to the state and make negotiations as effective as possible. Turan encouraged new membership to increase bargaining power. Turan encouraged senators to communicate this information to their departments, and any non-union senators to sign on.*
 - 1. [Become a CWA 1104 RA Union Member | CWA 1104 RA Union \(cwaraunion.org\)](#)
 - 2. <https://www.cwa1104gseu.com/become-gseu-member>
 - iii. *Senator Turan explained the university's new parking policy and how the union is working to reverse it.*
 - 1. *University administration is rolling out a new parking plan, requiring payments to be made for parking in different zones on campus. This Will affect all members of the campus community.*
 - 2. *However, according to campus union contracts, the administration is legally bound to negotiate any change in parking policy with the unions. Campus unions intend to begin negotiations after spring break.*
 - 3. *Turan encouraged senators to sign a petition or participate in Union action to protest this policy.*
 - iv. *Senator Turan gave an update on the unions' Living Wage Campaign*

1. *Beginning in October, the base stipend will go up from 22000 to 26000. However, this figure is still below the poverty line for Suffolk County, NY (33000).*
 2. *Turan reminded senators that the unions meet every monday at noon in the Student Activity Center to raise awareness for and to promote the campaign*
 3. *Upcoming contract negotiation will provide the best opportunity to increase stipend.*
- b. *Speaker Wadolowski opened the floor for questions.*
- i. *Senator Dana Golden (Primary, Economics) - How does having more members give the Union more power in our situation where we don't have the ability to walk away [according to the Tabler Law]?*
 - a. *Senator Turan responded by emphasizing the power of numbers and greater support in negotiations.*
 - ii. *Senator Tracy Radsvick (Primary, Psychology) yielded the floor to Charles Hsueh for a question.*
 1. *Mr. Hsueh: Does the university's new parking scheme address disability parking?*
 2. *Senator Turan responded that no exceptions have been clarified or announced about disability parking. Turan agreed that it is important and intends to bring the issue up at the next meeting with unions.*
4. **Starting Procedures**
- a. Quorum was determined.
 - i. *33 primary senators and one alternate senator acting as primary were present.*
 - b. Approval of meeting minutes
 - i. [December Senate Meeting Minutes](#)
 - ii. [February Senate Meeting Minutes](#)
 - iii. [February Emergency Senate Meeting Minutes](#)
 1. *All three sets of minutes were approved together unanimously.*
 - c. Adoption of today's agenda (eligible for unanimous consent)
 - i. *Motion to adopt agenda unanimously approved.*
 - d. Fix the time at which to adjourn the senate meeting to 7:30PM (eligible for unanimous consent) - **no objections.**
 - i. *Actions items not reached in time will be tabled to the next meeting.*
 - ii. *Committee and officer reports not verbally presented may be read.*

Action Items

5. Voting Items:

- a. **Vote:** Adopt the ["Resolution to Repeal the GSO Election Bylaws to Remove Requirements on Running for Executive Council"](#)

- i. This resolution shall repeal Article 1 Section 1.G and Article 1 Section 1.G of the Elections Bylaws
 1. "G. Candidates must be from a department with an active senator."
 2. "H. Candidates must have attended at least 2 GSO Senate meetings during the academic year of the election."
- ii. *Charles MacDonald yielded the floor to Charles Hsueh for a question.*
 1. *Charles Hsueh withdrew his question until end of President's presentation*
- iii. *President Manjot Singh took the floor to discuss proposed changes.*
 1. *President Singh argued that changing the bylaws removed barriers to running for office. The student activity fee is paid by all, regardless of senate participation and eligibility to run for leadership should be determined only by payment of activity fee.*
 2. *President Singh argued that attending two senate meetings does not show the kind of initiative that the bylaw assumes it shows. Singh wants to make sure that we have a successful election season and removing prohibitive restrictions will help to increase the candidate pool. Urges senate to vote to repeal these requirements*
- iv. **The floor is opened for Questions**
 1. The Senate debated the proposal and discussed its merits.
 2. Moved to vote
 - a. *The results of the vote were 20 ayes, 10 nos, and 1 abstention*
 - b. *Resolution passes, and bylaw lines are repealed*
 3. Point of order raised by Charles Hsueh
 - a. *Section 8, subsection 2, letters f+g of the constitution may invalidate the vote, as the senate had not been given enough notice to consider the changes.*
 - i. *Charles points out that it was announced on March 4, 2023, which was 3 days before the vote, not the required 5 days.*
 4. Speaker Wadolowski decides that vote is invalid and will need to be presented at next meeting so as to not violate constitution
 - i. *President Singh suggested that there should be an email vote. Speaker Wadolowski says that we are not set up for online voting.*

b. **Batch Vote:** Approve use of listed funding lines (there were already approved by the Budget Committee) to fund the respective listed [event proposals](#):

- i. **21st Annual Symposium in Neuroscience** (hosted by the Department of Neuroscience graduate students) for **\$1,700**
 1. Speaker & Conference Series
 2. Proposed expenses for speaker honorarium, travel, expenses, supplies (name tags, notepads, etc)
- ii. **Bringing Abolitionist Principles to Social Work Practice** (hosted by the School of Social Welfare Student Government) for **\$240**
 1. Speaker & Conference Series
 2. Proposed expenses for 3 speaker honorariums
- iii. **Spring Ball 2023** (hosted by the Indian Graduate Student Association) for **\$2,750**
 1. General Cultural & Social Events for **\$2,000**
 2. Productions for **\$750**
 3. Proposed expenses for food, DJ, decorations, gifts
- iv. **Nowruz Iranian New Year** (hosted by the Iranian Graduate Student Association) for **\$2,000**
 1. Proposed expenses for food, drinks, supplies
- v. The senate had no discussion points; no objections to voting
- vi. **Moved to voting without objections**
 1. *30 Senators were in favor of approving the use of listed funding lines for all events. Zero senators were not in favor.*

c. **Actions items from the floor (if any)**

6. **Discussion Items (Non-binding Resolutions):**

a. **Speaker continues current discussion on Invalidated Vote**

- i. Speaker reopens floor to discussion on invalidation of earlier vote.
- ii. Will MacDonald (Primary, Social Welfare)
 1. *Believes it best to wait;*
 2. *Speaker Wadolowski –believes it best to take vote as gauge of general sentiment for those considering it going forward*
 3. *President*
 - a. *Not proposing something unconstitutional, only proposing email vote which he learned was not possible*
 - b. *Encourages everyone to run*
 4. *Susie (primary, psychology)*
 - a. *Is it possible to amend the resolution, dropping it from two meeting attendance to one meeting attendance.*
 5. *PhD candidate and prescient of iranian graduate association*
 - a. *Regardless of election requirements , points out that there needs to be greater transparency about Senate meeting dates; should be announced to all members*

- i. Recreation - mostly processed through mid-Dec
 - ii. PDF - mostly processed through mid-Nov
 - iii. RAP - mostly processed through end-Nov
 - e. [IRS per diems](#) / [foreign per diems](#)
 - i. NYC rates: breakfast \$18, lunch \$20, dinner \$36, incidentals \$5
 - ii. Budget committee recommends daily meal cap for \$80 to make processing more efficient
 - f. **Assistant Treasurers' Report:** Chandrasekhar Thammisetty, Akshay Kurup, Mahsa Bargahi
 - i. Processing fall 2022 reimbursements
- 11. **Secretary's Report:** David O'Donoghue
 - a. Verifying and Updating Records
 - b. Election Committee Meeting
- 12. **Speaker's Report:** Robert Wadolowski
 - a. February Legal Clinic Held
 - i. Technical issues prevented initial date, need to reschedule 2 applicants
 - b. DTA Committee Meeting
 - i. Overview of application materials, scoring criteria
 - ii. Review process for Fall 2022 applications is almost complete
 - iii. Will announce Spring 2023 cycle and Fall 2022 awardees very soon
- 13. **Officer Reports**
 - a. **Graduate Student Advocate's Report:** Alexandra Checkers
 - i. Reviewing Graduate Student Emergency Fund Applications with ISA
 - 1. This year we have reviewed 24 applications and awarded 10 funding
 - b. **International Student Advocate's Report:** Gaelle Aminata Colin
 - i. Set up the international pals program and paired mentors and Mentees
 - ii. Met with ISA committee to discuss the international pals event
 - iii. Organized event for the international pals with PDs and Vice President
 - iv. Organized and set up the food drive around campus
 - c. **Media & Communication Specialist's Report:** Tiffany Martino
 - i. Created advertisements for GSO Game Night and shared across social media platforms
 - ii. Drafted and sent out bi-weekly newsletter
- 14. **Committee Reports**
 - a.
- 15. **Old Business**
 - a.
- 16. **New Business**