



Associated Students of Columbia University

G.S. STUDENT COUNCIL

Website: <https://gssc.gs.columbia.edu/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/yourgssc/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/yourgssc>

Contact Email: GSSC@columbia.edu

Meeting Location: Zoom, <https://columbiauniversity.zoom.us/j/8473653328>

GENERAL STUDIES STUDENT COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

November 16th 8:15PM

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the **General Studies Student Council of Columbia University** will hold a **REGULAR** meeting on **November 16th** at **8:15PM**. The meeting information is noted below. The General Studies Student Council reserves the right to suspend the orders of the day if necessary to conduct business. All General Studies Student Council meetings are held in locations that are wheelchair accessible. Other disability-related accommodations will be provided to persons with disabilities upon request. Persons requesting such accommodations should notify the General Studies Student Council Chair at sat2198@columbia.edu no less than three (3) working days prior to the meeting. The General Studies Student Council will make efforts to meet requests made after such date, if possible. Please also contact the General Studies Student Council Chair for any agenda related questions.

I. ORDER OF BUSINESS

A. Call To Order

B. Roll Call (* → indicates non-voting | ~ → indicates Interim Position)

OFFICERS	STATUS	OFFICERS	STATUS
*President Serengeti Timungwa	P	VP of Finance Simas Chacar-Palubinskas	P
Chief of Finance Alan Han	P	VP of Policy Kambi Gathesha	E
Chief of Policy Stephanie Pierre	P	VP of Campus Life Cole Wagner	P
Chief of Campus Life Emily Robinson	P	VP of Communications Brian Laurito	P
Chief of Communications Siena Iwasaki Milbauer	P	Veteran Students Rep Alejandro Rojas	P
Int'l Students Rep Carol Chen	P	University Senator Jeremy Wahl	P
Senior Class President Rachel Harris	P	Senior Class VP Nick Li	P
Senior Class Treasurer Garrett Gregor-Splaver	P	1st Year Class President Nasser Odetallah	P
1st Year Class VP Han Qing	P	Health & Wellness Representative	
External Events Chair Alex Starzyk	P	Family and Working Students Rep Shatize Pope	P
Alumni Affairs Rep Mike Kim	P	Dual B.A./Joint Program Rep Evan Rork	P
Community Services & Sustainability Rep Faith Grady	P	Treasurer June Lim	P
JTS Rep Josh Brunnlehrmann	P	Student Services/Academic Affairs Rep Andre Moutafov	P

Diversity & Equity Rep Rubaab Poonawala	P	Students w/Disabilities Rep Erin O'Bannon	P
Tech Chair Catherine Sun	P	Social Media Rep Lisa Cardoso	P
*Legislative Assistant Ferdinando Castro Gonzalez	P	*Legislative Assistant Kyle Gordon	P
*Advisor Sean Trulby		Chief Negotiator Katie Peters	P
*Advisor Ashley Johnson		Voting Members: 30 / Quorum: → 20 / Total: 29	

C. Adoption of the Current Agenda for November 16th, 2021 -> Pass/Rejected

1. Motion passes

D. Adoption of Meeting Minutes from November 9th, 2021

1. Motion passes

I. REPORTS

A. President

1. Opening Remarks
 - a. As we go into holidays, try to wrap up some assignments in your committees, keep track of deadlines

B. Policy Committee

1. SWC Strike Statement of Solidarity Update
 - a) Kambi sent out the Statement of Support for Grad Student Strike to rest of GSSC
 - (1) Would like to hear responses via email or during the meeting
 - (2) Serengeti: Will be voting on statement of solidarity in new business
 - b) Last week formulated an email to VP of Dining to set a meeting. The meeting will happen 12/3 (Andre and 1 other attending) to talk about issues GS folks have faced in dining this semester
 - (1) If you know anyone who has anything strong to say about this issue, please relay so those stories can be shared in that meeting

C. Communications Committee

1. Follow Our New Facebook Page ("Columbia University General Studies Student Council")
 - a) <https://www.facebook.com/Columbia-University-General-Studies-Student-Council-101384362363078>
2. GSSC Members: Take the social media survey
 - a) Around 25 folks have completed; please complete it if you haven't yet!

D. Finance Committee

1. Joint Council Cosponsorship committee met on Sunday; will be meeting on Sunday going forward
2. Where we stand in terms of funding: numbers are still in flux as FTFs haven't all gone through yet; according to the ledger our total current credits are around \$200,000 including our Dean of Students transfer and FACU (exact figures to come later)

- a) We're well within spending guidelines, internal fiscal standards and the record of GSSC finances in the past; Strong ability to host events going forward

E. Campus Life Committee

1. GSSC Volunteers for Holiday Mugs
 - a) Tree Lighting Planning is happening; we will need lots of volunteers to run things.
 - b) Holiday mugs will be distributed on the day of the event around Butler; design was made by CCSC and Faith is ordering
 - c) We need volunteers to put a package of Swiss Miss in each mug the week after Thanksgiving in preparation for the event on December 3rd; Google form will go out shortly
2. Lerner Pub Update
 - a) On December 3rd; working with UEM to find a space (should know by next week)
 - (1) Serengeti: Now that Lerner pub is on (4-school event), where is the senior-specific event at?
 - (a) Cole: Event going forward (Dec 10th)
 - (b) Rae: Only place we can use is Ansell plaza so that's why it is the 10th.
3. Snack Attacks Sponsorship
 - a) GS Alumni Office will be sponsoring one of our Snack Attacks; will be working with them soon to set a date where they will pay for one of the Finals Snack Attacks

F. University Senator

1. Update on the Potential Renaming of Thorndike Hall
 - a) Issue we're beginning to look into: TC Building Name Change
 - b) Krystal will speak on the history of the building in question; we're hoping to draft a statement of solidarity for presentation at next week's meeting
 - c) Ferdinando: We cannot vote on it today as it'll be introduced in Public Comment but pay attention as the Policy Committee will be drafting a statement of solidarity for next week and we'd like everyone's input

II. NEW BUSINESS

A. SWC Strike Statement Comments

1. Motion to Support the SWC Strike Statement of Support

- a) Joshua: The current strike is also difficult for undergraduates and we should acknowledge that in our language and advocacy
 - (1) Rubaab: We discussed Joshua's concerns in Policy Committee meeting and would like to address it; we also need to be cautious when expressing these sentiments to administration--use diplomatic language
- b) Katie: Did everyone receive my comments over email? I want to point out that Columbia has had record-breaking profits, GS pays per credit so this is our money and we want to see it supporting the TAs; put heavier emphasis on sexual harassment issues and need for

third-party arbitration; use stronger wording, qualitative/quantitative data

- c) Emily: Background wise, has anyone on Policy been in contact with SWC? Has anyone from SWC reached out or is this our own initiative?
 - (1) Several people on policy are doing research, spoken with the Press person for the strike about how to support as undergrads
 - (2) Organizers did not reach out to GSSC for support but did make a general call for students to take action; there is precedent for councils to speak up because it affects how students can learn (last year we included a statement asking the University to bargain in good faith for the betterment of undergrads)
- d) Rae: Have we heard from the student body? GSers have varying opinions so it would be good to get some understanding of their thoughts on the issue
 - (1) Policy has internally debated how strong the letter should be, what iteration we should use, etc.
 - (2) Serengeti: As council, we need to grapple with how to best represent the student body. We can't survey students for every individual issue but we need to try and stay tuned into the general sentiments of the student body
- e) Siena: To express sentiment that GS students are having issues during the strike but still staying in solidarity, potentially use talking point that effects are being had on GS student body because the needs of workers haven't been met yet. So acknowledging the effects of the strike on the GS undergrads, but making sure responsibility for those effects is being directed appropriately (i.e. at University since they are the ones failing to be a fiscally responsible employer and educator)
- f) Simas: Fiscal background for statement--focus significantly more on tuition as investment in education and the university's responsibility to adequately pay its workers as part of our education (if our TAs are unhappy, our education suffers); don't phrase recent growth in endowment as "profit" perse, the endowment is very complicated and ruled by Congress to protect donor intent so it's difficult for University to use funds outside of original intent (usually for Financial Aid for CC) -- maybe don't include in the letter
- g) Evan: Agrees with Simas; question for Rae: is dissatisfaction with strike directed at SWC or the administration?
 - (1) Rae: There is anger at administration but have also heard concerns about how the SWC's strike will impact undergrads
- h) Katie: We're safe advocates for issues so take that into consideration while writing the letter

i) Motion fails

2. Motion to edit current statement based on comments and present it again next week:

a) Motion passes

B. First-Year/Senior Class NYC Tour - Winter Village

- 1. Excursions throughout NYC so folks can meet each other; tours throughout NYC to achieve this goal
 - a) Nasser: Joint event between First-Year and Senior Classes as a way for First-Years to learn more about NYC through guidance of Seniors

- (1) First-Years have expressed sentiment that it's been difficult to socialize with others due to restrictions; tours would alternate between Nasser's tours and Carol's tours
 - b) Carol: For anyone (especially international students), we can explore the diversity of NYC by visiting different neighborhoods
 - (1) Hoping to conduct at least 2 or 3 tours by the end of the semester
 - c) Outdoor events so skips a lot of major covid-related logistics issues
 - d) Actual tours are free (metro cards are provided by motion passed last meeting). Meet at Lewisohn.
 - (1) After folks leave campus, they can split from the tour and that is no longer the tour's responsibility
 - e) First tour (Nasser) Sat 12/4 at 11am, Winter Village at Bryant Park
 - f) No motion, but wanted to update the GSSC so folks know what is going on
 - g) Forms will go to the Comms team to promote the events
 - h) If folks have ideas for future tours or want to volunteer for tour guide positions; please email Nasser and Carol
 - i) Erin: Sounds like such a fun idea, but you mentioned that if people do their own thing that's not our purview. I was curious if we would ever be held accountable if something bad happened to someone who went on the tour.
 - (1) Nasser: Messaging would provide a rough description, why we chose it, and a very rough "take this train to get there" description. Specifically I want to keep my tours to locations and areas that are outdoors. I don't want to make people feel like they need to go indoors or eat indoors. My idea is that we are encouraging folks to meet up, distributing free metro cards, encouraging them to stay together and bond. But what they do after that is on them, not our responsibility.
 - (a) Emily: Long history pre-covid of student life doing this exact kind of thing. Not new, unprecedented, or unique to pandemic era.
 - j) Nick: Regarding content of tours, what did you want to focus on? Cool shops and restaurants? Culture? History? Or is it up in the air? Need to keep financial aspect in mind (don't want financial barriers to entry for students)
 - (1) Nasser: I promise to ensure that everything will be accessible financially; wants to get to know the physical locations of the city and allowing others to meet one another; the focus is bonding and seeing parts of NYC, not necessarily purchasing things
 - (2) Carol: For those leading the tour, we can consider what will be the highlights and we can inform participants of those beforehand so they can make the decisions for themselves
2. **Motion to approve the creation of a series of tours for the rest of the school year**

a) **Motion Passes**

C. **First-Year Finals Study Break**

1. Nasser: During week of December 13th, host low-stress study break in GS Lounge; buy board games/individually wrapped candy and have them in lounge as way for students to relax
 - a) Use \$300 out of First Year Class Budget (currently has \$4000); doesn't intend to use all \$300 but wants wiggle room
2. **Motion to approve the use of \$300 for the financing of the First-Year Finals Study Break event**
 - a) **Motion Passes**

D. Senior Cruise Presentation

1. Senior Cruise is a tradition for Seniors; after graduation, we go on a cruise
2. Allocate \$30,958 from senior class budget
3. Guest count is 500, any Senior who wants to attend must buy a ticket and those payments will go back into the Senior Class Budget
4. Emily: Will we include 2020/2021 Seniors?
 - a) This event will be for only 2022 Seniors
5. Serengeti: How many graduating seniors are there?
 - a) The total is 681 (not all Seniors would be able to attend but this happens every year) → tickets always sell out
6. Serengeti: Previous years, Seniors could bring family. Will that be able to happen again/have they been included in the 500 headcount?
 - a) If non-CUID holders are allowed to come, that will be on the table
 - b) Current restrictions keep it to only CUID holders, but if that raises it will still only be 500 people total (meaning seniors and their guests)
7. **Motion to allocate \$30958 from the Senior Class Budget to the Senior Class Cruise**
 - a) **Motion Passes**

III. STANDING BUSINESS

- A. No Updates

IV. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE FLOOR

This time is reserved for any General Studies Student Council Members to make announcements on items not on the agenda. A time limit of three (3) minutes per speaker and (25) twenty five minutes total shall be observed. **NO** action will be taken and the total time limit for this item shall not be extended.

- A. Simas: Wants to update on budget
 - a. Earmarked for spending: \$237,400.20
 - b. Total remaining \$412,719.20
 - c. Email when you've sent the FTF; you'll get a pdf back
- B. Serengeti: Wants to commend the team on the statement they've come up with; being voted down does not mean it's a failure, simply want to do more work on it

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

This segment of the meeting is reserved for persons desiring to address the General Studies Student Council on any matter of concern that is not stated on the agenda. A time limit of three (3) minutes per speaker and ten (10) minutes per topic shall be observed. The law does not permit any action to be taken, nor extended discussion of any items not on the agenda. The General Studies Student Council may briefly respond to statements made or questions posed, however, for further information,

please contact the General Studies Student Council President at sat2198@columbia.edu for the item of discussion to be placed on a future agenda. (Brown Act §54954.3)

A. Shaqed Tzabbar (along with Zachary Becker): Wants to present a resolution created by university students that defines and condemns anti-Semitism

B. Document detailing proposal:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1YSODORoOD3D7ehYzMytAuol4y-MT_EEPp7YM2l8STZEK/edit?usp=sharing

a. Zach: Group of students noted a rise in anti-Semitism nationally and at Columbia (reports of swastikas, bomb threats at JTS)

b. Want to address generalizations/stereotypes, scapegoating of Jews, holocaust denial

i. Want to address accusations of disloyalty

c. Want GSSC to vote on and approve their definition of anti-Semitism

d. Comments/Questions:

i. Joshua: Can each speaker have 3 minutes?

1. Serengeti: It's really 3 minutes per party; they have 10 minutes for clarifying questions

ii. Jeremy: Can you clarify whatever it was you didn't have a chance to present?

1. Zach: We understand anti-discrimination policies are already in place but we'd like ones that are more specific as we feel they don't do enough

2. Shaqed: We've presented this definition at other student councils in the University as well

iii. Erin: How would it be enforced?

1. Shaqed: Working on creating surveys to gauge extent of anti-Semitism on campus; creating an accessible place for those who have experienced anti-Semitism/hate

iv. Faith: What is the ask of Council? What actions can we take?

1. Zach: Want the resolution to be given a sense of legitimacy and want councils to be voices for their Jewish communities; want council to formally condemn anti-Semitism in an explicit way to show that we do not condone hate

v. Stephanie: Policy has discussed coming out with a statement as other groups have been talking about discrimination and reached out for support; want to include as many people as possible as many groups are dealing with similar issues

vi. Serengeti: Could you clarify which councils you're working with? Have they voted on it or given you feedback? What can the council do? We don't have precedent for definitions condemning anti-Black racism, transphobia, etc.

1. Shaqed: SGA is voting on the definition this week, as is SEAS; they've been working with SGA for months to gauge anti-semitism on campus and develop resources; will be going to CC next week to present

a. Hoping to take action to prevent anti-semitism

2. Zach: A guide as educational resources/opportunities and moving expectations forward; not meant to be

exclusive, want to be impetus for other groups to create similar resolutions

- vii. Serengeti recommends reaching out to Policy, seeing how we can collaborate further
- C. Krystal Cruz: Wants to rename Edward Thorndike Hall to Edmund Gordon Hall
 - a. Would make us the third Ivy League to have a building named after a Person of Color
 - b. Thorndike was eugenicist, so having his name on the tallest campus building on campus was extremely insensitive, especially in light of anti-Semitic attacks on campus
 - c. Report on re-naming, including reasons for Gordon be chosen as new building namesake:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xdXMnbMcUX8mjmjidaBiFj5fY41ff8N1/view?fbclid=IwAR16n2NgLLBfOgN5KWOPv1yDe6CXBEoAZe3wo73d4boBVdbEjQ6krrDXqj8>
 - d. Wants us to sign [the petition](#) and draft a statement of support to show student support for the project of renaming the building
 - e. Questions/Comments:
 - i. Jeremy: Could elaborate on reasons why this particular time is important? Could you reiterate the GS connection?
 - 1. Krystal: Connection to GS is the GS Social Justice Medicine group supported the initial removal of Thorndike's name and provided that effort with academic legitimacy
 - 2. Krystal: Time is of the essence because Edmund Gordon is 100 years old and still alive; He could watch the ribbon cutting ceremony and supports the effort to rename the building
 - ii. Simas: Why Gordon specifically?
 - 1. Krystal: Gordon reversed the eugenicist ideals of Thorndike through his accomplishments; his wife was also a part of the Columbia community, they've both devoted their lives to our community; we don't need money, it's already been paid for through tax payer dollars (Department of Education grant) so we just need the Board of Trustees to take action
 - iii. Serengeti: Reach out to policy to have a council member support a statement and put it to vote
 - 1. Ferdinando has a draft already in the works

VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

This closed session is reserved for any General Studies Student Council Members to discuss and possibly take action on voting in the nominees for various, posted, council vacancies. The public, and the nominees, will be asked to step out of the room while the council conducts this business.

VII. ADJOURNMENT