



Associated Students of Columbia University

G.S. STUDENT COUNCIL

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

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

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Contact Email: GSSC@columbia.edu

Meeting Location:

<https://columbiauniversity.zoom.us/j/91508578336>

GENERAL STUDIES STUDENT COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

March 8th 8:15PM

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the **General Studies Student Council of Columbia University** will hold a **REGULAR** meeting on **March 8th** 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	U	VP of Policy Nasser Odetallah	P
Chief of Policy Stephanie Pierre	E	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	E
Senior Class President Rachel Harris	P	Senior Class VP Nick Li	P
Senior Class Treasurer Garrett Gregor-Splaver	P	1st Year Class President Faith Grady	P
1st Year Class VP Han Qing	P	Health & Wellness Representative Bruce Goumain	P
External Events Chair		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		Treasurer	
JTS Rep Josh Brunnlehrmann	P	Student Services/Academic Affairs Rep Andre	P

		Moutafov	
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: 28 / Quorum: → 19 / Total: 25	

C. **Adoption of the Current Agenda for March 8, 2022 -> Pass/Rejected**

1. **Motion Passes**

D. **Adoption of Meeting Minutes from March 1, 2022**

1. **Motion passes**

II. **REPORTS**

A. **President**

1. President's Remarks

- a. Selected Elections commission chairperson at the last minute; were to extend an invitation to the next candidate to be a commissioner (as they had agreed in their application). Unfortunately, the candidate who was offered the commissioner role rejected the nomination. We put out another round of applications and have had few applicants, but we will continue to push for applicants. If you know anyone who would like to get involved in GSSC, please let them know (keeping in mind we need objective, balanced folks)
- b. Met with Deans recently (will be sharing updates in executive session); went fairly well
 - i. Discussed about GSSC initiatives (Latin diplomas; wise to get insight from the student body on that initiative)
 - ii. Will be trying to keep these monthly meetings going
 - iii. Will also be meeting with CCSC rep tomorrow about expansion conversations (how GS can be represented in potential survey on expansion)

B. **Policy Committee**

1. Dean Rosner Meeting Debrief

a) Nasser met individually last Wed

- (1) Talked about P/D/F (decision was made right before the meeting, the deadline has been expanded to the last day of classes for just this semester, cannot PDF core or major classes)
- (2) The expansion: will be working on survey for student body including questions regarding expansion

2. Upcoming Dean Meetings

- a) Meeting with Dean Rogers next week (financial aid, columbia dining); Dean Delva to discuss academic advisors; Dean Griffith to discuss wellness in general after Spring Break

- b)** If anyone has questions for any of the deans, please let Nasser know by the end of this week so he can include in his conversation
- 3. GS Deans "Map" Initiative
 - a)** Wants to specifically talk with Dean Delva about clarifying what certain Deans do, who to talk about certain issues
 - b)** Hoping to create some kind of map on the website to explain to students who to reach out regarding certain topics
 - c)** A creative way to get information out there
- 4. GS Survey Update
 - a)** We are going to split up one survey from last semester into two shorter surveys:
 - (1)** A short service on CPS and mental health (to be voted on week after break)
 - (2)** Comprehensive survey on academic issues, expansion (voting on it sometimes after break)
- 5. Constitution and By-Laws Reforms
 - a)** Hoping to refurbish Constitution/By-Laws
 - (1)** Cleaning up language to make it easier to read; amending abstention rule; potentially limiting ability of current councils to direct spending of future councils; potentially clarifying voting rules
 - (2)** Final version will be presented to full council when ready
 - (a)** Helped by Legislative Assistant Kyle Gordon
 - (3)** Serengeti: Supportive of amending constitution; we have some amendments passed last year that we can revisit eventually as well

C. **Communications Committee**

- 1. No Updates

D. **Finance Committee**

- 1. General Finance Update
 - a)** In New Business, we'll be hearing from Columbia Organization for Rising Entrepreneurs to potentially sponsor upcoming trip to Israel
 - b)** Cosponsorships/JCCC allocations:
 - (1)** CUDems leads \$2500
 - (2)** Columbia Spectra \$875
 - (3)** Columbia Iranian Students Association got \$2000
 - (4)** Lamda Ki Pi \$3900
 - (5)** CORE \$2000
 - (6)** Brazilian Students Society \$1850
 - (7)** Philolexian \$649
 - c)** Expenditures for upcoming events have not yet been reflected in line items
 - (1)** Hoping to scale up events for alumni to attend
 - d)** Budget is publicly available on website (need to use Columbia email address to access); can also reach out to Simas via email (sc4413@columbia.edu)

- e) Post meeting, the total amount of funds in our discretionary reserve is \$83,096.80

E. **Campus Life Committee**

- 1. Snack Attacks Thank Yous
 - a) Lunches Wed & Th from snack attacks
 - b) Thank you to the volunteers!

F. **University Senator**

- 1. No Updates

III. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. CORE Global Tech Trek Co-Sponsorship Proposal

- 1. \$530 co-sponsorship request for GS students
- 2. As an organization, CORE got a \$4500 travel grant from CC but \$400 from GS student life (they can only spend the CC travel grant on CC students); this is a way to provide equitable access for GSers
- 3. Going on a tech trek; first one since covid, we got to a global country and meet with startups, Columbia alumni (about 15 students go); bring these entrepreneurs back to campus to recruit
 - a) Meeting with 2 companies a day for the 5 days of the trip
- 4. Looking to offset travel costs for GS students (all GSSC money would go to GS students)
- 5. Total trip cost is about \$16800, looking to offset \$14000 of the costs and the rest of the costs will be divided equally among participants
- 6. Particular circumstance with this GS student; they need to make an embassy appointment to get a visa because they are an international student. They had to pay out of pocket to get a flight ticket because that's how you get a visa. They have spent around \$1000 students out of pocket, so this would be more of an reimbursement.
 - a) Received \$300 per students from GS student life versus around \$750 per student from CC
 - b) Previous tech treks have had significant GS participation
- 7. Don't plan to have any marketing but happy to make it known that GSSC has provided support
- 8. **Serengeti:** Three questions
 - a) Mentioned that student had to make an expedited appointment, given the fact that CORE has trips, why wasn't this planned further in advance to reduce costs?
 - (1) Typically planning for this trip begins in Sept/Oct. However this year, covid restrictions meant that there was no indication that this trip would be possible. When the travel policy was updated, about three weeks ago, that's when planning started. Was pulled together very quickly, especially since this year's graduating seniors are the last group members who remember how to coordinate this kind of trip (due to it not being held for a long time because of covid)
 - b) Will there be any way to brand GSSC on social media?

- (1) Happy to give GSSC shoutouts/put logo on social material; could do this during participant shoutouts
 - (2) Could also reference GSSC as sponsor if they create a recap post after the event
 - c) Do you have exact numbers as to how many GSers attended in previous years?
 - (1) For past canceled trip to Sao Paulo, 5 out of 16 participants were from GS
- 9. **Carol:** How many GSers will be coming?
 - a) Two GS members but one wasn't able to attend due to short notice financial student contributions
- 10. Will vote in Exec session
- B. Community Services and Sustainability Representative Nomination
 - 1. Nour: A current Junior in Sciences Po Dual BA; studies sustainable development; active on and off campus in relation to this role (VP of Sustainable Development Goals Student Hub)
 - a) Main goal would be to help GSSC get involved with community; allow GS students and students from all 4 schools to get involved; bring to light University's plans for sustainability by 2030 and help students be aware
 - b) Potential Events/Initiatives: Recycling in the city presentations for student groups/students; map for sustainability programs/admin on campus
- C. GSSC Wellness Run
 - 1. Bruce has come up with two events that he wants GSSC to sponsor for mental health
 - 2. Wants to organize a run on Wednesday, March 30th gam
 - a) Will be free to host and participate, no need to reserve space
 - 3. Motion to host GSSC Wellness Run
 - 4. Evan: Giving out t-shirts or swag to promote run?
 - a) Probably couldn't get it together on short notice but considering it's such a simple event, could definitely do it again with merch at some point in the future
 - 5. Nick: What makes this different from a running club? Is University Life involved?
 - a) Just low stakes to bring people together, health is tied to community so want to bring people together
 - 6. **Motion passes**
- D. GSSC x MilVets Creative Writing Session
 - 1. MilVets hosts weekly creative writing sessions; wants to reach out to them to partner so GS students can come to Thursday, 24th of March at 6:30pm session
 - a) Room is already booked, logistics in order
 - b) Will reach out formally before promotion, but should be a collaboration that works out
 - c) Motion to promote a GSSC-MilVets cross creative writing session
 - (1) Serengeti: Really cool idea; appreciate us increasing our collaboration with MilVets; look forward to continuing to collaborate with organization with big GS memberships
 - d) **Motion passes**

E. Shabbat Dinner

1. Joshua organizing a shabbat dinner

- a) Feels Jewish students are not well represented (especially with regards to Gala)
- b) Because of GS gala date, it conflicts with Passover Seder
 - (1) Flagged concerns to GSSC when gala date was announced
 - (a) Date announcement was not accompanied with a statement addressing the date choice; believes that if non-GSSC students hadn't spoken up after date was released, the GSSC would likely have not released a statement addressing the date
 - (b) Says the statement is not an appropriate apology; questions why Josh as JTS rep was not consulted when the apology was drafted
 - (c) GSSC needs to address what it will do in the future to ensure inclusion; should allow Josh as JTS Representative to communicate with students regarding their concerns
 - (2) \$40,000 deposit sends message that funds are more important than inclusion
 - (a) GSSC could have used funds to find new venue
 - (b) Council made active choice for Gala to happen on April 16th
 - (3) Why compare observances of Jewish students to other religious groups; minimizes concerns of Jewish students
 - (4) Jewish students have tried to brainstorm options so that gala is accessible to them but it is difficult
 - (a) Some observant Jews would have to walk to gala
 - (b) The Seder-food rituals are very specific and would require very specific steps
 - (5) GSSC has obligation to apologize
- c) **Motion:** To move Gala to May 7th
 - (1) Evan: Is that feasible?
 - (a) Serengeti: Historically prohibited to utilize funds for events during finals; could potentially go to administration to ask for exception
 - (2) Simas: Wants to clarify we have \$133821 in discretionary reserves
 - (a) Discretionary reserves are not directly allocated but will mostly be used to benefit alumni returning for events
 - (3) Serengeti: Events typically aren't hosted during finals because students don't usually show up
 - (a) During finals, GS students and GSSC members would be very busy day of
 - (b) An event like Gala is something people tend to prepare for
 - (c) Unsure if we'll be able to fully accommodate Class of 2020/2021 who would be expected to come back for this event and then also for graduation

- (d) Wants a workable solution; if we want to decide to forfeit the deposit we can
- (e) Joshua: Says that discussing Class of 2020/2021 is itself an act of prioritizing others over Jewish students
- (4) Carol: Could deposit be used for next year if we don't use it for this year?
 - (a) Cole: It is highly unlikely (because contract is in advanced state of process); were informed by admin that we would likely forfeit (that is where it currently stands and that is where it stood last October when the planning started)
- (5) Alan: Deeply sorry about the situation, could there be alternative accommodations for those who do choose to attend the gala on the current date? Is that feasible?
 - (a) Joshua: Would be very costly, even then would not be particularly accessible to most Jewish students
- (6) Cole: I hear and understand what you're sorry, extremely sorry. Everyone involved in planning could not see another date that could make it work; doesn't want to offer an excuse (recognizes this is a major problem to a historically significant group); wants to express that he understands and acknowledges pain
- (7) Katie: If the motion goes forward, we are going back to the venue to move the date to during finals? If that's the case, we should just forfeit the money. With regard to Shabbat rules is there a way to open earlier/end later to include Jewish students?
- (8) Serengeti: We should make a separate motion to change the date overall without specifying a specific date at this time
 - (a) Could look into a different date, as opposed to prescribing a date during finals
- (9) Bruce: What are the consequences of forfeiting \$40,000?
 - (a) Won't be hosting at that venue
 - (b) Would need to find new venue, host before commencement
 - (i) New deposit could be much higher but that can be a sacrifice we're willing to make
- (10) Kyle: Specifics for discretionary spending?
 - (a) \$133821: we collect the least from any council; have already received less from last rollover as student activity fee last year was cut in second semester; currently, funds go toward bringing back alum; around \$50,000 is currently flagged for senior cruise
- (11) Nasser: In the name of trying to find a plausible solution; would support voting no on May 7th motion and immediately Nasser will motion to forfeit the money, change the date, and have the people who are finding a new date present it to GSSC to make sure the financial situation and date work (giving flexibility to the folks building the event)
 - (a) Would require GSSC agree on final date and venue before booking it

(b) Serengeti: Wants there to be as much flexibility as possible

d) Motion to move gala to May 7th

(1) Motion fails

e) Motion to require a date change search and require full presentation when Campus Life has found a new date/finances and can present our options

(1) Faith: thinks we should specify that presentation be done over Slack rather than in person at next meeting

(a) Serengeti: Can't vote on large sums of money over Zoom or email; we could potentially change our rules to vote over email; or we could meet over Zoom during spring break

(b) Faith: Just mean that we can discuss the date

(2) Nick: Making a formal ask to Josh to be included in this decision making process; would it be possible for Josh to provide dates that are a no-go for the Jewish community; may be a good practice to start initiating for various religious communities into the future so GSSC can be accountable to our students of faith

(3) Cole: Wants to provide updates on what this could potentially look like; if motion passes, we will try as hard as possible to secure another date/venue; however, reality is that we might not be able to move to another date due to time constraints; were already under extreme pressure due to booking shortages by admin; wants it to be known that it might not be possible to move Gala's date at this point in time; we'd been trying to avoid this and takes responsibility for not having open dialogue, not given many options especially due to changing circumstances under Covid (weren't even sure we would be able to hold Gala until around 3 weeks ago)

(4) Carol: Point of clarification for motion – if we can't find a suitable replacement, would gala need to be canceled?

(a) Nasser: Would require CL to present potential other dates/venues; at that point we can vote to move date, keep date, not hold Gala at all if that is the only possible solution

(5) Evan: Can we move Gala to earlier in the day? Is that a possible solution?

(a) Joshua: Still not accessible

(b) Serengeti: As a Muslim, would be fasting during the day due to Ramadan (would allow for little

f) Motion passes

(1) Serengeti: Thank you for being part of this conversation; I do wish we could have had a more open conversation about this earlier and come up with a solution at an earlier point. The door is always open for feedback.

F. GS Neighborhood Tours: Thrift Shopping (1) AND The Met (2)

1. Motion to allocate \$500 for these two events to spend \$250 for each tour to buy coffee/pastries for each tour

2. Carol: Would this money roll over if there are less than 50 people:

- a) Faith: We've called Hungarian Pastry shop so we will get 1 gift card for \$250 for the first tour; we will then use the money to top it up to \$250 for the next tour (anything left over will rollover)
- b) Serengeti: Do these tours leave from campus
 - (1) Yes
- c) Serengeti: Is there any consideration for the fact that folks can use their dining plan to get this coffee/treats
 - (1) Faith: Consideration is that some of these students won't have dining plans, and so this is a nice way to be inclusive and increase participation in this type of event that GS is holding regularly
- d) Serengeti: Then is thrift shopping the best idea for accessibility?
 - (1) Faith: Was the idea that we would be shopping specifically for gala (and will adjust based on gala changings); currently the tour is scheduled for 3/26
 - (2) Serengeti: We may need to either push date or change branding of the tour to not be a gala-themed event
 - (a) Faith: Will likely re-brand as we still want to hold tour (going to Williamsburg to escape campus bubble)
 - (3) Nick: Is there a new Met tour happening (different than the one that just happened)?
 - (a) Faith: Yes, this is a second MET tour because the first one was popular and the exhibits will be changing
- e) **Motion passes**

G. First Year Movie Night

- 1. Spend \$2000 on a first year movie night
 - a) Cost about \$1700 but we want wiggle room
 - b) Rent Lerner cinema for the night, get popcorn, sodas, and candy and watch a 3-D movie
 - c) Friday April 8th
 - d) Eventbrite link will be open till just First-years till Wed at midnight, then open to all GSers to ensure good turnout
- 2. **Motion to allocate \$2000 to first year movie night**
 - a) Evan: How much is in first year class budget
 - (1) Simas: Around \$1200; Would be fairly comfortable to add \$500 to \$600 to cover
 - (2) Have \$35,000 in student events
 - b) **Motion passes**

H. GS Spring Picnic

- 1. **Motion to allocate \$2000 dollars for spring picnic**
- 2. Can reserve Lewisohn Lawn for April 29th; will throw picnic for everyone to encourage community building outside of Lewisohn
- 3. Simas: Are we going to put this on the 1st year line item or student events line item?
 - a) Faith: Student events
- 4. **Motion passes**

IV. STANDING BUSINESS

V. 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.

Erin: Everyone who has spoken tonight has been very brave, especially Joshua. Also want to commend Student Life Committee for all their work over the past semester; we should appreciate the difficulties they've faced and everything they've done

Serengeti: Agreed, thank you for working around the trials and tribulations of the pandemic to provide

VI. 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)

Avidan: Appreciates the meeting taking place, thinks Joshua did a great job speaking for religious students; doesn't see it being possible that we can resolve the issue (has knowledge of the events space in NYC); But for the future, we need to ensure it won't happen again (no section of the GS community should be excluded at any time)

Matt: Graduated in 2020, excited to celebrate in May alongside Classes of 2021 and 2022, wants to thank council from last year and this year to keep alum in mind, glad Senior class was able to get back deposits for Senior Cruise; grateful for GSSC keeping alum in mind and wants to be more of a presence in the coming months; asks GSSC to push along request to admin to get more communication from administration

- **Serengeti:** for travel fund, still working out how it can be utilized; want to be inclusive of alum who missed out; will try to ensure that Alumni Relations will keep you up to date
- **Rachel:** Has also been getting questions from alum; Class Day will be May 16th; Commencement for 2020 and 2021 will be May 19th
 - **Serengeti:** Can we include 2020 and 2021 in the GS Facebook 2022 group? Regardless, please do stay in touch with Senior Class President Rae Harris

VII. 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.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT