



22nd of October, 2024

GENERAL BODY MEETING

I. ORDER OF BUSINESS

- a. Call to order
- b. Roll Call

Officer	Status
President Maya Platek	P
VP of Policy Oscar Wolfe	P
VP of Finance Eric Yu	P
VP of Communications Isabel Tenney	P
VP of Campus Life Caitlin B. Anderson	P
Chief of Policy Marquise Johnson	P
Chief of Finance Adam Platek	P
Chief of Communications Haya Fine	P
Chief of Campus Life Chaya Droznik	P
*Academic Affairs Rep. Nora Zhu	P
First-Generation, Low-Income, and Working Students Representative Janel Perez	P
Veteran Students Rep.	
Students with Disabilities Rep. Paul Audoin	P
Diversity & Equity Rep. Jessica Kim	P
Health & Wellness Rep. Eleanor Robins	P
*Commuting Students & Students with Families Rep.	
*Policy Coordinator Peihan Ge	P
*Policy Coordinator	
*Policy Coordinator Galia Labowitz	P
*Student Body Liaison Rex Park	P
*Student Services Rep. Alec Rodriguez Stangle	P

Officer	Status
Treasurer Venska Pongoh	P
*Finance Coordinator Irene Souny	P
*Finance Policy Advisor Brea Sloboda	E
Social Media Rep. Maeve Sheehan	P
Technology Chair Sophia Ho	P
*Content Coordinator Thomas West	P
*PR Coordinator Amélia Pagan	E
*PR Coordinator Jeanne Fontaine	P
Alumni Affairs Rep. Anna Hazolyshyn	UE?
International Students Rep. May Sin Than Tung	E
Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS) Rep. Jake Resnick	P
Community Service and Sustainability Rep. Aoife Houlihan	E
Senior Class President Taylor Moniz	P
Senior Class Vice President Evan Edler	E
First Year Class President Gloria Lee	P
First Year Class Vice President Inés Caldara	P
Dual BA & Joint Program Rep. Jorge Ballesterro	P
*Campus Life Coordinator Carina Rudolph-Math	P
University Senator Bruce Goumain	P
Voting Members: 27 → Quorum → 20	Total: 22



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C. Adoption of the Current Agenda

1. Motion **Passes**

III. REPORTS

A. President–Absence Reporting Reminder

- a. Thank you President Armstrong and Dr. Melanie Bernitz for coming!
- b. Gonna talk about Absence Reporting in exec session
- c. Dean Rosen Mentch and ? will be here next week - come with questions she will be speaking about what the 30 million and new dorm mean to GS students
- d. My one-on-ones are still happening – the link will be sent out later today
 - i. Sorry they were delayed, midterm season!

B. Policy

- a. by next week, we will fill the remaining positions (need to finish interviews)

C. Finance (Not Thomas)

- a. More co sponsorship coming
 - i. CUBE next week
 - ii. Keep an eye out for that

D. Communications

- a. Use the Whatsapp to update to related GSSC events
 - i. Feel free to put our posts in your stories, show some love
 - ii. We're a team !

E. Campus Life–Past & Upcoming Events (Haya)

- a. Shoutout to Nora and Jake for being my two amazing bball mania volunteers
 - i. They got 2nd place! The only reason they didn't win was because the actual bball player missed the shot
 - ii. In the future when it comes to volunteering we're going to have an expectation that members of council volunteer!! It's a part of your civic duty :)
- b. Another shoutout to Jake for hosting a lovely JTS/GS event
 - i. And he only spent \$6!
- c. Upcoming events:
 - i. We have Jorge presenting on a dual ba event happening next week
 - ii. Next week there will be a presentation on gala (get hype)

F. Senator (Thomas)

- a. Joined the housing committee at the policy level



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- i. Feel free to email him with concerns or recommendations
- b. Major representatives initiatives will be launched this week

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Welcome President Armstrong and Dr. Melanie Bernitz! (Haya)

- a. Armstrong:
 - i. Happy to be here and meet more of our fabulous students!
 - ii. Melanie and I take notes and try to work through the issues that you all present
- b. Melanie:
 - i. Pleasure to be here
 - ii. Interim President of University Life
 - iii. I hosted the E-Board a few weeks ago and heard a lot from them
 - 1. It'll be interesting to see if they represented your thoughts well
 - 2. We're hoping to work with the e-boards of many schools to see where these challenges, concerns, and ideas all are and how we can help you with them
- c. Jake:
 - i. Something that's really disheartening is the lack of discussion on the Israel-Palestine conflict. I want to know what admin is doing to facilitate conversations because it seems like one side is trying really hard to talk about it whereas the other side seems to not want to talk about it at all
 - 1. Armstrong: and just to be clear, we're going to take down all of this and make sure the different groups are following forward
- d. Nora:
 - i. I'm currently working on a project on increasing research opportunities for GS students. It seems that we have a lot of bureaucratic issues that we run into. We have one dean who acts in way too many roles. UGE isn't able to reallocate resources because they only oversee CC and SEAS. Broader problem of giving GS students access to more resources.
- e. Oscar:
 - i. Nora is really picking up on a theme that comes up frequently
 - ii. Many of the entities that are set up to help the undergraduate schools aren't there for GS
- f. Armstrong:
 - i. As I was talking to students it seems that nobody was aware of university life's role in addressing that



- g. Galia:
 - i. Just to add on that, there's a huge lack of communication between UGE and a lot of CC and SEAS, there's not even a platform for GS research which is a huge issue. As Nora was saying, Dean Lee who is the singular person for research is not in communication with a lot of these other branches – especially across schools
- h. Nora: We're talking about general roles of research
- i. Haya:
 - i. In the humanities research areas, different for sciences. Fellowships for humanities, there are zero available to GS students. GS students qualify for every quality except for the fact that they are GS students. Just as qualified as they are but can't apply just because we are GS
- j. Oscar:
 - i. Some of these programs were funded by an alumni donor for a specific school, these issues are baked into the institution
- k. Taylor:
 - i. I was in SURF this summer and I found a lot of obstacles due to the fact I'm in GS and some GS students couldn't live in Barnard Housing
- l. Maya:
 - i. I wanted to highlight the fact that international students within GS have more barriers in obtaining internships that in CC and SEAS don't exist
- m. Taylor:
 - i. I was also in a discussion about why GS students don't have access to certain research opportunities. For example we pay by credit, but if we wanted to take biology 3500 we would have to pay for working in someone's lab for free so a lot of GS students won't take independent research or thesis classes.
- n. Maya:
 - i. Along the lines of that it's important that fees like these get waived because we don't want students to feel like there is a barrier to them getting an internship or having research experience
- o. Irene:
 - i. Speaking to internships and job search coordinators I applied to Columbia my sophomore year from Science Po and when I tried to sign up for Handshake they told me I wouldn't have access to it until I actually arrived at Columbia.
- p. Adam:



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- i. I have a suggestion in terms of the job search aspect... we were just talking about how some research funding is allocated directly by an alum to a certain school. A lot of jobs that are based on networking and I've noticed that a lot of these people are less likely to network when they learn we're from GS. If there's a way we can try to have specific GS initiatives to help GS students enter careers such as finance, consulting, etc. this will be less likely to happen in the future.
- q. Oscar:
 - i. I think what you just saw is actually very telling about the changes that have happened in GS. There has been a pretty dramatic demographic shift in GS, it's more traditional age college kids now with the expansion of these Dual Degree programs. We're more in need of these things than ever before
- r. Caitlin:
 - i. Something Eric and I have been trying to look at this year is trying to figure out what council is going to look like in the next 5 years. We're trying to look at the budgetary concerns we've seen as a part of this year. When it comes to things like the 4 school events, we're kind of tacked on at the end because less GS students would show up, but now we actually make up just as much of a proportion as SEAS and Barnard. So we are also having to look at the fact that we're subsidizing this future ourselves, and its becoming an approaching issue that these small scholarship and funding issues aren't going to match our need in future years.
- s. Maya:
 - i. I think it's important to acknowledge that a lot of GS students are suffering financially. I think that the university has taken a lot of important steps forward, but we still have students whose basic needs still aren't met.
- t. Oscar:
 - i. For the past 5-ish years the councils have allocated money from our own budgets to help fund the metro-card program. This seems like something that should be coming straight from the University, not from our student life budget.
- u. Katelyn:
 - i. We really view it as the bridging of the gap, especially for GS – I know we talked about housing issues before but specifically when it looks at GS's unique needs the metro card program is one of them.
- v. Oscar:



- i. with the other councils their main motivation was to get ppl to explore the city and get off campus, but for us it's about the need to get to campus
- w. Armstrong: Know that there are also shuttles people can take as a means of transportation and getting to campus!
- x. Venzca:
 - i. I really want to hammer in the importance of the metrocard, I held out until 3 days before orientation for residential housing and by some magic happened another GS student had room in their apartment. But otherwise I would've been commuting back and forth from the Bronx which would have added an extra \$150 to my rent each month. Housing is a major shared issue amongst all GS students. I also have faced a lot of difficulties reaching the financial aid office, and I know a lot of ppl who have faced similar issues.
- y. Janelle:
 - i. I am also a second bachelor's student coming from Dartmouth college where I received full financial aid, which is why to my shock and surprise when I enrolled in Columbia and when I received my financial aid offer I didn't even qualify for the full tuition, and that's not even considering the fees. This is something the University needs to consider. I know we have recognized the fact that a lot of donations are directed towards specific colleges, I think it's also important to recognize that a lot of donors have no particular affiliation towards a certain school. I think it's important to ask admin if there's a chance for the bureaucracies to open up a little so GS is met with the same level of support as SEAS and CC. Anything, like small funding of things like the metro card program would be nice, but the issue of at large financial aide is still at large.
- z. Maya:
 - i. I do want to highlight along those lines that GS as a whole tends to have a student body that tends to be not as well-off as most students in CC and SEAS. If i'm not mistaken, GS has the most pell grants of any other ivy league institution. Also regarding accessibility especially on campus, a lot of parts of campus are not physically accessible even with the accessibility entrances. I also had a lot of difficulties reaching disability services during a time when I needed them. For a lot of students this is a reality for them every day.
- aa. Paul:
 - i. One of the things we will be working on is creating a way to link students with disabilities and facilities. There is no way at the moment for students



with disabilities to share the struggles that they face with Columbia. So we're hoping to work on improving that.

bb. Alec:

- i. An issue that I see GS students face as well as many students with disabilities is that they end up in the hospital and end up missing work from school and there's no viable way for some of these students to catch up. So if there's a way these students could have an accommodation to have a zoom recording for a class?

cc. Isabel:

- i. This is just a quick footnote: as of Friday SSOL does not reflect the changes in the PDF deadline. So if you opt to PDF, the old deadlines are the only things that show. This seems like a quick fix that can be made with CUIT.

dd. Eric:

- i. I think picking on the question that everyone sort of asked is really behind this desire to be integrated into the greater university be it the dorms, nsop, etc.. It would really help us to become more integrated into the overall university community especially as our new student population becomes younger and more of traditional college age.

ee. Janelle:

- i. Even though we have a lot of demographic change in terms of the GS student body we still have a large amount of older students, which makes it very difficult for them to get the waiver for financial aid from their parents, as most of them aren't working off of their parents income.

ff. Armstrong

- i. It's been such a gift to be here with you all tonight. I feel what you're feeling. We will follow up with the leadership and try to take on some of the things you all suggested.

gg. Melanie:

- i. Echoing appreciation... we will follow up.

B. Dual BA Coffee Chat Presentation (Sophia)

- a. October 29th, 1-2pm
- b. GS Lounge, Lewisohn Hall
- c. 20-25 students
- d. **Motion:** Requesting \$150 from student events line (for donuts and coffee)
- e. Oscar
 - i. Does it include JTS? - yes
- f. Maeve



- i. bc in GS lounge, how to restrict to Dual BA - jorge will know
- g. Isabel
 - i. comms: post stories and reminders
 - ii. also want footage and photos
- h. Maya
 - i. Have you considered other times?
 - 1. did not, but am fully flexible
- i. Eric
 - i. might have to order from JJ's catering
 - ii. starbucks and krispy kreme - ok nvm
- j. Jake
 - i. all GS events advertised are open to all GS students, so technically cannot restrict
- k. 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.

Haya:

- Student library advisory committee (SLAC)
 - wondering if more GS interested in being involved
 - meet x2 a semester, sit and eat lunch, talk abt how library can be improved

Marquis

- if you have issuing for housing, when send to Bruce send to Marquis as well and cc Oscar

Maya

- vote on reimbursing batteries for Marquis

??

- is there anything stopping us from putting a microwave in GS lounge - talk abt in exec

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT



This segment of the meeting is reserved for all non-Council members desiring to address the General Studies Student Council on any matter of concern, 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. (Brown Act §54954.3)

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.

Motion to allocate 2,000 to GSA Halloween event

- out of pocket will be 7,000 - so really only adding \$600 (bc of revenue)
- will also be the GS welcome back event
- will be 21+ event
- GSSC will not be on advertisement, but will be signing the contract tho
- can still advertise it
- taking out 9113

Motion: PASSES

Taylor - proposed budget for cruise - asking for \$15,000

- used to be 4 school thing but now it's just us (bc of alcohol rules)
- class day - may 19 @ pier 61, boarding 6pm, sail 7-10pm
- pricing: 52,000 total (minimum of 650 attendance)
 - \$80 per person for first 650, \$47 for every additional person after that
- keeping GS students at \$55, raising guest tix to \$80
- will not exceed \$15,000 from senior class budget

Motion: PASSES

Caitlin - tree lighting and glass house rocks (4 school events, annual traditions)

- requesting \$15,000

Motion: PASSES

VIII. ADJOURNMENT



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