

GENERAL STUDIES STUDENT COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

October 18th, 8:15PM

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the *General Studies Student Council of Columbia University* will hold a *REGULAR* meeting on **October 18th, 8:15 PM**. 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 President 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 Executive Board 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 Emily Robinson	P	Treasurer Kris Packauskas	P
VP of Policy Nasser Odetallah	P	Senior Class Treasurer Rebekah Cornish	P
VP of Finance Simas Chacar-Palubinskas	P	Chief Negotiator Jennifer Odum	P
VP of Communications Catherine Sun	P	Technology Chair Raymond Yoon	P
VP of Campus Life Maya Platek	P	Social Media Representative Faith Grady	P
Chief of Policy Kyle Gordon	P	*Outreach Associate Haya Fine	E
Chief of Finance Su Lee	P	Senior Class President Garrett Gregor-Splaver	P
Chief of Communications Jessica Beisser	E	Senior Class VP William Grugam	P
Chief of Campus Life Evan Rork	P	First Year Class President Robert Mueller	P
University Senator Bruce Goumain	P	First Year Class VP Jule Boudreaux	P
Veteran Students Rep DeAngelo Hunter	P	JTS Rep Joshua Brunnlehrman	E
Diversity and Equity Rep Marie Febrillet	P	International Students Rep Altynbek Tilepbergenov	P
Family & Working Students Rep Gaetan Evina Biloa	P	Dual BA & Joint Program Rep Ann Mizrahi	U
Health and Wellness Rep Allison Darne	P	Alumni Affairs Rep Katherine Zimmerman	P
Students with Disabilities Rep Rachel Papirmeister	P	Community Service & Sustainability Rep Ranni Wekselman	E
Student Services & Academic Affairs Rubaab Poonawla	P	External Events Ashley Tan	P
*Legislative Assistant Maria Monzon	P	*Campus Life Coordinator Lily Penn	E
*Legislative Assistant Savanah Shulkin	P	*Commuter Students Representative Sean Reilly	T
*Policy Coordinator Daniel LaFata	P	*Communications Coordinator Ines Ben Taher	P
*Advisor Sean Trulby		*Advisor Jawad Cipriani	
		Voting Members: 27 / Quorum: → 18 / Total: 27	

C. Adoption of the Current Agenda for October 18th , 2022

1. Motion Passes/Fails- **Motion Passes**

D. Adoption of the Meeting Minutes from October 11th, 2022

1. Motion Passes/Fails- **Motion Passes**

II. REPORTS

A. President

1. General Remarks
 - a) Midterm Season: Hope everything is going well - Go to the Snack Attacks!
 - b) Every committee should use the calendar
 - c) Fill in the roster if you want to!
 - d) Check out the 1-on-1 chats

B. Policy Committee

1. General Project Updates Meeting with GS Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Wellbeing Amber Griffiths
 - a) Making progress with the laptop program
 - b) Meeting with disabilities office in the works
 - c) A lot of our projects are awaiting Dean meetings
 - d) Introduce Gaetan and DeAngelo as new members of the Policy Committee
 - e) First meeting of Policy Team is Next Tuesday with GS Associate Dean of Student Affairs and Wellbeing Amber Griffiths
 - (1) If there is anything you want us to bring up, please inform Allision and Nasser
 - (2) More meetings To Be Announced!

C. Communications Committee

1. Instagram Posting + “Quote”
 - a) Missing quite a few responses
2. Sizing Charts
 - a) Sending the links on slack again
 - b) Fill out the forms

D. Finance Committee

1. No Updates

E. Campus Life Committee

1. Campus Life Updates
 - a) Snack Attacks are happening right now
 - (1) Tomorrow: Tropical Sensation
 - (2) Thursday: Famiglia Pizza
 - (a) Will have kosher and gluten-free
 - b) Spirit Week
 - (1) Wednesday is White Lie Day
 - (2) Thursday is Red Flag day
 - c) Basketball Mania
 - (1) Friday, Dodge 6:30 pm
 - (2) Maya will be a judge
 - d) GS + GSA Halloween
 - e) More info to come: sustainability fair, class events, alumni chat ...
2. Evan: Shoutout to Nasser for stepping up and helping out with Snack Attacks

F. University Senator

1. Senator Updates
 - a) Senate meeting on Friday: welcome to join

III. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Spring 2022 Survey Results Update

1. Nasser: Survey Results, Apologies for the long delay, it ended up being a 58-page document!
2. Recap: April Policy Committee put out a survey to outline the GS experience
 - a) Asking questions ranging from finances to health to academics to space etc
 - b) 178 responses
 - c) Over the past few months Policy team has been working on organizing the data collected to report to the Deans
3. 16 different sections
 - a) Columbia Residential
 - (1) Students are not happy with the lottery system
 - (2) Shared responses on why students choose not to be in Columbia Residential
 - (a) The price is a barrier
 - b) Financial Aid
 - (1) Charts showcasing how much student body is taking federal loans and debt
 - (2) 50% have reached the cap for federal loans
 - (3) Showcased degree to which the cost of attendance and the GS financial aid has impacted your academic decision and mental health and wellbeing at Columbia.
 - (a) More than 60% for academic decision change
 - (b) Almost 70% mention the strong impact of finances on their mental health
 - (4) 49 qualitative responses stating difficulty in costs of attendance
 - c) Dining-Plan
 - (1) People like the GS-subsidized meal plan
 - (2) Those who are not on the plan claim cost as the main reason as to why they're not on it
 - d) Academic Advising
 - (1) Specifically on graduate school advising
 - (2) Students are very unaware of graduate school advising
 - (a) Will be a goal for policy team to work on with the gs administration
 - e) Grading
 - (1) PDF Classes
 - (a) The student-body would like PDF for the core
 - (2) Over 50% of students have used PDF since returning to in-person learning
 - (3) High responses in students wanting to have PDF grading in ONE major and ONE Core class
 - (4) How useful would you find it to push back PDF deadline until the last day of classes?
 - (a) Highest rated response, 86.5% rated this a 5
 - f) Registration
 - (1) Satisfaction with the process
 - (a) Pretty mixed responses
 - (b) Not informed enough before registration
 - (2) Responses for which resources were used to select courses
 - (a) 91% SSOL
 - (b) Bulletins least relied upon

- (c) Showcasing that many students do not know the correct websites to use for course registration
 - (3) Accessibility of Syllabi :
 - (a) Low accessibility
 - (4) Course and Professor Reviews
 - (a) Negative response, as it is hard to get information
 - g) Expansion
 - (1) Overwhelming negative response to expansion
 - (a) Concerns of space on campus and general resources
- 4. Questions
 - a) Liam: Is PDF University-wide policy or just GS ?
 - (1) Nasser: It is a joint with CC,
 - (a) Barnard and SEAS have different forms of PDF
 - b) Kat: Is this survey sent out yearly?
 - (a) Nasser: I can't speak to super far back, but this is the most comprehensive one that GSSC has done
 - (b) Hope it to be a yearly survey
 - c) Su: Are some classes too expensive? What are some possible solutions?
 - (1) Nasser: The cost of attendance is too high, and pushing people to change their academic plans. I will have many updates coming in the following meeting that Policy is working on- from Deans to University Senators to Policy Updates
- B. Course Search and Registration Reform Presentation + Statement Vote
 - 1. Sent out a statement already to Council Members
 - 2. Columbia's population is growing but space and resources are not
 - 3. Registration is an area that is greatly affected by student population growth
 - a) Struggle to find course information
 - b) Last minute enrollment
 - c) Long waitlists
 - 4. Three specific issues will be presented to the Senate
 - a) Lack of a reliable and consistent course search website (Vergil)
 - b) Lack of reviews for courses, as well as professors
 - c) Lack of readily available syllabi for all classes before the first day
 - 5. Broad fix
 - a) New cohesive search system
 - b) Singular website that's more intuitive and other alternatives
 - c) Comparison with other institutions
 - d) Propose a new, cohesive course search system
 - e) GSSC is committed to working with the Senate to propose a new course search system that will fix these three issues in tandem. Ideally, this will be a singular system that is more intuitive and powerful for students, but multiple suggestions will be presented. We hope to learn from our peer institutions what is working and not working.
 - 6. Vergil Showcase
 - a) Difficulty finding courses with limited knowledge of course names
 - b) Difficulty finding course review data for courses
 - (1) Reviews are restricted if they're not super specific to the professor and the class
 - (2) They are also rarely uploaded
 - c) Syllabus Difficulty
 - (1) "Syllabus Information is not available" in most courses

- (a) Having syllabi during shopping period and registration is helpful
 - (i) Students are restricted to emailing professors for syllabi, which causes a domino effect, resulting in waitlists and shopping period difficulties
- 7. Proposed system - CourseLeafPATH
 - a) Used by Yale, Brown, UPenn, and other Ivies
 - b) Intuitive Search Engine: 3-column display, logical orders, overall more complete and efficient
 - c) Even if the system is not fully adopted, some aspects of it can be integrated to Vergil
 - d) Clean course review graphs
- 8. Next steps:
 - a) Columbia already works with CourseLeafPATH: they should be open to the idea
 - b) Voting on the statement
 - c) Presenting to the University Senate
 - d) Doing outreach to campus partners (other councils)
- 9. Questions
 - a) Marie: Very Nice, we like it!
 - b) Kat: One of the things I don't see mentioned here is the information available to me on the mismatch of information between Vergil, SSOL, and the registrar
 - (1) Nasser: SSOL is the most updated. The directory is updated at midnight (should wait a day or two for changes)
 - (2) Emily: Vergil is updated by the department, not by the registrar (have to see if it's still relevant information)
 - (3) Simas: isn't Vergil removed?
 - (a) Nasser: CourseLEAF gives a much better visual
- 10. Statement:
 - a) What we are voting on tonight is to address the three issues and go into the senate in support of statement
 - b) **Motion to Pass the Registration Statement**
 - (1) **Motion Passes Unanimously**
- 11. Huge shoutout to the Policy Team and everyone who reached out to help!

IV. **STANDING BUSINESS**

- A. No Updates

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.

- A. No Updates

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)

A. No Comments

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