

Graduate Student Senate- March 22 Agenda

Date and Time: October 13th, 3-5pm

Location: Olscamp 221/Zoom with approval

Call to Order 3:02pm

Roll Call

- In-Person: Sign in sheet
- Zoom: Put name and program in chat

Approval of Minutes (minutes not ready yet)

Elections

President

1. David M. Fisher

1. Masters of Popular Culture Seconds
2. Motion to go into Question and Answer:
 1. Professional Development Chair
 2. Second Masters of Popular Culture
3. Question 1: What is one thing you would change from your leadership this year to next year?
 1. Answer 1: I think one of the biggest things that was an issue was communication. And I think I would probably focus on improving our communication. We started working on that a little bit this year. In terms of year-to-year communication, which was my primary focus with records, management and transition processes. But in terms of real time communication, I think. There's some work that we can do to making that work better. For the most part, I think this is a question of values, alignment and understanding, the power of the communication, and having everyone get on board and the same page.
4. Question 2: Academic Affairs Representative: David, you just said about the one thing that you are going to change it's about having better communication, so we can have better outcomes from our meetings. Now, is there anything that you have in mind that?
 1. Answer 2: Yes. So primarily, our activities strategies have been relatively passive. I won't say passive I'll say, more reactive than proactive. And I think that there is an opportunity for GSS, to have a frontline approach to our activities. We get invited to do events, and then we work on doing them. I think if we kind of collect some of our recent history and information, we can strategize how we want to implement those events that we normally do. And in the terms the rest of that, I think, strategizing how we actually engage with campus is going to be our most important aspect for that.
5. Question 3: So do you have anything in mind?

1. Answer 3: Yes, I think with our new committee structures. With the Service engagement Committee. We will have the opportunity for sub leadership or a second level of leadership to actually operationalize and make sure that we're thinking of what we can do in advance.
6. Motion to extend Q&A by two minutes.
 1. Motion by First year PhD representative
 2. Second by Representative at Large
7. Question 4: I know you were mentioning communication, and we started the slack channel. I know there's been some back and forth regarding like pushing that farther, and I do think it'll take effort and convincing both to our fellow General Assembly members to make sure that they're joining in as well as the larger graduate student body potentially, so that we can really become more united and communication in a way that we haven't really been seeing. And I'm wondering like your feelings on pushing that more, and how you plan to address the communication aspect, if not with pushing slack, then what would you recommend.
 1. Answer 4: I think one of the biggest things that would give us a positive impact on better communication would be advanced notice. One of the issues this year might have been we tried to implement improved communication strategies and procedures while we were already going through the course of the year. And if we implement some new procedures for incoming GSS members in general, as well as increased communication of what responsibilities there are regarding how we communicate with each other, that that will go a long way for improving our communication strategies through the year.
8. Question 5: And in terms of slack. What are your thoughts on that.
 1. Answer 5: The particulars of which platform that we use or don't use. I'm not sure I have a strong opinion on that aspect. I think utilization is our at least my bigger concern in this case.
9. Motion to end QA and go into deliberation.
 1. Motion by Representative at Large
 2. Second by Master of Pop Culture
10. Motion to end deliberation and move into voting.
 1. Motion by Biological Sciences Masters
 2. Second by Masters of Popular Culture
11. David M. Fisher Elected 24 Yay, 1 Nay, 3 Abstain

Vice President

1. Syeda Zainab Akbar Lnu
 1. Second from Academic Affairs Representative
 2. Motion to go into QA
 1. Motion by Philosophy PhD
 2. Second by American Culture Studies PhD

3. Question 1: As the current Vice President the job can be stressful and overwhelming at times. How do you handle a lot being thrown at you, especially last minute?
 1. Question 1 Answer: I'm hoping you're leaving me blue baby strength, but otherwise more serious. Note. I think I've seen 2 sides. I think I'm a person who's a workaholic. So I mean, considering the roles that I see you doing about, you know, organizing meetings, about doing events and about like reaching out to people in communication. yeah, I think what I would need to work on is organization of all of this. But I believe I can manage since I'm a pretty good multitasker and considering no classes, I would love to do this, and it, it sort of does work for me in many ways. I have been in pretty stressful situations like this with my previous experience in my job.
4. Question 2: I heard you saying about focusing on both the effectiveness and efficiency. And I know that David focused on the effectiveness for the past year. Now, from your own experience throughout this whole year. do you have any plan as of how you are going to improve efficiency, and we did not even touch on it this year.
 1. Question 2 answer: Thank you for the question. I think I've always constantly, found myself, trying to do some marketing and outreach for GSS, without anyone asking me, because I'm like, hey, this is such a great opportunity. You need to see it kind of a thing. So, in terms of like organization and efficiency. I think timeline, wise planning and in terms of outreach is something that would be very necessary because we are doing the work. It just needs to reach the enough people. So, the sort of like increasing efficiency in sort of communication channels in terms of streamlining processes which we have done a lot this time, but sort of make it more nuanced. Effective, I think. And, just organization, how we function, how do we communicate with each other that seemed like with slack. It sort of has improved. So, I want to sort of use these trends and affordance of slack to be able to, you know, do this better, and those kind of stuff.
5. Motion to move to deliberation.
 1. Motion from First Year PhD Representative.
 2. Second from Biological Sciences PhD
2. Syeda Zainab Akbar Lnu elected 25 yay, 1 nay, 2 abstain

Academic Affairs

1. Madison Alteri
 1. Second by Popular Culture Masters
2. Mmadubuchi Godsgrant Akujuobi
 1. Second by the Academic Affairs Representative

3. Motion for QA
 1. Motion by Masters in Sociology
 2. Second by Interim Environmental Affairs Representative
4. Question 1: Godgrant can you elaborate a little bit more on the graduate students advocating for them to teach 2 courses a semester.
 1. Answer 1: Madison Yields question
 2. Answer 1: Mmadubuchi Godsgrant Akujuobi: So I have personal experience where someone last semester had to teach 2 different courses, and this was not him assisting a professor. He was the one who came into class for these 2 courses, according to what he said. and it was later resolved, this semester that I had to be given only one course. Because why? I said, that is that teaching one course alone, just like myself. I'm doing currently I'm teaching a course alone by myself, and there's no professor directly, and that could be really, really time demanding it. So I feel technically, if a graduate student is having to teach 2 courses in a semester, that person would likely overwork himself and work more than 20 hours. No, that's actually why I'm making that from my own point of view and from the other story I also heard.
5. Question 2: And I was curious if either of you had any plans or intents or interest in working with the administration to lower or eliminate the non-tuition fees that take quite a bit of our of our stipends from us every semester.
 1. Question 2: Madison Alteri: Yes, I would. 100% advocate for this. because it is a lot it can end up being at least I know, for mine. 800 to a thousand dollars or more. A little bit more than that, and that ends up being a ton of money out of my pocket. And that's just my personal experience. I know that other departments are paid even less and may pay the same amount. And so it is an incredible issue and strain on us, especially if we have to work on top of that, do research and go to courses, and that we aren't necessarily. I think a lot of the ways we have to kind of define that we're not really living. We're surviving. And I don't think that's necessarily enough. I think it has a lot when we're just surviving to drain on us mentally as well. And so I think that needs to be brought up to them is that we're surviving. But we're not really living. And to really redefine that definition. and that we do a lot of work. And it's valuable, and a lot of time with pay equals value in a lot of different fields. And I think that also is for us, because we do a lot of really great things. And we have. We are a big majority of the teaching force at this university, and we should be valued more and paid more.
 2. Question 2 Answer: Mmadubuchi Godsgrant Akujuobi: Alright. Thank you so much for this opportunity to respond to that question. I've always talked about the fact that you know, it's even more annoying if someone is overworked and you don't get any extra pay for that. Of course, you know, that's the contract. You have to work 20 h, but literally at times you have to work more than that, and then you don't get extra pay. But the other side of advocacy. I'm actually gonna also support the view that talking with the management of the university is very important. As leaders. They should also be able to give us some listening. Yes, to hear where we are having

issues with paying a lot of fees. But I also understand that maybe they might also say that some fees cannot be waived or not. No, something they can just rule out or cancel. So, I would try to also use my office like I've been doing, you know, in my little way to tell people about other scholarship opportunities we have on the BGSU website. You know, I've been part of the scholarships for like 2 years now, where people beyond their normal graduate assistantship, funds or funding are able to get additional scholarships to assist themselves. I will bring this to our notice so that we'll be able to explore these opportunities. Thank you.

6. Motion to extend QA for two minutes.
 1. Motion by Academic Affairs Representative
 2. Second by First Year PhD Representative
7. Question 3: So, you said that you wanted to advocate for the students in terms of their financial struggle, like to find them any opportunity that may, you know, decrease that kind of struggle. Now I remember that you said something about advising and mentorship is one issue, that some of the graduate programs do not have established criteria for what we can call a mentorship or advisership which basically does not establish any kind of firm accountability measures. Do you have anything in mind in terms of how you are going to approach this when some of the graduate programs already have great or an effective mentorship between them and between their supervisors or their mentors.
 1. Question 3 Answer: Mmadubuchi Godsgant Akujuobi: Alright. Thank you so much. I appreciate that question. Yeah, I understand. Just like you said, and also said it in the on the previous meeting that some programs may not have a structure about this mentorship or how to go about mentoring the students. But I think it's something they can go back to the drawing board and think about and design something because the issue is about the feature of their graduates, the people, the people they are training, and they are going to release into the job market to get different jobs and to occupy positions. I have like a friend of mine or my wife as well, who did her masters here, but because she went to a different university for her doctorate program. She had very strong mentorship, and she was able to publish more than 5 papers, and that helped her secure a job in no distant time. She just graduated. She had a job waiting for her. I think, if really want our people, our graduates, that we can boost off to be able to get good positions. Every program should be taxed on that we should work collectively with the graduate college to make sure this is possible, because it doesn't really make a lot of sense that someone finish a doctoral program and you cannot boast of having one research paper published. You cannot boast of being able to write skills. Yeah, some of these skills might be linked online per se. But it's not as good as when you have someone in the system mentoring you based on the experiences and a lot of things they've been able to accomplish. So that is why I think it's important for us to go that route.
 2. Question 3 Answer: Madison Alteri: Yeah, this is this is definitely an issue that I just now have really been thinking of. Because in biology, it's it's very common that we publish here, and that our mentorship goes throughout

and after our careers, because we have collaborators. And that's something that we definitely need for the rest of the departments, too. If this is an ongoing issue of not having publications and not having a mentor, I don't think it really makes sense for undergraduates to have the advisors for their Matt, our bachelors, and we don't have for a Masters or a Phd. Somebody to really advocate and help us along. And in a Phd. We get an outside committee member. That kind of makes sure everything is fair when we do go through prelims and everything. You don't really get that in your masters, though. And so there really is no accountability for mentorship and stuff like that. And when I was designing a field safety guideline for a department. I put a lot of thought into what the faculty needs to hold up their end of the deal when doing research and for medical events or emergencies that happen and how they need to keep track of. Of. There are students in the field as well. and that really just goes over to professional development as well is that you you're taking on a student, and that you, if you're taking on that student, you are responsible for them, and you're responsible for their professional about development. And I know a lot of people in biology have issues contacting their pi and not getting their thesis put through. They're being ignored or they're being held for extra years. And it's something that we've brought up to the graduate college already. But it's something that we really need to keep bringing up, because these things can't keep happening. We need to find some way to work around them, and faculty are given a set of standards to work from in their contract so, we may have to go back and maybe put some sort of mentorship clause in there that they have to hold up a mentorship, a positive one and a productive one. I'm not sure how possible that would be or what that would look like. That's just 1 one example of what we could do. but we'll have to figure out how to work with that, and with faculty to bring up change and to make it positive.

8. Motion to extend QA by two minutes
 1. Motion by Academic Affairs Representative
 2. Seconded by American Culture Studies PhD
9. Question 4: How you are going to empower or motivate faculty to include that class, for example, or even to work on reframing their relationship with their advisees when they already have a lot on their plates, or they may say that they have. They're not being paid for that.
 1. Question 4 Answer: Madison Alteri: Yeah, that is extremely difficult. There are faculty. I know that. Say this like why and the thing is, is maybe their ability to have graduate students be taken away. That's something that can happen to faculty is their ability to take graduate students just can be taken away if they don't follow that it's really hard to keep faculty like that in. I don't want to say in line, but like really foster their students in a positive way, and I'm afraid I don't have a lot of answers for that. How we could do that right now I would have to learn a bit more about what we can do. in order to come up with some more ideas other than contracts looking at it. And I'm sorry I can't give a direct answer. I feel like I'm kind of failing this. But I think it would have to be a very slow, ongoing effort, and I feel

like that's not exactly what anybody wants to hear is that this might be slow to come by but realistically managing faculty like that is very hard to do. In my own experience as well. a lot of times you have to like. Really push them along, or really motivate them in another set of ways and or words say, like, hey, you're not doing your job. You have to kind of like. circumvent and be like, well. I've noticed that something is happening. And if you could just do this. something like that. But again, that doesn't always work. So yeah, I feel like we'd have to look at a lot of different things before we really have some sort of solution. And I'm sorry I can't give a better answer.

2. Question 4 Answer: Mmadubuchi Godsgrat Akujuobi: Alright. Thank you so much. I once again thank you for that question. what I would say is this, first if I'm in that position as the academic Affairs representative, I would try as much as possible to work with the Graduates college. I've seen an example from the current leadership, how they've maintained such a very commendable relationship with the graduate college. And that is exactly what I would continue to do to make sure that that relationship be as much fruit. And if I have that good functional relationship. and we are able to agree on this as an expectation that we want for all our graduate students. I believe the graduate college team should help us make sure that the program coordinators for all graduate programs implement this. then, secondly, I also try to 2 different program representatives in the GSS to see a way of, you know, building a feedback mechanism where they go back to get information about how this is being done in their programs, because I don't think it's enough for us to have GSS meetings. And then people who represent different programs do not have any real communication with those they represent, those in those their constituents. So, I think if they maintain good communication with their constituents, and then they find out whether the programs are working or effective or not, and then they'd get us to know. Then we'll be able to know how to make each mentorship arrangement or program will work for this different program. And lastly, I think the other thing I would say, is to encourage us as budget students to begin to ask for such opportunities ourselves to. If, for instance, you want to learn how to do something. You want to learn how to go into grant writing. And you find someone in your program who's able to do that more. You can ask the person, and of course some of them, I believe, are going to be very willing to help in every way possible, so we can also encourage people to ask, but at times we don't receive many opportunities because we're not aware of them, or we don't know that people are willing to help us. Thank you.
10. Motion to end QA and go to deliberation.
 1. Motion by Biological Sciences Masters
 2. Second by Philosophy PhD
 11. Motion to end deliberation and to vote
 1. Motion by Popular Culture Masters
 2. Second by Professional Development Representative
 12. Madison Alteri Elected 16 Yay, 10 Nay, 2 Abstain

Student Affairs

1. Abiola Sobayo
 1. Second by Academic Affairs Representative
2. Lifton Square
 1. Second by Online Student Representative
3. Mmadubuchi Godsgrant Akujuobi
 1. Second by Academic Affairs Representative
4. Chandu Dirispiro
 1. No show
5. Motion for QA
 1. Motion made by Academic Affairs Representative
 2. Seconded by American Culture Studies PhD
6. Question 1: How are you going to collaborate with Madison. To make a change in students, college experience. Correct?
 1. Question 1 Answer: Abiola Sobayo: Okay? Alright. Thank you very much for the wonderful question, yeah, this is my response to your question. Yeah, like, this is an administration, right, it is not only about me, Abdi Al Sobayo. No, it is not my team. Yeah, this is graduate students. And it's and we actually working together collectively to achieve a common goal. So yeah, regardless of whichever office each person is actually holding. All we need to avoid. The back of way of our mind is the fact that yeah, it's seen. So yeah, the success won't be for me, and the success won't be for Madison, too. So, it's going to be a collective thing. So yeah, whichever position I'm holding also favor, that is within any position, then we have to have the ideology that we have to work collectively to actually achieve a common goal. Yeah, so I will definitely be in touch with Madison on any idea. Actually, I have concern in my office. And at the same time, if I actually have any idea that I can actually move our office forward to yeah, we definitely work hand in hand to actually communicate with our option. And then think of how we can actually move the association forward. Thank you.
 2. Question 1 Answer: Lifton Square: So, the position of student affairs. It's not a stand-alone position. It's a position you work with academic affairs. And not only that, but you also have to work with the administration and everyone else who does their academics. So yeah. To make sure there is proper coordination between this My plan is to make sure that to intensify communication with Madison and make sure. I know the, the challenges students are going through but also and then present to her, and also find out from her some challenges that students are experiencing. And now think about ways, how we can present that to make sure that any change takes place. And that's the best way. The best way is just to increase communication, make sure that there is it proper communication. lack of communication. Things cannot go smoothly so, and not only to her alone, but even to the entire GSS team, you, maintain that proper communication for things actually to work very well without communication, then things

will not work very well. So, I would intensify my communication with her. Yeah, that's what one to do.

3. Question 1 Answer: Mmadubuchi Godsgrant Akujuobi: Alright. Thank you so much. I think my other friends have all said the right thing. The truth is that for the success of all graduate students. It is necessary for academic affairs, representative and the student affairs representative to work together. The truth. The why? I said, that is because in as much as academic affairs sees a lot of into a lot of things about academics. student affairs generally cover both academic wellbeing, emotional wellbeing and stability. So, I think if my goal is for the welfare of graduate students, then it's important. I work with both the academic affairs representative and every other GSS. Leader. Thank you.
7. Motion to extend QA for two minutes
 1. Motion made by Student Affairs Representative
 2. Second by International Student Affairs Representative
8. Question 2: I know you mentioned about talking about how big the GSS is, so what's leverage, or what? How do you intend to ensure that the GSS is and is inclusive, or what activities or what program do you want to do to ensure this is actually carried out?
 1. Question 2 Answer: Mmadubuchi Godsgrant Akujuobi: Okay, so for me, I think diversity is an important aspect of society. We must understand our differences and recognize that and celebrate that as well. So as much as possible. Like we've said, there are different programs organized by the university to encourage diversity programs and also as a leader. It's important that we don't. We understand. We're not working for a particular culture. We are working for everyone who is part of GSS and everyone who is part of the graduate college. So in our programs in our activities, we should design them in such a way that it will reflect diversity, it will create room for no safe spaces, and promotes inclusion as much as possible. I think that also giving us opportunities for people from different cultures, or the people from different with different perspectives. To express themselves, is very important.
 2. Question 2 Answer: Lifton Square: Yeah. I want to say for the short time that I've been at BGSU I have discovered so many events that incorporate people from different backgrounds that have involved diversity in that. But I also have noticed that even if some people, they are not, they were not participating in those activities. And the whole plan is to make sure that not only a small amount or smoke, or it just. it's more group of people are just involved in that. But just making sure, like finding out, like how many, how many people groups do we have at BGSU? And then, just make a deliberate plan to make sure you involve everyone and make sure that you talk to every one of those people groups to get involved into those activities because some people, some people groups it might be upfront in terms of being involved in in the events of. but some may not. If they don't have any knowledge. They may not be involved in that. But just make sure you. You have got like an inventory of people, groups you have, and make it delivered. Plan to make sure that each one of them is involved, and

approach to make sure they think about something. To come up with you something that they can showcase in those events. That's what I just wanted to say.

3. Question 2 Answer: Abiola Sobayo: Okay. Alright. Thank you very much. Yeah. Like one of the activities that I I'm very sure we can work on to promote inclusion and diversity is looking at programs that can actually. that can include every individual from every country in GSS. BGSU, like what I'm saying in essence is that we can try to organize a kind of mini competition that can actually be between different countries. Yeah, I also believe this, we promote unity between us as students. Yeah, it's maybe in different games. It may be in it could be anything. Yeah, it could be anything. So yeah, I believe events like this, we actually help us as a people, to be much more united, and also to learn much more about other people's culture and how to live together as a people. Queue.
9. Motion to extend QA for two minutes
 1. Motion made by Student Affairs Representative
 2. Seconded by International Student Affairs Representative
10. Question 3: So, you talked about insurance, but I wasn't sure about the other things that you talked about, cause the line was breaking. I wanted to, if you re-talk about it. Just so I get clear view of what you were intending on doing once again today. Once you are elected as a student affair, representative.
 1. Question 3 answer: Abiola Sobayo: Okay. Okay. Alright. Thank you very much. Yeah. Like, I talked about 3 major things the first time I spoke, and the first one is advocating on a better pay for great assistance. BGSU, yeah, I made a categorical example of knowing some certain people that are actually in less than \$450 by weekly, so which is very small for them to actually get up for them for their house rings their upkeep, and to also pay part of their deficits. So that is number one. So. And secondly, I talked about the expensive health insurance that we that we actually subscribe for at BGSU, compared to what's other colleagues, or what's other students in various schools actually pay and what they enjoy. So yeah, I'm looking at the facts that we can work together as a team. and with the university administrators, to look at how we can actually make this to be much more affordable for our students, especially international students. Now, because we are talking about inclusion and diversity, so much more for our students, and the first that they should be able to enjoy it the benefit of Diesel insurance to the fullest. And lastly, I still talked about the issue of events. Yeah, I talked about organizing social and professional events for our British students, so that they can actually have a memorable experience while on campus in BGSU, and also things that can actually equate them with how to navigate, live as students on campus and also outside the forwards of BGSU.
 2. Question 3 answer: Liftion Square: Yeah, I think I can. I can. I can say something. I feel like It's a good move. But before implementation of that or before asking for that, I would say the first thing to do is to look at different healthy insurances and you look at those different health insurances you try

to differentiate. And then, once you differentiate how their services are all like. Then now you can say, okay, this is this, insurance is pretty much higher. Would you? Do you want to bring it down? I would say that because you are not dealing with one person, we're not dealing with it. BGSU alone we are dealing with healthy insurance that they have got to their own policies and stuff like that. So, we need to go around and check other policies, and how they are like. which I think it's also difficult to really know whether, because you would accept that I I'm not sure but that's what I would say. It's better you find out from other health insurance. First of all, before you come into implementing this.

3. Question 3 answer: Mmadubuchi Godsgrant Akujuobi: Yield due to time.
11. Motion to move into deliberation.
 1. Motion Made by Philosophy PhD
 2. Second by Biological Sciences Masters
12. Motion to go skip deliberation and go straight to voting.
 1. Motion made by Popular Culture Masters
 2. Second by Sociology Masters
13. Mmadubuchi Godsgrant Akujuobi was elected 16 yay, 9 nay, 3 abstain
14. Motion to table Treasure and Secretary elections until the April 12 meeting.
 1. Motioned by Philosophy PhD
 2. Seconded by Representative at Large

Treasure (tabled)

1. Chandu Dirispiro
2. Katrina Tennis-Malick

Secretary (tabled)

1. Chandu Dirisipo
2. Katrina Tennis-Malick
3. David M. Fisher

Meeting adjourned at 5:00pm