



29th 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	E
*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	P
Social Media Rep. Maeve Sheehan	P
Technology Chair Sophia Ho	P
*Content Coordinator Thomas West	P
*PR Coordinator Amélia Pagan	P
*PR Coordinator Jeanne Fontaine	P
Alumni Affairs Rep. Anna Hazolyshyn	P
International Students Rep. May Sin Than Tung	P
Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS) Rep. Jake Resnick	P
Community Service and Sustainability Rep. Aoife Houlihan	P
Senior Class President Taylor Moniz	P
Senior Class Vice President Evan Edler	P
First Year Class President Gloria Lee	E
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: 29



GSSC

C. Adoption of the Current Agenda

1. Motion Passes

III. TOWN HALL

A. Welcome Dean Rosenmetch and Dean Rodgers!

a. Dean Rosen-Metsch:

- i. Has been dean for 6 ½ years, 9th Dean of the School of General Studies, also Professor of Sociology

b. Dean Rodgers:

- i. Vice Dean of GS, been working with GS since 1998, works closely with the senior team

c. Dean Rosen-Metsch:

- i. Wonderful for us to have hosted interim president Katrina Armstrong and Melanie Bernitz
- ii. Here tonight to talk about good news
 1. Giant step forward for GS, recognition that we still have a large way to go in order to support students the way we would like to
 2. Thank you to everyone here! You are here because you care very much about our school, making it better, representing different issues, here with the same goal we have which is to ensure that our student body has the best possible intellectual experience
 - a. You will be making your mark on our school and the future
 3. The news we are sharing tonight stands on the shoulders on the students before you
 4. Sent an email out to all student leaders in our different organizations who had advocated for GS students
 - a. Recognition by the university really recognizes the work of us student leaders
 5. Please continue to to work with us to make our community greater and stronger
 6. Thank you for your questions and comments last week - we appreciate them
- iii. Three Pieces to the Announcement
 1. Financial Aid



- a. Background Information: Columbia University is adding \$30 million to our endowment. Columbia's endowment is very large (in the billions). Large in the USA, not largest in the Ivy League. Endowments given as gifts or donations in particular areas, i.e. to the medical center. GS has shares of the whole endowment. GS created in 1947 compared to CC 1754, GS was much smaller. Takes time to give and build. Over 20,000 GS alumni, many of them still hitting their prime. Fundraising and developing our endowment takes time. Our endowment was \$16 million when I started. GS gave out \$43* million in financial aid last year, in return on tuition from the arts and sciences. We get a percentage back that we give out in financial aid, which works the same for CC.
 - i. Student Support Initiative: fundraising efforts to give out more money for financial aid
 - ii. University gave us \$30 million to become part of our endowment, interest is about \$1.5 million
 - iii. Allowed us to use that money to offer alumni and donors a 1 to 1 match
 - iv. It will keep going up, the amount of money we can use for financial aid
 - v. Hasn't been this kind of contribution before
 - vi. Allows us to keep moving in giving out more financial aid every year
 - vii. This money will go to the students directly more easily, PAL program, last year \$5 million gift allowed us to add more spots to the program. This endowment will allow us each year to grow.
 - viii. Giving the money to all the students now may seem like a good idea but the way we are going about it will grow
- b. No priority higher for us than to raise money and to improve the way we support our students
2. Designated GS Residential Hall
 - a. Really exciting
 - b. Capacity for several hundred students



- c. May not be ready for 2-3 years, so you may not get to live there but you are part of letting it happen
 - d. More opportunity for community and lounges and gathering places
 - e. Enormous investment
 - f. Highest priority of financial aid will go hand in hand with the residential hall
- 3. NYC Scholars
 - a. Starting small, about 10 students at Borough of Manhattan Community College, students are usually admitted to GS after two years, going to admit these students earlier after one year
 - b. New program will admit students in their first year, they stay in the second year at the Community College but paired with academic advisor and will be a Columbia student
 - i. Full tuition scholarships will be given to these students
 - ii. Hoping to expand it beyond Borough of Manhattan Community College
 - iv. Advances us as a leader as students following diverse non traditional paths
- d. Dean Rodgers:
 - i. Been working with the financial aid office for the last ten years, financial aid has always been the most challenging issue for GS students.
 - ii. This endowment, never before seen, will improve our fundraising efforts and financial aid efforts over time
 - iii. Not an immediate effect will take time to grow but compound interest is amazing
 - iv. Vast majority of this is focused on financial aid, represents so much
- e. Questions
 - i. Haya:
 - 1. Transfer from BMCC, something I am worried about is how would you prevent people from abusing it? People who apply to CC usually, would they be abusing it
 - 2. How would it affect other BMCC students applying to GS?
 - 3. How will it affect other Community College students who will transfer?
 - ii. Dean Rodgers:



1. Collaborative admissions process - student has to meet all criteria, still designed for GS students (not traditional), going to be selective naturally
 2. BMCC is our largest feeder community college - don't expect numbers to drop
 3. Not taking away any of the 34 spots, just won't be part of the NYC scholars program
 4. CUNY Scholars - financial aid scholarships dedicated to students transferring from the CUNY system (abt 10 a year)
 5. We have an incredibly diverse student body, intentional about where you go and who you partner with
 - a. Can develop interesting bodies of students with partnerships i.e. Dual BAs, can we do it locally with a school that sends us more students than any in the world
- iii. Irene:
1. Logistics of what prompted the \$30 million from the University and how do we work towards more of this in the future?
- iv. Dean Rosen-Metsch:
1. Keep being your fabulous selves!!!
 2. Being so diverse and unique and incredible
 3. People are watching carefully, other Ivies are upping their number of student veterans and transfer students
 - a. Keep being cutting edge, still competitive, but there is nothing like our school
 4. Why now is because of the advocacy of our students
 - a. We point out how integrated we are but two of the schools have commitment to meeting full financial aid and we cannot
 5. CC is many centuries ahead of us and there is a decentralized process here at Columbia both on student and our parts
 - a. Demonstrating the need
 6. Spring of '23 survey on student financial need told a lot
 - a. Data speaks
 - b. Able to use it to make the case for change
- v. Aoife:
1. Could you expand more on the residential housing plan? Working with local communities or how exactly are you going about it?
- vi. Dean Rodgers:



1. Housing in NY is complicated
 - a. Thinking about the way in which the community we hope to build with the housing
 2. We have been constrained that we don;t have enough space for our students
 3. We have been working with local landlords who have floors or buildings we can take from market rates to Columbia residential rates by subsidizing
 4. Majority of Columbia residential units are available to GS and other schools, bug investment from the school to gain support for housing
 5. That money goes directly to a private outside landlord
 6. Identified a project and put together a team, whole groups of our university working together on it
 - a. Moving from private landlord agreements to one location with an increase in the total number of beds
 - i. Still complicated
 7. Will have created the first ever cluster with over 300 students that was built for GS students in mind
 - a. Departments and teams in the University are thinking about how to make the housing accessible to everyone
- vii. Chaya:
1. About the housing, I talked to many students at risk, if there will be any students awarded free housing or if it is only subsidized?
 2. How long will the other two benefits of this endowment come to fruition?
- viii. Dean Rodgers:
1. NYC scholar program starting in pilot mode, 5 are starting in GS this year
 2. Could tale 5-6 years to expand it, still need fundraising
 3. We are not considering free housing within Columbia housing, we are aiming to meet your need in terms of housing, if students need full funding than they will hopefully receive it but it is a long term goal
 4. To students who are struggling, if you know of a student who is struggling reach out (or reach out on their behalf) to someone on the administration who will get them in touch with the right person
 - a. Wellbeing team too!!
 - b. Never want students to be homeless



- c. We can't always help with our resources or their circumstances, we can't help if we don't know the situation!
 - d. Even if we aren't successful we will try
- ix. Eleanor:
 - 1. Are there any plans to support non-dual BA international students? If so, what does it look like?
- x. Dean Rodgers:
 - 1. Yes of course
 - 2. One thing we think of in terms of financial aid, we administer it regardless if they are domestic or international students
 - 3. Institutional aid for domestic and international students is administered in the exact same way
 - 4. We are pushing towards need in all the packages
 - 5. Fundraising to support international students has always been a priority
- xi. Dean Rosen-Metsch:
 - 1. One of our biggest benefactors set up scholarships for all international students
 - 2. When we meet with someone, our goal is for more full cost attendance scholarships that's where we want to be
 - 3. When we meet people who want to support the school, we want them to support the students in different disciplines
 - 4. Another goal of our fundraising is scholarships for displaced students
- xii. Venska:
 - 1. We are hearing the term residence hall, will this be treated as a regular residence hall? Is it suite-style, dorm, etc.?
- xiii. Dean Rodgers:
 - 1. Working with design facilities and architects for design concepts
 - 2. Looking at a whole host of designs, and looking at other institutions
 - 3. Across Columbia Residential, 800 students in 78 different buildings just GS
 - a. Huge variety of types of buildings
 - 4. Leaning towards singles with community rooms
 - a. Amenity spaces on each floor clustered around rooms
 - b. Rooftop with gathering space to be used by students
 - c. Fits into the mix of things we have



GSSC

5. We will still have the other buildings and our goal long term is to increase the number of options we have
 6. Supports a typical living experience
 - a. Thinking about non-traditional students and not your standard dorms
 - b. Some doubles for cheaper prices
 7. One of the decisions we had to make is if there will be family-friendly units, but we decided against it because they need a whole different set of infrastructure
 8. Focusing on residential community building
- xiv. Janel:
1. Peers cried over the news, questions from some of the students. Do you expect to see the financial benefits in the next semester or will it benefit the further term students?
- xv. Dean Rosen-Metsch:
1. We will see the benefit right away but but it is being given to us over 3 years
 2. What it will do will allow us to improve it, small effect starting this year but the full \$30 million will be realized over time with us working with arts and sciences and central
 - a. 5% we will be having immediately
 3. Usable for fundraising so the money will go farther
 4. Last year we were able to raise \$10-15 million that went directly into current use
 - a. Getting over the finish line scholarships, students at risk of not graduating
 5. If you are a recent alum, the university is also making an investment you can see
 6. I want to be humble for our school for recognizing that our students and we still have a long way to go.
 - a. We need to do better, the university needs to support us better, we all need to do better for supporting our students.
- xvi. Dean Rodgers:
1. The biggest line item in our budget is GS financial aid
 - a. We are always improving on the total number of funding we have for GS students
 - b. In the long term it will permanently support our students



- c. Size of endowment is the biggest difference between our and CC full need funding
 - d. Unlike the finish line scholarship, this will take time to grow
2. Dean Rosen-Metsch:
 - a. While you hear from us that the highest priority is financial aid, so is research
 - i. We are working on all of this but we are making progress
 - ii. As you recognize and find things that we can try and fix together with ideas you all bring together, we are hearing your concerns, be transparent and open that's how change occurs
3. Nathan:
 - a. Why did the percentage of Yellow Ribbon recipients change?
4. Dean Rodgers:
 - a. We are committed to the 100% YRP enrollment
 - b. 2010 first entering class, first school to start the convo with the university, first to acknowledge the benefits of it with the GI bill
 - c. Huge funding resource for GS students but there are still other challenges,
 - i. The way we were able to do that is through a gift (Wang Pavillion) how we were able to get to 100%
 - d. Bancroft Research Fund we created
 - i. Able to identify endowment to permanently support GS research
 - ii. Check your newsletters!!!!
 - iii. Another place we hope to increase opportunities and support for GS students
5. Chaya:
 - a. Is there a building already selected for the new housing? Will it be close to campus or not?
6. Dean Rodgers:
 - a. Yes, it is close to campus
7. Eleanor:
 - a. How do you see GS in 50 years time?
8. Dean Rodgers:



- a. I still may be here...
 - b. Endlessly optimistic, seen it change in so many ways in the time I've seen it
 - c. In 50 years, meeting full financial need, hope that all the problems GS students have right now will be resolved
 - d. This college is certainly unique and incredible, the paths you travel, the ways you interact within our community
 - i. No other college like GS in the world!!!!
- 9. Dean Rosen-Metsch:
 - a. GS will reshape how we think about higher education in this country
 - b. 17-18 year olds, mental health crisis in this country
 - c. Taking a break or doing something you are passionate about right after high school
 - d. My hope is that within the next decade or two we will be able to truly realize our mission: access to education and social mobility!!!
 - i. So innovative in its approach
 - ii. We cross boundaries and train people to be global leaders
 - e. The Columbia core and liberal arts education is so important today
 - f. We are all in this together - be bold, be brave and push boundaries!
 - i. There is no stopping us!!!!

IV. REPORTS

A. President

- a. Had Deans for Townhall it was wonderful and see everyone interact with them
- b. Apologies about disappearing for 1 on 1, will be back soon! Scheduling them into the next 2 weeks
- c. Goes to Japan so will be meeting on Zoom
- d. Happy to meet before or after fall break
- e. Next Tuesday NO council, no council during breaks, next session is November 12th
- f. A lot to get through today and we will get through

B. Policy-New Appointments

- a. happy with way projects are moving
- b. dozen projects are being moved forward simultaneously



- c. new appts - existed to welcome!
- C. Finance (Sophia)
 - a. one co-sponsorship - CUBE
- D. Communications—Owl of the Week
 - a. trying to involve on council members
 - b. Owl of the Week - form you can fill out about yourself and can attach a photo if you want
 - c. If hosting an event, take photos and videos - so we can share!
- E. Campus Life
 - a. Shoutout Jorge for a wonderful Dual BA event today
 - b. Looking forward to Aoife's presentation later and discussing Gala...

V. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Co-Sponsorship Presentation (CUBE)
 - a. Brianna senior at SEAS
 - i. Mission statement: provide Columbia students with the ability to dance one full ballet each semester, foster an inclusive community, dancers from all levels, and wish to further everyone's education
 - 1. Entirely run by students, costumes, and sets were done by students, tons of learning opportunities, GBB recognized, 12.7% GS
 - 2. Produce The Nutcracker on Sunday, November 10th at MMAC, work in collaboration with Ballet and books - increase literacy and teach ballet to little kids (they do the little mice), the show is open to everyone for 15 -20\$, CU and Barnard get a discount
 - ii. GBB Allocation: 4680\$, got money for costuming but not theater rental
 - 1. Total working with 6549\$
 - 2. Spend money on costumes and props usually 750\$, and the full buyout is 5000\$ but they are allocating 1000\$ and 1500\$ from revenue to the buyout
 - iii. Rehearsal space: have to dance on a specific floor and the only spaces with this floor are Barnard dance studios but not allowed to dance there, so they rehearse in Bridge for Dance
 - 1. Will use revenue to pay for studio space
 - 2. Typically spend all the money given
 - 3. Pursued other co-sponsorship opportunities JCFC, ESC, SGA, GBB and Dig Fundraiser
 - iv. Eric: will only fund the percentage of GS Students, the request is 503\$



GSSC

B. Thrifting Trip–Aoife

- a. A thrifting trip to promote more sustainable clothing purchasing
 - i. And to provide a break after midterms to GSers
 - ii. To raise awareness for want vs. need thrifting sustainably/ethically
 - iii. Lower east side for location!
 - iv. Saturday the 9th or Sunday the 10th
 - v. Leave at 11am, finish at 2pm
- b. 15/20 people, happy for more but then it might be too large of an atmosphere
- c. Free event!! A signup link on Instagram/email
- d. Possible metro-cards to spare...
- e. Maya:
 - i. Don't think metro cards are doable
- f. Caitlin:
 - i. If someone wants to be on the trip but can't afford we have cash??
- g. Maya:
 - i. I think Sunday is better than Saturday because of Shabbat
 - ii. No vote if no money?
- h. Eric:
 - i. Still working on metro cards, advisor has to purchase them
 - 1. If we want extra for this, we need to propose at least 20 times 3, \$60 for this just in case
- i. Maya:
 - i. Any money not used could just be put into metro card rollover
- j. Chaya:
 - i. Are you the only one leading?
- k. Aoife:
 - i. Yes but open to more people
- l. Chaya:
 - i. Can split into groups and go to different stores if there is an abundance of people

C. MOTION TO ALLOCATE \$120 from campus line item:: **PASSES**

D. New Role Appointment Introduction

- a. Students with Families Rep. - Michael:
 - i. 1st semester at Columbia which is exciting it's been fantastic, enjoying himself and his courses aside from UW, hoping to bring in his background with his family and has met lots of different people w kids and families and



bring a voice of the concerns of people with family and bring them to committee

- b. Policy Coordinator - Ashlyn/Aislin?:
 - i. very excited to be here, 2nd semester at Columbia took a dinosaur class over the summer and highly recommend it, excited to be here and know everyone better
- c. Commuting Students Rep. - Walter:
 - i. same position last year: DBA senior and commutes from Brooklyn, not good with names
- d. Veteran Students Rep. - Nathan:
 - i. was in the Navy for 4 years stationed in San Diego, wants to be a voice for veterans and the community to the best of his abilities

VI. STANDING BUSINESS

VII. 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.

Anna - Maya will send out invite for 1-on-1 meetings every week (she's busy as hell, taking 20 credits guys)

Marquise - 1st of Nov - last day to get 50% off MilVet tix (code: Milvets)

VIII. 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)

IX. 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.



GSSC

X. ADJOURNMENT