



The Graduate Student Senate

2024-2025

Annual Report

Bowling Green State University

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GSS President's Remarks

My Fellow Falcons,

It has been my honor to serve the graduate student body and the BGSU community. This is my second year as Graduate Student Senate's (GSS) president and my third year serving on the Senate Executive Council (SEC), formerly the Senate Executive Committee. Serving a second term as GSS president and four years as an officer is a rare circumstance in the history of GSS. There has, after all, only ever been one other two-term GSS president.

Next year, I will have the privilege of serving as secretary. While university policy regarding part-time credits prevents me from serving in a variety of positions, I am nonetheless excited to provide operational support in my new role and to encourage others to step into greater roles of advocacy and representation. I look forward to strengthening the legacy of GSS, supporting all graduate students, and contributing to the advancement of graduate education.

My time in GSS has provided me with unparalleled opportunities to grow as a leader, advocate, and professional. The insights I've gained have shaped my understanding of governance, collaboration, public service, and community. Just like my academic unit (the PhD in Higher Education Administration degree as part of the School of Counseling, Higher Education, Leadership, and Foundations) and my graduate assistantship (with the National Student Affairs Archives in the Center for Archival Collections), GSS has become a special place for me as a falcon. Having all these spaces has given me the chance to integrate my experiences across different contexts, disciplines, and roles.

This has been a year of transformation for all of us, and together, our resilience and excellence have shone as a beacon of courage and hope. Through our representation, advocacy, service, and programming, the graduate students of BGSU and the GSS have actively lived the guiding principles of *Forward* and *Momentum*. We are united by a shared vision: the advancement of graduate student body and graduate education. We are resolved to serve the *Public Good*. Individually we are capable of greatness, but together, we collectively transcend our roles as students to build a resounding legacy.

As I have reflected on our shared legacy, I have recognized the unique position student governments have in the landscape of organizations, professional or otherwise. We occupy a liminal space, bridging the gap between the university and the student community. Graduate students exist in a similarly liminal space on both sides of the threshold between student and professional/expert. Together, our status in student governance and as graduate students gives us the opportunity to pursue goals beyond what might otherwise be imaginable.

Over the past 56 years, we've established arenas of shared governance where none existed before. The GSS has proven to be more than just a representative body; it is a dynamic space where change is not only envisioned but actively created. The GSS influence extends beyond just policy. We nurture and support a

culture of active engagement and shared experience. Through our efforts, we have built partnerships that cross time, discipline, and communities.

However, not all efforts are immediately seen, and not all outcomes are immediately obvious. But the needle moves when we remain continuously engaged and active. Today, we plant proverbial trees so that years from now graduate students may enjoy their shade and fruit. Today, the shade and fruit we enjoy exists because years ago, someone else planted a proverbial tree for us. We are linked in an unbroken legacy of trust—an enduring connection that transcends time and strengthens with every step we take. Through our shared commitment, we build a future that is not only shaped by our actions now but is sustained by the actions of those who came before us and those of us who will take our place after we leave. Past. Present. Future. Forever Falcons.

Fully and with gratitude,
David M. Fisher



Graduate Student Senate's 54th President

Report Preview

The purpose of this report is to review the Graduate Student Senate's activities, achievements, and reflections for the 2024-2025 academic year. It aims to provide a comprehensive understanding for various audiences, including graduate students, university administration, Graduate Student Senate membership, and other stakeholders. This report preview highlights a few notable ideas but does not serve as a complete summary of the entire report.

Selected Highlights

This year, the GSS made significant strides in strengthening its organizational framework. Key developments included a second year of efforts to overhaul the Constitution and Bylaws, as well as laying the groundwork for the creation of policies and handbooks. These changes are aimed at enhancing the GSS's governance process, ensuring long-term sustainability, and facilitating smoother transitions between administrations. Although the proposed changes received overwhelming support, a lack of engagement during the voting process hindered progress. This was the result of a high level of voting-participation as a requirement for adopting the changes.

Additionally, the GSS made substantial progress in enhancing its records management systems. This year, GSS leadership submitted key documents to the University Archives and continued to develop onboarding procedures for new officers. These efforts ensure that institutional knowledge is preserved, allowing future administrations to build on past successes without the need to reinvent the wheel.

The transition and elections processes were successful, with four returning

officers assuming key leadership roles: the incoming President, who previously served as Representative-at-Large; the incoming Vice President, who was part of the SEC four years ago while pursuing their master's degree and is now pursuing a doctoral degree; the incoming Secretary, who is the outgoing President; and the incoming Professional and Outreach Development Officer, who is the outgoing Vice President. Additionally, all but one of the officer positions have been successfully elected.

Some Next Steps

The GSS plans to prioritize improving engagement across both the General Assembly (GA) and the broader graduate student community. The notable success of the Shanklin Colloquium, which saw record-high participation, illustrates GSS's growing visibility and capacity to connect meaningfully with students. Building on this momentum, GSS will focus on refining outreach strategies, improving communication, and developing accessible opportunities for involvement. A more inclusive and participatory GA will empower graduate students to actively engage in governance and contribute to GSS's overall effectiveness.

Ensuring the successful passage of the proposed governance reforms remains a key priority. Although these changes received broad support, insufficient engagement during the voting process stalled their implementation. This is now the second year these much-needed changes have been delayed. GSS must revisit and reintroduce these proposals with renewed emphasis on communication and participation to meet the engagement thresholds required for ratification. Finalizing these governance developments will strengthen GSS's structural foundation and improve operational clarity for future leadership.

GSS will also continue refining its records management systems to ensure institutional continuity across officer transitions. This year's submission of archival materials to the University Archives and development of onboarding processes marked significant progress. Further standardization and reinforcement of these systems will prevent redundancy, preserve organizational knowledge, and promote smooth transitions. In tandem with this, leadership development should be bolstered through more structured training opportunities. With several returning officers stepping into new roles, GSS is well-positioned to formalize leadership preparation that supports institutional memory, long-term planning, and sustained organizational growth.

While the GSS has built a solid foundation for continued development, there is still important work ahead and ongoing challenges to address. The future success of the graduate student body will depend on its ability to unite across disciplines and actively engage in shaping a stronger, more connected community.

New Logo

During the 2024-2025 academic year, the Graduate Student Senate designed a new organizational logo. The design was officially adopted by the General Assembly on March 21, 2025. It was then publicly unveiled on March 31, 2025, during the Charles E. Shanklin Colloquium and Graduate Student Senate Awards evening ceremony.



The New GSS Logo

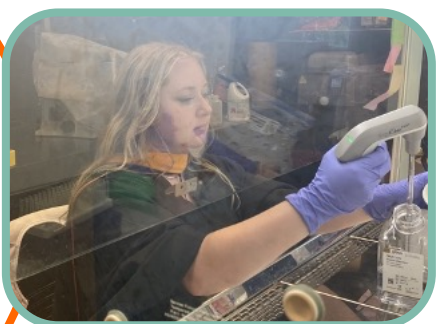
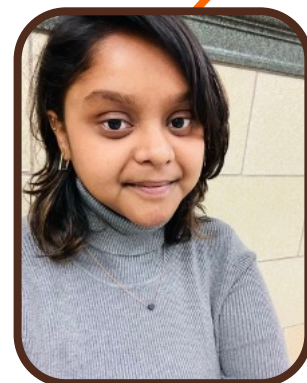
The background incorporates historical university imagery—a symbol of how we are all brought together by Bowling Green State University. The foreground retains the gavel, a longstanding symbol of Graduate Student Senate's legacy and commitment to shared governance for the benefit of all graduate students. It also introduces a falcon—a symbol of our shared path *Forward*.

Senate Executive Council Roster



President—David is a third-year PhD student within the School of Counseling, Higher Education, and Leadership Foundations, and has previously earned a Bachelor of Music and Master of Music in Music Composition. David works as a graduate assistant for the National Student Affairs Archives in the Center for Archival Collections on the fifth and sixth floor of the library and has previously held a position as adjunct faculty in music.

Vice President—Syeda Zainab Akbar is a third-year PhD student in the School of Media and Communication. She holds a Master's degree in Digital Humanities and a Bachelor's degree in Psychology, Sociology, and English. Her previous work experience spans diverse sectors, including industry, non-profits, and for-profits with a focus on the intersection of technology and social impact. Currently, her research is centered on examining the authenticity of communication on social media platforms, delving into the implications of digital interactions on societal perceptions and trust.



Academic Affairs Representative—Madison Altieri is a third-year PhD student in Biology and received her Master's in Biology from BGSU in '22. Her Master's research was with canine mobile genetic elements and uncovering their molecular mechanism, while also dabbling with endogenous retroviruses research. Currently, Madison is focusing her PhD research on bacteriophages—viruses that infect bacteria. This research leads into potential avenues such as treating bacterial infections, biocontrol, and potential discovery of bacteriophage dynamics. Madison is currently a teaching assistant in the Department of Biological Sciences teaching the SEA-PHAGES course directed by the Howard Hughes Medical Center. This course is an opportunity for undergraduates to get to experience research in a classroom setting. She has also been a TA for general genetics, general microbiology, microbiology for health professionals, introduction to cellular biology, and has held a faculty position in microbiology at Lorain County Community College.

Student Affairs Representative—Mmaduabuchi Akujuobi is a second-year doctoral student in the Leadership Studies program. He earned his bachelor's and first Master's degrees in Public Administration. Due to his strong passion for teaching, he obtained a Master of Education degree in Curriculum and Teaching from Bowling Green State University. His research interests include humanitarianism, human resources management, advocacy, diversity and inclusion, and public governance. Mmaduabuchi believes that serving as the Student Affairs Representative will provide him with a veritable platform to advocate for BGSU's graduate students. Mmaduabuchi believes that students' welfare is undoubtedly connected to students' academic success.



Treasurer—Ginikachi Ifenatuora is a Master's student in Cross-Cultural and International Education at the School of Counseling, Higher Education, Leadership, and Foundations. Driven by a passion for innovative education, she is also pursuing a graduate certificate in Instructional Design and Technology. Ginikachi hails from Anambra State, Nigeria, and is deeply committed to creating culturally responsive and inclusive educational experiences, particularly for students with special needs. Her career aspirations include becoming an instructional designer who leverages cross-cultural knowledge and technology to enhance learning environments. Ginikachi aims to bridge educational gaps and empower diverse learners, especially those with special needs, through culturally sensitive teaching practices.

Secretary—Hallie Ruby is a second-year doctoral student in the Neuroscience program within the Psychology Department. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from BGSU in 2021 and has continued her work in the Developmental Neuroendocrinology Lab as a graduate student. Her current research focuses on how maternal supplement intake affects a developing fetus throughout its lifespan. Hallie has served as the Psychology Department Senator for the past year, during which she advocated for increased stipends and improved conditions for graduate students. She has also worked for multiple mental health agencies and volunteered in several community programs. Hallie is passionate about advocacy and using science to improve the health and quality of life of at-risk populations, including graduate students. She hopes to continue this work as the Secretary of GSS.





Representative-at-Large—Ariel is a third-year Master's student in the Sociology program with a focus in Criminology and Social Psychology and has previously earned a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Sociology at BGSU. Ariel has previously served as the Sociology Master's program senator and Representative-at-Large. They are currently finishing their thesis examining the relationship between ADHD and arrest rates.

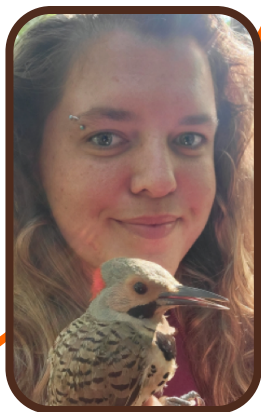
Outreach and Marketing Officer—Samantha, Sam, Imrie is a second-year Master's student, studying Art History at Bowling Green State University. She earned her B.A. in Art History from The University of Akron, Myers School of Art. Sam has always been interested in the arts, and the storytelling aspect of art and literature. Her research interests in 15th century art in Western Europe and Italy; materiality and visual culture as presented by illuminated manuscripts; as well as gender and sexuality. Sam has worked professionally in various arts institutions such as the Emily Davis Gallery, the Canton Museum of Art and Summit Artspace. In addition to serving Graduate Student Senate, Sam is currently the Art History and Arts Admissions Graduate Assistant, and Senior Officer of the Art History Association.



Professional Development Officer—Abiola Sobayo, hailing from Abeokuta, Nigeria, is a Graduate Teaching Assistant at Bowling Green State University, Ohio. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Library and Information Science from Tai Solarin University of Education, Nigeria, where he served as the Press Secretary of the Students' Union. Abiola has extensive experience in teaching, media content creation, and public relations. He has been involved in community service, notably with the World Health Organization, and has held significant leadership roles. His skills include research, teaching, and social media management. Abiola's achievements include the Prestigious Scholar Award and a Certificate of National Service.

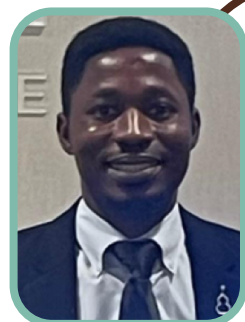
International Graduate Student Representative—Adwowa A. P. Osei is a Ph.D. student in the School of Counseling, Higher Education, Leadership, and Foundations in her fourth year. She earned a Master of Fine Art in Jewelry Design, Enameling, and Metalsmithing. Adwowa is passionate about enhancing graduate students' educational experiences. Her role allows her to advocate for students, assisting them in navigating administrative processes and resolving concerns that may arise during their educational journey. She is also passionate about fostering an inclusive and welcoming campus climate for students of diverse backgrounds. Adwowa is a people person who consistently exudes positive energy around the people she interacts with. She cherishes her family and her heritage.





Environmental Affairs Representative—My name is Nancy Ransom and I am biology major with an ecology specialization in Vern Bingman's lab. I'm interested in studying molt of some select neotropical migrants that travel here to breed. I've been bird banding for seven years and have lived in Ecuador, Costa Rica, the American Samoan Islands, Massachusetts, Colorado, and a few other places in hopes of forwarding my career as an ornithologist. After my recent trip to Peru, the amount of birds I have seen in my lifetime is 917 species total around the world. Since I'm so passionate about birds, I hope to have a career as an ornithologist or work for a permanent migration banding station. Being so passionate about birds and wildlife in general, I care very deeply about preserving and protecting our planet's wildlife. I hope that this position will give me even more opportunities to make a small impact on the local community, as stirring passion in others to make small adjustments to their lives to reverse global climate change can be challenging.

Online Graduate Student Representative—Damilola Osamika is a Master of Health Services Administration (MHSA) candidate with a background in Environmental Health Technology and healthcare. I have experience working in healthcare administration, environmental health, and safety including Epidemiology, as well as supporting public health initiatives. I am passionate about health informatics and policy development, with a focus on improving healthcare systems and solving disparity issues. In his spare time, I enjoy contributing to research and mentoring peers in academic and professional settings.



Trustee—Kathryn Ware '22 is a third-year doctoral candidate in Biological Sciences at Bowling Green State University. She is currently pursuing her PhD in ecology and conservation biology following successful completion of her Master's degree in the lab of Dr. Karen Root. Her dissertation research is focused on how bird communities respond to different kinds of disturbance, including forest management, hurricanes, and window collisions. Kathryn enjoys being involved on campus and has served as the Graduate Student

Senate Environmental Affairs Representative for two years. She is also active in her department as a Teaching Assistant for Anatomy and Physiology labs, an officer of the Biology Graduate Student Association, founding member of the Biology Research Forum Committee, and a Biology Graduate Student Orientation leader. She completed her bachelor's degree at The University of Findlay and currently lives in Findlay, Ohio with her husband Sam. Outside of academia, Kathryn loves to read and go birding and is an active volunteer with Black Swamp Bird Observatory as a bird bander, bird-watching guide, and advisor to the Ohio Young Birders Club.



Data and Research Officer—Richard Maguire is a third-year Doctoral Student in Leadership Studies in the School of Counseling, Higher Education, and Leadership Foundations (SCHELF). He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Mass Communication and a Master of Arts in Sustainable Communities. Richard is very passionate about leadership, which has a lasting impact on people's lives. His previous work includes working with non-profit organizations in Malawi, serving Malawi's rural communities to bring social and economic change. Currently, he is a Graduate Research Assistant with the Midwestern Educational Researcher journal as a managing editor and a Graduate Teaching Assistant with the C. Raymond Marvin Center for Student Leadership and Civic Engagement.

Parent-Student Representative—Hello and Salam! I am a Pakistani mother of two amazing, sassy girls and the spouse of a UToledo Rocket. I am also a Ph.D. scholar in Critical Interpersonal and Family Communication at the School of Media and Communication. I believe in taking a holistic approach to one's identity rather than confining them to a single role, such as being just a parent or a student. We all live multiple lives at once, as parents, friends, mentees, and mentors.



First-Year Graduate Student Representative—My name is Allison E. Kidd and I am a first-year graduate student here at Bowling Green University. I am in the Master of Science in Interdisciplinary Gerontology (MSIG) program with a concentration in Long-Term Care. I earned my Bachelor of Science degree from Kent State University in Long-Term Care Administration with minors in Business and Gerontology. I was born in Northeast, Ohio and have been here for my whole life, 23 years. My career aspirations are to graduate from Bowling Green with my Master's degree and use both my Bachelor's and Master's knowledge to be an Administrator of a Nursing Facility. I have worked for Independent Living, Assisted Living, and Skilled Nursing Facilities and truly believe that the field of Gerontology is my calling. If I am not doing coursework, or working in a nursing facility, I can be found on a trail enjoying a run or at home reading a good book.



Values Statement

We *are* graduate students *for* graduate students—an interconnected and diverse community where each individual perspective and experience converges to co-construct the very essence of our university. As the nexus between the graduate student body and the broader university, the Graduate Student Senate serves the following core commitments include:

- Co-creating environments of *belonging*, empathy, support, and well-being to achieve our full potential.
- Inspiring collective engagement in *stewardship*, shared governance, and service to positively contribute to our university, professions, communities, and world.
- Supporting the development of our *voice*, agency, and each other to represent and advocate for the benefit of the graduate student experience.
- Forming positive partnerships to drive the *transformation* of graduate education.

Figure 1

Simplified Visual Presentation of the Values on the Website



Vision Statement

To be a model of graduate student governance that inspires service, growth, and leadership. To be recognized as an engaged graduate community for its commitment to developing active, exceptional, and altruistic people who contribute meaningfully to their professions and communities.

Mission Statement

To advance the well-being, success, and representation of all BGSU graduate students through collaborative advocacy, meaningful partnerships, and innovative structures. To strengthen connections across campus, fostering a supportive community that promotes development, shared governance, and policies that benefit graduate students. To ensure the creation of platforms for leadership,

mentorship, and academic excellence. To engage in continuous organizational learning and action.

Structures of the Graduate Student Senate

The Graduate Student Senate (GSS) at Bowling Green State University is the representative governing body for all graduate students. Senators are selected or elected by their respective programs and participate in shared governance through the General Assembly (GA), the main decision-making body of the Senate. The Senate Executive Council (SEC) provides leadership and operational support, working alongside the GA to raise graduate student concerns, engage with university administration, and advance both policy and service-based initiatives. Additionally, the GSS has 4 standing committees and a set of ad hoc committees or task forces to handle other operations or initiatives.

This section of the report will present description of the structural elements of the GSS and the activities of those structural elements. Additionally, this report will identify key organizational developments.

General Assembly

Over the course of the 2024–2025 academic year, the GSS convened nine GA meetings—four in the fall and five in the spring. These meetings were chaired by the Vice President. In the absence of the Vice President, the meetings were chaired by the Representative-at-Large. With 42 senators representing a wide range of academic programs, the GA functioned not only as a space for information exchange but also as a forum for dialogue and collaboration across the graduate student body.

Throughout the year, senators engaged in discussions on issues most relevant to graduate students, including stipend levels and allocations, housing, parking, faculty-student interactions and mentorships, access to BGSU resources, external funding opportunities, and the unique challenges faced by international students—particularly regarding housing and immigration policy. The GA also served as a space for reflecting on broader legislative and legal developments, such as the implications of Senate Bill 1¹ or the U.S. Department of Education’s Dear Colleague Letter² and their impact on graduate student academics and life.

Several key university leaders participated as guest speakers, enriching our sessions with institutional insights. Notable visitors included Dr. Ali Eskandarian (Interim Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate and Professional Programs), Dr. Mary-Jon Ludy (Associate Dean of the Graduate College), Alexia Coffman (Senior Administrative Assistant, Graduate College), Stacey Allen (Associate Director of Student Engagement), and Dr. Glenn Davis (Interim Provost and Senior Vice President). These interactions provided senators with opportunities to raise questions, offer feedback, and directly engage with decision-makers on pressing

¹ Ohio Senate Bill 1, 136th Gen. Assemb. (2025), "Enact Advance Ohio Higher Education Act." https://search-prod.lis.state.oh.us/api/v2/general_assembly_136/legislation/sb1/05_EN/pdf/

² U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Dear Colleague Letter: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act in Light of Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard, February 14, 2025, <https://www.ed.gov/media/document/dear-colleague-letter-sffa-v-harvard-109506.pdf>

issues.

Senator contributions extended beyond meetings. For instance, Sarah Urbank was the winner for the Arts and Humanities area of the Charles E. Shanklin Research Excellence Award. Further, Sarah engaged in leadership, advocacy, and peer support. Senators Tanner Hurst, Nayeem Al Alimul Hasan Nahid, and Jaryt Salvo actively supported GSS programming and events. Nikolai Dignoti, recipient of the Senator of the Year Award, demonstrated exceptional understanding of parliamentary procedure. Nikolai was actively engaged in the GA's shared governance and contributed to effective and efficient meeting operations.

Despite several successes, the GA faced some challenges. Senator engagement and attendance varied through the year with one meeting being cancelled due to a lack of quorum. Further, this year's efforts to adopt revisions to the Constitution and Bylaws failed to meet the minimum required number of votes. In an ongoing attempt to address these issues, we began development of robust Senate Executive Council (SEC) and GA training materials.

In summary, this year's GA served as a dynamic platform for graduate student advocacy, leadership, and community building. The progress made lays a strong foundation for continued momentum in the year ahead. For the minutes of the GA See Appendix A.

Senate Executive Council

The SEC convened regularly to support the mission of the GSS and to respond to the evolving needs of graduate students. We held total of eight business meetings and three additional non-business. The three non-business meetings included: a mid-summer strategy meeting, a leadership retreat at the beginning of the fall semester, and a transition meeting in the spring.

These meetings, chaired by the GSS president, brought together 12 elected officers and 3 appointed officers. During one meeting when the President was absent, the Representative-at-Large assumed the role of chair. In addition to the elected and appointed officer positions, the SEC included several functional roles that were distributed among officers based on their skills and interests. These roles often involved chairing a committee.

The beginning of the year was marked by challenges due to several unfilled officer positions. This made it difficult to sustain early momentum and evenly distribute responsibilities. As roles were filled, the SEC regained stability and pressed forward with its strategic priorities.

The SEC engaged in wide-ranging discussions on GSS and student-generated initiatives, which were central to graduate student life and advocacy. The SEC actively integrated these voices into the university's shared governance processes. SEC meetings served as important venue for planning and promoting events, for strengthening the representation of graduate students, and for creating dialogue with university leadership.

The SEC made significant strides in enhancing records management to ensure the long-term accessibility and transparency of GSS documents. Key efforts included organizing shared drives and streamlining documentation processes. In tandem, the SEC worked to secure additional technology resources, recognizing the

need for better tools to facilitate communication, collaboration, and efficient management of ongoing initiatives. These actions were designed to create a more robust infrastructure for the SEC, enabling smoother operations and more effective transitions in leadership.

Under the leadership of the Treasurer, Ginikachi Ifenatura, the SEC launched a long-term financial sustainability initiative aimed at ensuring GSS's continued ability to support graduate students. This included drafting a revenue-raising strategy focused on identifying alternative funding sources for future GSS administrations to enact. This strategic initiative will allow GSS to improve support in key areas that were identified as crucial for enhancing students' financial well-being, one of which notably included professional development support.

Under the leadership of the Representative at Large, Ariel Esposito, several officers and senators participated in civic engagement efforts throughout the year. This included volunteering with BGSUVotes to help register voters, volunteering for the Letters of Love campaign as part of the MLK Day of Service, and a few other service activities including for the spring day of service. In total, GSS was involved in about twelve events. Two such events were the Fall and Spring Campus Fests.

Despite strong engagement, the SEC noted and identified structural and procedural challenges that impacted the efficiency and effectiveness of its work. By reflecting on patterns in attendance, meeting dynamics, and the breadth of discussions, SEC officers critically considered how to better support the organization's goals. The outcomes of these reflections shaped ongoing discussion and generated actionable ideas, creating opportunities for future innovation and stronger organizational structures.

Overall, the Senate Executive Council served as the operational and strategic core of GSS, ensuring that the organization remained responsive, proactive, and aligned with the interests of the graduate student body.

Governance Committee

We continued work a comprehensive rewriting of its Constitution and Bylaws. This effort reflected the evolving structure, culture, and responsibilities of GSS within the broader graduate student community. The Governance Committee addressed long-standing concerns around the clarity, structure, and gaps of the governing documents. Some of these gaps included issues related to the framework for representation, procedural comprehensiveness, and organizational continuity.

The proposed updates include:

- Clarification of membership expectations including attendance, participation, and engagement.
- A reconfiguration of Senator representation to accommodate representational trends, academic unit restructuring conducted by the university, and representational equity.
- A formal adoption of Values, Vision, and Mission statements.
- A new type of Constitution and Bylaw revision process that handles larger-scale changes.
- The recognition of an external advisory board.

- Added detail for the GSS financial procedures.
- The combination of the Professional Development Officer and Outreach and Marketing Officer positions into a singular Professional and Outreach Development Officer position.
- An option to leave specific SEC positions vacant as necessary.
- A differentiates between standing committees, ad hoc committees, and task forces by outlining their respective scopes and timelines.
- Formal inclusion of the Regalia Award: Recognized in Article IX as a key GSS award for service and engagement.
- The charge to have and govern a set of policies as a supplement to the Constitution and Bylaws.

Finally, the Governance Committee has also updated its purpose and charge to handle the revision of all governing documents and to support the assessment and improvement of internal governance. The Governance Committee members included: David Fisher (Chair), Nikolai Dignoti, Tanner Hurst, Mahogany Chapman, Syeda Zainab Akbar, and Ariel Esposito.

Voting and Quorum Challenges

The Constitution and Bylaws that were presented to the GA this year was the culmination of two years of work. While quorum was met at the General Assembly meeting when the documents were originally presented and quorum was met again during the meeting when an initial vote was attempted, the thresholds required to for major revisions were not reached. This included two thresholds, first, a four-fifths attendance to hold a valid vote, and second, a four-fifths majority for adoption.

While discussion during GA meetings indicated wide approval of the changes a substantial number of abstentions prevented valid adoption of the changes as presented. Senator Nikolai Dignoti (Film and Theatre, MA) recommended to voting members, current and future, to seek clarity during discussion phases rather than abstain from voting out of uncertainty. This recommendation was well received and will inform future voting procedures and facilitation strategies.

Graduate Academic Units (GAUs) Proposal

To stabilize representation in the GSS will move forward with standardized structure for senator seats. In the past, senator seats were granted to degrees, programs, departments, schools, or colleges. Further, the decision for which unit-level had representation was entirely uncoded and left to the discretion of each academic unit. This approach led to confusion and created the risk of some units lacking representation entirely or being represented multiple times. Now, the GSS will grant senator seats to Graduate Academic Units as defined by the university as departments or schools. This change is intended to accommodate the wide variation in how academic units are defined across colleges while eliminating the inconsistencies of the previous system. In the new system:

- Departments can be granted 1 seat if they have master's programs, 1 seat if they have doctoral programs, or 2 seats if they have both.
- Schools can be granted 1 seat if they have master's programs, 1 seat if they have doctoral programs, or 2 seats if they have both, and 1 additional seat if

they are in a college that is determined to be underrepresented.

Finance and Allocations Committee

The Financial Allocation Committee played a critical role in supporting graduate student professional development through the administration of funding throughout the academic year. Through the year members, Ginikachi Prisca Ifenatuora (chair for fall and spring), Syeda Zainab Akbar (chair for summer and fall), Abiola John Sobayo, David Fisher, Ariel Esposito, Zachary Mathews, Ashleigh Raye Bettum, Ebun Dosumu, Azeez Akinbode, Bo Young Kang reviewed and processed applications for the Funding for Professional Development (FPD) across summer, fall, and spring cycles (See Table 1 for an overview of the FPD budgeting). Among the standout committee members was Zachary Mathews, whose attention to detail and commitment to due diligence helped maintain a high standard in the review process.

Throughout the year, the committee identified several areas for process improvement:

- The current application platform should be reviewed to determine whether a transition from Canvas Quizzes to an alternative like Qualtrics would offer better flexibility, accessibility, and overall functionality.
- The application form itself should be streamlined to improve efficiency and ensure it continues to meet the needs of both applicants and reviewers.
- Providing FAQs as a supplement to the application process would help clarify common questions and enhance the overall experience for all parties involved.

The committee's work ensured that hundreds of graduate students received financial support for their professional growth, conference participation, and academic memberships. These efforts underscore GSS's ongoing commitment to enhancing graduate student success and visibility beyond the classroom.

Financial Overview and Proposed Budget

GSS's financial planning this year reflected both its expanding responsibilities and the increasing demand for graduate student support across professional development, research recognition, and organizational infrastructure. The financial year 2024–2025 demonstrated a strategic use of funds across core programming and administrative operations, even as actual expenses in some areas exceeded initial projections due to growth in participation and scale.

Table 1

Professional Development Fund Allocation Overview

Term	Summer 2024	Fall 2024	Spring 2025
Requested	\$18,998	\$63,000	\$72,910
Budgeted	\$8,000	\$11,000	\$25,000
Allocated	\$8,173	\$10,806	\$26,620
Conference	\$6,273	\$8,640	\$23,680
Membership	\$685	\$1,404	\$1,680
Other	\$1,215	\$600	\$1,260

Note. Spring allocation exceeded the budget due to rollover and fund reallocation.

During the 2024–2025 academic year, GSS managed a diverse budget supporting both longstanding traditions like the Shanklin Colloquium and newer initiatives such as enhanced professional development programming. A few categories experienced cost overruns—most notably in Professional Development Day and the Shanklin Awards Ceremony—largely due to increased participation, venue upgrades, and expanded recognition efforts. While some events experienced a shift which reduced the necessary expenditures. This included the Graduate Student Orientation which was streamlined and did not have a luncheon component, or other outreach programming which remained underutilized. GSS was able to effectively reallocate resources where the impact was the highest.

The total cost for Professional Development Funding (FPD) alone amounted to \$45,599, exceeding the original projected budget of \$31,000. This reflected both increased application volume and GSS’s commitment to equitable funding access across all cycles—summer, fall, and spring. Similarly, expenditures related to the Shanklin Colloquium and GSS Awards rose to over \$16,500, demonstrating the growing scale and visibility of this signature academic recognition event. In contrast, Regalia Award allocations remained significantly under budget, with actual costs totaling just under \$2,500, despite a proposed budget of \$9,000 (See Table 2). This underspending suggested a need to re-evaluate eligibility criteria, outreach strategies, or the award’s visibility and accessibility moving forward.

While the budget included funds for co-sponsorships with other student organizations, this area did not develop as planned. GSS aimed to build collaborative programming through co-sponsored events but found engagement lower than expected. Recognizing this as an area for improvement, GSS will focus on clearer marketing and earlier outreach to encourage stronger partnerships next year. More broadly, the recurring trend of increased FPD demand highlights a crucial distinction between graduate and undergraduate student needs. In a general sense, graduate student needs often extend beyond campus. Graduate students rely on conference attendance, research presentations, and membership in professional and/or academic associations. For many students, a single national conference and requisite annual membership can cost between \$1,500 to \$3,000, making FPD support one of the most vital services GSS provides.

Entering the 2025–2026 fiscal year, GSS will have approximately \$73,237 in available funds. This includes a \$50,000 allocation from the Student Organization Allocation Board (SOAB), a significant contribution from the Shanklin family, and a \$20,237 carryforward after deducting spring and summer funding already awarded. This carryforward—drawn from previous-year reserves—provides important stability, especially in light of rising student needs and an expanding event calendar.

Table 2

Regalia Award Distributions

Term	Awarded
Summer 2024	\$744
Fall 2024	\$431
Spring 2025	\$1,085

The proposed budget for 2025–2026 reflects the dual need to sustain GSS's core programs and expand strategic initiatives. A total of \$37,250 is planned for Professional Development Funding—an increase that aligns with recent usage trends and anticipates continued high application rates. The Shanklin Colloquium and Awards will also see further investment, with \$12,920 proposed, including enhanced catering and updated award tiers to reflect the event's growing visibility. See Table 3 for the award increases from the past few years.

GSS also plans to continue scaling Professional Development Day, allocating about \$1,750 to support external speakers, interactive workshops, and hybrid formats that increase accessibility for all students. The inclusion of SB1-related orientation, AI literacy programming, and career-building sessions is already under discussion as part of next year's calendar.

On the operational side, stipends for SEC members have been updated to reflect newly added officer roles and a more balanced distribution of leadership responsibilities, bringing the total stipend pool to \$8,000. Modest increases in funding for retreats and transition events are also included to support team development and institutional memory across leadership transitions. While co-sponsorship and outreach programming remain in the proposed budget at \$2,000 and \$1,500 respectively, GSS will be revisiting how these funds are communicated and deployed to ensure they reach their intended audiences. Outreach will play a key role in realizing the full potential of these collaborative efforts.

Sustainability and Additional Funding Sources

As GSS continues to meet a growing array of responsibilities, long-term financial sustainability has emerged as a central strategic focus. In response, the organization is actively exploring new fundraising initiatives that not only support current operations but also lay the groundwork for future growth and autonomy.

Table 3

Award Increases

Award	22/23 Amount	23/24 Amount	24/25 Amount	25/26 Amount
Charles E. Shanklin Research Excellence 1st Outstanding International Graduate Student Award	\$1,250	\$1,250	\$1,250	\$1,500
Dr. Margaret Zoller Booth Graduate Senator of the Year	\$500	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Creative Expression Contest 1st	\$100	\$100	\$150	\$150
Creative Expression Contest 2nd	\$250	\$250	\$300	\$300
SEC Member of the Year	\$75	\$75	\$250	\$150
	\$75	\$75	\$150	\$150

One such initiative, proposed by Treasurer Ginikachi Prisca Ifenatuoro, involves a partnership with the University's One Day fundraising campaign—a 36-hour effort supporting campus-wide groups. The plan sets an annual goal for GSS to raise \$10,000 to enhance programming, with a focus on professional development. Designed as a recurring model rather than a one-time effort, the strategy may include targeted outreach to alumni and donors. The public engagement component of our approach will emphasize the tangible impact of graduate students.

GSS will also examine a broader range of revenue possibilities. These include local business sponsorships, alumni giving programs, grant applications, merchandise sales, and community partnerships, including collaborations with faith-based organizations. These efforts reflect GSS's commitment to embedding its mission within a wider ecosystem of support, building lasting relationships with those invested in the success of graduate students at BGSU.

If implemented successfully, the strategies would not only provide a valuable financial boost to professional development but would also cultivate an increased valuation of graduate education. These efforts align with GSS's long-term vision of becoming a more proactive and forward-thinking organization—one that is not only responsive to student needs but also empowered to shape the future of graduate life at BGSU.

Ultimately, the fiscal year 2024–2025 affirmed GSS's ability to adapt to emerging demands while delivering high-impact programs. The proposed 2025–2026 budget builds on that momentum, prioritizing core services while preparing the organization for shifting cultural and policy landscapes. As graduate students continue to navigate complex academic, financial, and professional environments, GSS remains committed to ensuring their efforts are visible, supported, and meaningfully recognized.

Awards and Arbitration Committee

The Awards and Arbitration Committee, convened during the spring semester to oversee the planning and evaluation processes for the annual Charles E. Shanklin Colloquium and GSS Awards. The committee was chaired by the Vice President Syeda Zainab Akbar and included Colton Hudson, Tiyinoluwa Omotosho Olushola Alao, Jaryt Salvo, and Madison Altieri. The committee was responsible for developing the rubrics, anonymizing submissions for blind review, organizing applications, identifying faculty judges, and managing all related communications. Additionally, the committee engaged in judging for some of the GSS awards. This year, the committee's scope was reconsidered, prompting a change in its name from the Awards and Allocations Committee to the Awards and Arbitration Committee. The updated charge reflects a potential new role in handling internal affairs and serving as an arbitration body when needed.

Graduate Student Trustee Applicant Search Committee

The search for a new graduate student board of trustee is beginning earlier than in previous years. The search committee aimed to increase the visibility of the position. David asked all SEC officers to increase the word on the position.

The Graduate Student Trustee Search Committee is convened every two years

to identify qualified candidates to serve on the BGSU Board of Trustees. The term for a student trustee spans two academic years, offering students a rare opportunity to participate in high-level university governance.

Kathryn Ware, the current graduate student trustee whose term concludes in 2026, will play an integral role in the search process in the next academic year. She will work closely with the committee to clarify expectations, outline responsibilities, and provide mentorship insights for prospective candidates. Her contributions have been key in refining how the position is defined and presented to interested students. The early start and collaborative approach of the committee this year reflect a broader effort to strengthen the presence and impact of graduate student leadership at the trustee level. The SEC officers have been encouraged to amplify communication around the open position to ensure a diverse and well-informed applicant pool for the upcoming year.

Ad Hoc Committee for Faculty-Student Interactions and Mentorship

The Graduate Student Senate established an Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty Mentorship to address long-standing concerns around the quality and consistency of graduate student mentorship at BGSU. The committee was formed in response to reports of both ineffective and harmful mentoring practices—ranging from academic neglect and lack of professional guidance to inappropriate expectations such as personal errands or emotional manipulation. Given the lack of formal mentorship guidelines or accountability structures, this initiative aimed to better understand mentorship experiences and lay the foundation for institutional improvements.

The committee's first deliverable was the development and administration of a preliminary mentorship survey, which received responses from 71 graduate students. This pre-survey played a crucial role in mapping the landscape of mentorship across departments and informing the design of a future comprehensive assessment. Key findings from the pre-survey revealed:

- Terminology and structure vary widely across disciplines: Students referred to their mentors as “advisor,” “mentor,” “professor,” “PI,” or “capstone reader,” with some unsure of what label could be applied.
- Mentor assignment methods differ by program, with some students choosing mentors directly, others assigned by faculty, and some ranking preferences for eventual pairing.
- Students often seek additional mentorship beyond their assigned advisor. While some students reported being satisfied with their primary mentor, others sought (or wished they had access to) outside mentors due to unmet needs—highlighting gaps in interdisciplinary support or emotional guidance.
- The qualities most valued in mentorship included not just academic expertise and research alignment, but also interpersonal traits such as empathy, honesty, responsiveness, adaptability, and professionalism. This underscores the dual role mentors play in both academic and emotional development.
- When asked what mentorship should ideally look like at BGSU, responses varied from “weekly check-ins” to detailed visions of structured, collaborative

relationships. A common theme was the desire for mentorship that actively supports academic progress through regular engagement, clear expectations, and mutual respect.

Building on these insights, the committee finalized a more comprehensive mentorship survey, organized into categories including mentorship styles, communication, equity and professionalism, outcomes, and reasons for mentorship change. The next step for the survey will be to create a finalized version by using the pre-survey data to better reflect the range of student experiences.

This work represents a significant step toward institutionalizing a culture of accountable, supportive, and transparent faculty mentorship. Key collaborators supporting this initiative include Madison Altieri, Academic Affairs Representative, Dr. Glenn Davis, Interim Provost and senior vice president, Jessica Turos, University Assessment, and Dr. Mary-Jon Ludy, Associate dean of Graduate College. The committee remains committed to improving mentorship experiences and ensuring that every graduate student has access to meaningful and professional guidance throughout their academic journey.

Dissolved Committee for Service and Engagement

Service and engagement continued to be core pillars of the Graduate Student Senate's mission during the 2024–2025 academic year. Graduate student leaders collectively participated in approximately 12 events, contributing over 105 hours of volunteer time to both campus and community initiatives.

Over the course of the year, it became clear that GSS did not require a fully separate, dedicated committee to manage these activities. While the idea had merit, the time and effort needed to charge, oversee, and sustain such a committee did not align with the expected benefits. Since many service events were coordinated by external departments or community partners, GSS's role was primarily to share information and recruit volunteers. These responsibilities were effectively managed by a designated individual.

To better recognize the broader contributions of graduate students, executive leadership recommends that membership use BGSU serves as previously recommended. This would allow senators and graduate students to log independent service hours and offer a more complete picture of graduate engagement on and off campus.

One of the most visible service engagements this year was our Homecoming Week involvement, which was organized in collaboration with the Graduate College. GSS members—Ariel, Zainab, Madison, and David—painted a world-themed banner for the Homecoming competition, which placed third overall. Despite weather conditions washing out the banner, the group expressed interest in donating the prize funds to a cause aligned with GSS values. Executive Leadership expressed a desire for the funds to be donated to the Firelands Student Government. The accompanying Homecoming tabling event was the best-attended service event of the year, with five SEC members and two senators participating. It offered a meaningful opportunity to interact with the broader graduate student community and increase awareness of GSS's role on campus.

As we reflect on this year's contributions, GSS remains committed to

fostering a culture of service, encouraging visibility and impact, and exploring creative ways to recognize the diverse forms of engagement that graduate students bring to the BGSU community.

Major Events

The 2024–2025 academic year featured a range of major events that showcased the Graduate Student Senate’s dedication to professional development, academic excellence, and inclusive engagement. These events reflected GSS’s mission to enhance the graduate student experience through opportunities that are both meaningful and mission aligned. Whether by curating impactful career programming, facilitating open dialogue with university leadership, or celebrating scholarly achievement, GSS remained committed to fostering community, leadership, and visibility for graduate students across disciplines and modalities.

Professional Development Day for Graduate Students

The Graduate Student Senate’s Professional Development Day was held on Thursday, October 24th, 2024, from 9:45 AM to 3:45 PM in Room 308 of the Bowen-Thompson Student Union, with both in-person and hybrid attendance options. The annual event is designed to empower graduate students by offering practical tools, expert advice, and networking opportunities to support their career development both within and beyond academia. This year’s theme focused on “Alternative Career Pathways that Shape Futures and Create Lasting Impact.” As graduate students increasingly explore non-traditional professional routes, GSS curated sessions to help them reflect on their values, expand their horizons, and strategically plan their next steps.

We were honored to welcome Dr. Donald Asher, an internationally acclaimed author and speaker on graduate career success. With over a dozen influential books to his name—including *Graduate Admissions Essays* and *Who Gets Promoted, Who Doesn’t, and Why*—Dr. Asher brought unparalleled insight into navigating complex career landscapes. His sessions encouraged students to consider career design with intention, explore diverse professional domains, and identify opportunities for change-making roles outside the academic mold. Additional sessions were offered by Kat Williams and Rachel Froman from the Kuhlin Career Hub, who led a dynamic workshop on professional branding, and Gabriel Dunbar, Assistant Director of Life Design, who provided actionable strategies for building adaptive, purpose-driven career pathways.

The event was launched with welcoming remarks by Abiola J. Sobayo, GSS Professional Development Representative who was the primary leader for the event, and concluded by David M. Fisher, GSS President. A networking lunch allowed attendees to connect with one another and with facilitators in a casual, engaging setting. The event attracted participation from across disciplines and was one of the most well-attended GSS programs of the year. By spotlighting varied perspectives and practical tools, the 2024 Professional Development Day reflected GSS’s commitment to career readiness, holistic growth, and leadership development for graduate students at BGSU.

Open Forums

This year, GSS initiated a new effort to foster open dialogue between graduate

students and college leadership through a series of targeted open forums. Led by Damilola Osamika, Online Graduate Student Representative, these forums were designed to center student voices—particularly those of online and nontraditional graduate students—while also strengthening relationships with college deans and increasing transparency around available resources.

The first two open forums were successfully held on February 26, bringing together students and deans from both the College of Arts and Sciences (Dean Ellen Schendel) and the College of Technology, Architecture, and Applied Engineering (Dean Wael Mokhtar). Both deans served as co-hosts for these sessions, demonstrating a strong commitment to student engagement and shared governance. Each forum began by acknowledging common concerns, such as stipends and parking, while intentionally shifting the focus toward less discussed but equally pressing topics. These included:

- Building a sense of belonging for online and nontraditional students.
- Identifying underutilized resources and support systems.
- Encouraging collaborative opportunities through GSS involvement.
- Strengthening direct communication between students and their college leadership.

The feedback from both students and administrators was highly positive. Deans expressed appreciation for the opportunity to connect directly with graduate students and indicated a strong interest in continuing the series in future years. This initiative marks a significant step in broadening GSS's reach and representation, and while two forums were completed this year, plans are already underway to expand the series to include all degree-granting colleges in the next academic year.

Charles E. Shanklin Colloquium and Graduate Student Senate Awards

Now in its 43rd year, the Charles E. Shanklin Research Excellence Colloquium remained the Graduate Student Senate's premier event—a celebration of the bold, innovative, and interdisciplinary work produced by BGSU's graduate scholars. The event continued to be a centerpiece of scholarly exchange, intellectual dialogue, and institutional pride. This year's Colloquium—held on March 31, 2025, in the Bowen-Thompson Student Union—highlighted presentations from over 50 graduate student researchers in a variety of formats and from a variety of disciplines. The event culminated in a vibrant awards banquet that recognized both academic excellence and graduate student leadership.

The Colloquium offered three main presentation formats: abstract presentations, poster sessions, and a special category for creative scholarship. Students presented across disciplines, with entries grouped into Math & Sciences, Arts & Humanities, and Social & Behavioral Sciences. A total of 28 abstracts were submitted, 15 students participated in the poster session, and 6 finalists—two per category—were selected from 34 preliminary submissions for the Research Excellence competition. All research papers, oral presentations, and posters were reviewed through an anonymous, rubric-based process by faculty judges. GSS awards were evaluated by the Awards and Arbitration Committee. Faculty from across colleges generously volunteered to serve as judges, responding to open calls circulated earlier in the semester. Rubrics for both the Research Excellence Awards

and the broader Colloquium categories were reviewed and standardized ahead of time, helping to ensure fairness and transparency in scoring. The day concluded with a celebratory banquet where winners of the Colloquium and GSS Awards were honored.

While there was an estimated 300 hours of judging divided between all of the awards, it is a significant challenge for GSS to secure enough faculty judges for the Charles E. Shanklin Research Excellence Award.

The event was led and coordinated by Vice President Syeda Zainab Akbar, with the support of GSS officers and senators including David Fisher, Ariel Esposito, Madison Altieri, Kathryn Ware, Ginikachi Ifenatuoro, Abiola Sobayo, Mmaduabuchi Godsgant Akujuobi, and Hallie Ruby. On-the-day support from the full SEC team ensured smooth logistics, while marketing and outreach were managed with help from Samantha Imrie. Faculty engagement was a crucial part of the event's success. We would like to extend a special recognition to Dr. Lara Martin Lengel, who generously contributed her time and expertise in evaluating research submissions for a time-sensitive tie breaker.

This year's Shanklin Colloquium saw the highest number of abstract and research excellence submissions in recent years. The event ran smoothly and on schedule, and the energy during the banquet was lively and celebratory. The scale of the event grew significantly, and the amount awarded in cash prizes was increased to reflect the quality and range of student work. Participation from GSS senators was notably high, and the presence of university leadership—including Mizell Stewart III, a member of the Board of Trustees—underscored the Colloquium's stature on campus.

Awards and Recognition

A total of \$11,025 was awarded across presentation formats and research categories. Poster, abstract, and creative presentations were all recognized, in addition to the highly competitive Charles E. Shanklin Research Excellence Awards. The banquet also featured the annual GSS Awards, honoring contributions to research, leadership, and graduate education. See Table 4, Table 5, and Table 6 for information on the winners of the various Shanklin Colloquium and GSS awards.

Table 4

Shanklin Colloquium Award Winners

Category	Place	Winner
Poster	1st	Hsin-Ho Wei
Poster	2nd	Shahryar Zinaee
Poster	3rd	Jacqueline Kossey
Abstract	1st	Hallie Ruby
Abstract	2nd	Andrea Freimuth
Abstract	3rd	Nancy Ransom
Creative - Performative Arts	1st	Story Moosa
Creative - Visual Arts	1st	Nicholas Felaris
Creative - Visual Arts	2nd	Syed Ayaz Fatmi

Table 5*Charles E. Shanklin Research Excellence Award Winners*

Category	Place	Winner
Math & Sciences	1st	Jacqueline Kossey
Math & Sciences	2nd	Carren Burkey
Arts & Humanities	1st	Sarah Urbank
Arts & Humanities	2nd	Trisha Bonham
Social & Behavioral Sciences	1st	Janecca Chin
Social & Behavioral Sciences	2nd	Mehran Ghasemi

Table 6*Graduate Student Senate Award Winners*

Award	Winner
Outstanding Graduate Student	Kathryn Ware
Outstanding International Graduate Student	Desire Okpattah
Outstanding Research Assistant (RI)	Janecca Chin
Outstanding Research Assistant (RII)	Siva Sai Narayana Singh Udaya
Outstanding Contributor to Graduate Education	Dr. Karen Root
Margaret Zoller Booth Senator of the Year	Nikolai Dignoti
SEC Member of the Year	Ariel Esposito

Impact and Response

The 2025 Colloquium was widely appreciated by university leadership, faculty, and students alike. Graduate students described the event as more engaging, organized, and inclusive than in past years. The structure of the event and quality of feedback provided by judges contributed to a strong sense of scholarly recognition and community celebration. It served as a culminating moment for academic achievement and professional growth among BGSU's graduate student body.

As GSS prepares for the 2026 Colloquium, several opportunities for improvement have emerged. These include expanding faculty involvement, increasing participation from underrepresented disciplines, and enhancing outreach—particularly to include online and nontraditional students. Rubrics will continue to be refined based on judge and participant feedback. With momentum built from this year's success, GSS remains committed to growing the Shanklin Colloquium into an even more inclusive and prestigious event in the years to come.

Primary Initiatives

Throughout the 2024–2025 academic year, the GSS advanced a range of initiatives focused on advocacy, engagement, and student well-being. These efforts reflect GSS's commitment to addressing the evolving needs of graduate students at BGSU, while fostering collaboration with campus partners and local community organizations. The following section outlines key initiatives that demonstrate the Senate's responsiveness, capacity for action, and dedication to representing graduate student voices across institutional and civic contexts.

Community Partnership with BG S.O.N.G. and Lease in Peace

This year, the Graduate Student Senate deepened its engagement with local

housing advocacy efforts through a growing partnership with BG SONG (Bowling Green Save Our Neighborhoods Group)—a community-based nonprofit focused on improving housing access and quality in Bowling Green. The initiative was initially introduced to GSS by Kathryn Ware, Graduate Representative to the Board of Trustees, and later expanded through ongoing dialogue with community leaders and GSS members.

In Spring 2024, Rose Drain, former President of BG SONG, joined the Senate Executive Council as a guest speaker to present the organization's mission and efforts. Her presentation highlighted a growing housing crisis in Bowling Green, citing increased demand, rising rent prices, and a shrinking supply of livable rental housing. Notable efforts such as Rock the Block, a spring cleanup and community-building event that mobilized 100 volunteers, were shared as examples of BG SONG's hands-on approach to revitalization.

In collaboration with Undergraduate Student Government (USG) and PEBG (People of Engagement Bowling Green), GSS co-sponsored the event Lease in Peace: A Renter's Toolkit on Wednesday, March 19th, in Olscamp Hall, Room 203. The interactive event addressed common concerns of student renters—including international student guarantor issues, delayed repairs, lease non-renewals, and communication challenges with landlords. Participants heard from graduate student and former senator Sam Morkel-Williams, BG SONG's Rose Drain, and Lori Young from PEBG, with Student Legal Services and City Council members invited to provide additional resources and support.

The event was co-organized by Senator Tanner Hurst and GSS Vice President Syeda Zainab Akbar, who also engaged in strategic discussions with a local Housing Revitalization Community Action Team. The GSS unanimously approved a \$300 co-sponsorship for the event, reaffirming its commitment to addressing off-campus housing concerns faced by both domestic and international graduate students. Through this partnership, GSS continues to advocate for equitable, safe, and accessible housing in Bowling Green while strengthening graduate student representation in local community efforts. More information about BG SONG can be found at www.bgsong.org.

Vegan Campus Dining

In Fall 2024, the SEC received a proposal from a graduate student advocating for the removal of all animal products from BGSU dining halls. The initiative was introduced via email to GSS leadership and was brought to the November 22nd SEC meeting for discussion. David Fisher, GSS President, initially met with the student to discuss the goals of the proposal and clarified GSS's role in student advocacy and representation. He encouraged the student to gather department-level support to strengthen the case.

At the SEC meeting, the student presented findings from a campus-wide survey which indicated limited support for the proposal:

- 17% supported removing all animal products from campus dining halls.
- 13% supported removing only meat.
- 68% were not in support of any changes to current dining options.

During discussion, SEC members raised questions about outreach efforts,

compromise strategies, and precedent from other universities. The student acknowledged that they had not yet consulted with other student organizations and that they were not currently considering compromise options, instead advocating for a maximalist approach. Due to insufficient campus-wide support, the proposal was tabled, with a recommendation that a revised, more inclusive version might garner broader interest. However, the student later communicated that they would not be pursuing the initiative further as they had begun full-time employment in their academic field. As a result, the matter was unable to be brought to the GA. While this initiative did not progress, it could always be brought back. Nonetheless, GSS appreciated the student's engagement and reaffirmed its commitment to providing space for graduate voices on matters of campus life and policy.

Resolution in Opposition to Senate Bill 1

In response to the advancement of Ohio Senate Bill 1 (SB1)—a piece of legislation with far-reaching implications for public higher education—the Graduate Student Senate took formal action to voice its concerns and represent the interests of graduate students at BGSU. SB1, which mirrored elements of last year's SB83, places restrictions on public universities, particularly around curriculum development, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programming, and faculty labor rights.

Recognizing the potential impact of this legislation on academic freedom, labor rights, and the educational experience of graduate students, GSS initiated a formal response. While Undergraduate Student Government (USG) had already released a statement of opposition, Faculty Senate opened and responded to the issue within one meeting, GSS GA enacted a deliberate approach to considering opposing perspectives.

A motion was brought to the SEC to establish an informal committee tasked with drafting a resolution in opposition to SB1 (see Appendix B). The motion was led by Representative-at-Large Ariel Esposito and passed SEC with overwhelming support, with only one abstention. The SEC also discussed the potential of creating an accompanying informational resource to help graduate students understand the bill's implications. Following SEC review and revisions, the SB1 resolution was formally introduced and discussed during a General Assembly meeting. Based on the GAs recommendation the resolution was amended and approved for final adoption after open discussion and clarification. It was adopted with strong support: 18 votes in favor, 1 opposed, and 5 abstentions. The resolution positions GSS in formal opposition to SB1, reaffirming its commitment to academic freedom, inclusive education, and graduate student protections. It also signals a united graduate student voice at BGSU in the face of statewide legislative changes that directly impact campus climate, classroom content, and working conditions. GSS extends its appreciation to Ariel Esposito for their leadership in facilitating this timely and critical resolution.

Stipend Levels

Over the past three years (2022–2025), stipend levels for graduate assistants at BGSU have increased across all tiers, marking a significant achievement in graduate compensation. These increases reflect the result of sustained advocacy

efforts by the Graduate Student Senate, which has consistently elevated graduate student concerns about financial security and equity in assistantship structures. GSS views these changes as a clear win for its role in voicing the needs of graduate students and engaging in institutional dialogue. Master's stipend levels increased by \$4,000 across all levels ranging from a 50 percent increase to a 29 percent increase. Doctoral stipend levels increased as follows:

- Level A: +\$6,000 (33%)
- Level B: +\$5,000 (31%)
- Level C: +\$4,000 (29%)
- Level D: +\$3,000 (25%)

These increases, particularly at the lowest tiers, offer meaningful progress toward stabilizing graduate student income. However, they have also widened the gap between the highest and lowest doctoral stipends, raising concerns about equity within the funding structure. Despite these improvements in stipend levels, overall funding allocations to colleges have declined:

- Stipend allocations decreased by approximately 0.3%, from \$10,070,788 to \$10,050,111.
- Tuition waiver allocations dropped by nearly 10%, from \$12,692,148 to \$11,318,838.

This means that while individual stipends have increased, many departments are at risk for greater financial strain. Without increased allocations, departments and schools may face tougher decisions in the future. Some units may need to reduce the number of funded assistantships, switch to lower-level contracts, or offer partial stipends (e.g., 15-hour instead of 20-hour positions).

These potential developments pose challenges to both student access and program sustainability. While GSS had considered initiating a formal advocacy effort to increase institutional allocations, after consultations with mentors and university leadership, the decision was made not to pursue that advocacy track during the 2024–2025 academic year. This decision allows time for monitoring the impact of current changes and gathering more feedback from departments before advancing further policy recommendations. At the same time, GSS continues to emphasize the importance of:

- Senator engagement within programs to track stipend distribution and related impacts.
- Developing a cohesive, data-informed advocacy plan in future years.
- Ensuring any future gains are not offset by reduced access to assistantships.

Records Management

As the Graduate Student Senate continues to evolve as a governing body, the need for intentional and organized records management has become increasingly urgent. This year, GSS made key strides in developing systems to preserve institutional memory, support leadership transitions, and create a more efficient infrastructure for internal operations. Additionally, several executive officers volunteered to help create, organize, and distribute documents and materials donated to the university archives.

Student Limited Role in Canvas

One of the most notable challenges faced this year involved the inappropriate use of the GSS Canvas shell as a listserv by students, who were able to send messages to all other users within the platform. This raised significant concerns around privacy, professionalism, and message oversight. To address the issue, many options were explored as potential responses. In the end, GSS collaborated with the Office of Information Technology Services (ITS) to create a new user role known as Student Limited.

The Student Limited Role mirrors the standard student role in functionality but removes the ability to message other users, effectively curbing the misuse of Canvas as a mass communication tool. This change helped reestablish Canvas as a structured and professional environment for student engagement, where information-sharing is moderated and aligned with GSS's administrative needs in the shared community space.

As part of these discussions, GSS also considered the potential implementation of a dedicated listserv. After careful evaluation, it was determined that a separate listserv would be both redundant and labor-intensive, requiring ongoing maintenance without offering clear advantages over our other platforms.

Second Canvas Shell for GSS Officers

To further strengthen internal organization and support year-round continuity, GSS established a second Canvas shell exclusively for officers. This digital space functions as a central repository for leadership resources—including meeting notes, financial documentation, event planning materials, and internal communications. By separating officer records from student-facing content, the shell has reduced confusion, improved access to essential documents, and supported more efficient onboarding for new SEC members.

In the absence of a formal historian role, the officer shell has also served as an informal archive of institutional memory, preserving key decisions and processes that inform the organization's ongoing work. It ensures that future officers can build on prior initiatives, rather than restarting efforts from scratch each year. This year, efforts to enhance the shell's utility were expanded through the collection of monthly reports from officers, the introduction of more robust transition reports at the end of each term, and the creation of orientation materials.

Development of Handbooks

Beyond the comprehensive rewrite of the Constitution and Bylaws, GSS also began laying the foundation for a broader suite of organizational documents aimed at strengthening continuity, clarifying roles, and supporting leadership development. This effort reflects a broader vision of long-term structural stability and improved institutional memory. One of the key projects was a set of Policies, which began as a flexible working document to capture evolving procedures and internal expectations. Designed to complement, rather than replace, the Constitution and Bylaws, these policies will allow GSS to respond nimbly to changing organizational needs without requiring formal constitutional amendments. It is envisioned as a living document—updated regularly to reflect current practices and operational norms.

Alongside this, GSS began drafting Senator and Officer Handbooks, which are intended to serve as practical tools for onboarding, training, and performance accountability. These handbooks will provide role-specific guidance, clearly outlining responsibilities and expectations for each position within the organization. Their purpose is to ease leadership transitions, support professional development, and ensure that critical organizational knowledge is retained from year to year.

Importantly, GSS also secured approval to begin designing bridge training materials for incoming senators and officers. This training program, to be developed over the 2025-2026 academic year, will offer structured orientation content tailored to each leadership role, further supporting the continuity and effectiveness of the Senate's work. While these handbooks and training modules remain in development, the groundwork laid this year represents a critical step toward institutionalizing knowledge, strengthening leadership transitions, and supporting the evolving needs of graduate student governance at BGSU.

External Advisory Board

In keeping with the vision to build deeper institutional continuity and long-term leadership capacity, the Graduate Student Senate initiated plans this year to establish the Falcon Fellows Advisory Board (FFAB)—a GSS alumni advisory council. The FFAB was conceptualized not simply as an external body, but as a structural link between past and present. It represents a broader commitment to strengthening GSS's external partnerships—both with alumni who have helped shape the organization and with broader university structures invested in student governance and development.

The purpose of the FFAB will likely include: (1) offering strategic oversight of GSS development and operations; (2) evaluating how effectively the organization embodies its values, mission, and purpose; (3) serving as a reference point for leadership continuity; and (4) acting as a potential resource for financial advancement.

While still in its early stages, the creation of the FFAB reflects a pivotal step forward in institutionalizing continuity, mentorship, and reflective leadership practice. By engaging alumni and external partners through a structured advisory process, GSS positions itself not just as a student governance body, but as a dynamic organization capable of learning from its past while preparing thoughtfully for its future.

Issues Affecting International Students

This year, GSS continued its strong advocacy for international graduate students by addressing the layered academic, financial, and structural challenges they face while pursuing education at BGSU. Our efforts were grounded in regular engagement with university offices and leaders. The International Student Representative met monthly with the director of International Programs and Partnerships (IPP) to communicate concerns, inform programming, and support IPP-led initiatives. These conversations served as critical communication channels for voicing the lived experiences of international students and creating more inclusive institutional practices.

Inclusive Curriculum and Pedagogical Training

One of the persistent concerns raised by international students is the challenge of adapting to American academic expectations. Many arrive from vastly different educational systems, and the shift in classroom norms, assessment styles, and academic rigor can be disorienting. This difficulty extends beyond their own coursework—international graduate assistants often find themselves teaching undergraduate students with little familiarity with U.S. educational standards.

We advocated for more rigorous training and orientation programs, particularly for international students assigned to teach BGP (general education) courses. In response, the Graduate College expanded its international orientation materials, and several departments were encouraged to include discussions of pedagogical expectations in their onboarding sessions. The Center for Faculty Excellence (CFE) also offered enhanced training in inclusive pedagogy and graduate student instruction, further equipping international TAs with the tools needed to succeed in the classroom.

Graduate Assistants as First-Time Teachers

Language barriers, cultural differences, and limited teaching experience continue to impact international graduate assistants, many of whom are serving as instructors for the first time. We voiced concern to multiple college deans that disparities in teaching preparation can affect undergraduate student learning, as reflected in course evaluations and student feedback. GSS strongly recommended deeper support at the departmental level, including more comprehensive orientation programs and structured mentorship for graduate instructors.

Healthcare Costs and Systems Awareness

Healthcare remains a major source of confusion and financial strain for many international students. Accustomed to lower healthcare costs or public health systems in their home countries, many students must adjust to the insurance-based model of healthcare in the U.S., where services are often significantly more expensive.

To address these challenges, GSS collaborated with the Office of Health and Wellness and IPP to ensure international student orientation programs clearly explain the U.S. healthcare system, insurance models, and the rationale for associated fees. In addition, we have continued conversations with university leadership about reducing the cost burden or increasing institutional support for healthcare coverage, referencing models used by peer institutions across the country.

Housing and Transportation Challenges

GSS also worked to amplify awareness around the complex housing issues international students face upon arrival. These include:

- Inability to sign leases without guarantors due to a lack of credit history, often forcing students to pay up to three months' rent as a security deposit or overcrowd shared housing.
- Vulnerability to predatory housing practices, including non-renewal of leases and unclear rental terms.

- Limited access to university transportation, particularly for students living in parts of Bowling Green not well connected by campus shuttles.
- Navigating rental costs and landlord disputes, especially without prior experience in the U.S. housing market.

Most graduate students, including international students, live off-campus and function as renters in the city. To make these issues more visible, GSS co-sponsored the “Lease in Peace: A Renter’s Toolkit” event, in partnership with BGSONG (Bowling Green Save Our Neighborhoods Group), USG, and PEBG. The event created a forum for sharing student experiences and provided direct access to community organizations, city council members, and legal resources. This helped students learn their legal rights and best communication practices to avoid any issues with rental agencies. Student legal services as a campus partner supported these discussions. We continue to work with BGSONG’s Transportation and Mobility team to identify areas where transportation connectivity is required in Bowling Green.

Immigration Policy and Emergency Communication

As immigration regulations have tightened under recent federal policies, international students are under closer scrutiny and face more rigid travel and documentation requirements. While Student Legal Services at BGSU does not provide immigration-specific support, GSS supported IPP’s efforts to distribute comprehensive emergency travel guidance and helped amplify lists of accredited immigration attorneys and consular resources. We remain committed to ensuring transparency in all communication around policy shifts and compliance. Throughout the year, we worked alongside Faculty Senate, Graduate Council, and IPP to support a consistent flow of information to students about travel requirements, document preparation, and institutional contacts in case of emergencies.

Understanding the International Student Experience

In both our internal discussions and broader advocacy efforts, GSS emphasized the importance of recognizing the unique pressures international students face upon arriving in the U.S.—from dietary changes and social isolation to complex bureaucratic systems and financial constraints. For a second consecutive year, we advocated for adjusting the university’s payroll calendar to reduce the gap between the fee payment deadline and receipt of the first stipend check, which places undue strain on newly arrived students. These experiences are often shared by first-generation graduate students as well, highlighting the need for intersectional support systems. GSS continues to call for greater sensitivity across campus units to the transitions faced by international students, advocating for proactive measures, inclusive resources, and campus-wide collaboration.

ITS Survey

Each year, the Graduate Student Senate partners with Information Technology Services (ITS) to assess the classroom technology experiences of graduate students—particularly those serving in instructional roles. The goal is to better understand how technology infrastructure and support systems affect teaching effectiveness, accessibility, and overall satisfaction for graduate instructors at

BGSU. In Spring 2025, GSS launched a short but targeted survey to gather feedback from graduate student teachers across campus. The survey remained open through Friday, February 14th, and received 36 complete and valid responses, marking a modest yet meaningful increase from 29 responses collected in the 2023–2024 cycle. This improvement in participation demonstrates growing awareness of the survey and the importance of graduate student input in institutional planning. The GSS will be hosting a survey to ask graduate students about their classroom technology experiences. This will help GSS and ITS better understand how graduate students are interacting with and experiencing technology on campus, especially as teachers. The survey consisted of 18 items, including:

- 6 demographic questions.
- 10 quantitative Likert-scale questions (primarily 4-point scales).
- 2 open-ended qualitative questions.

The majority of respondents (83%) were affiliated with the College of Arts and Sciences, and a large portion (94.4%) were enrolled as full-time students. Most respondents were Ohio residents (81%), and 89% attended classes in person. In terms of academic level, 53% were pursuing master's degrees, while 94% of all respondents held teaching responsibilities, making this survey especially relevant for evaluating classroom technology used in instructional contexts. The age range of respondents spanned from 22 to 47 years, indicating a diverse representation across academic and professional stages.

Key Findings and Comparative Insights

The overall tone of the survey responses was generally positive, with satisfaction levels across most questions ranging between 68.5% and 86.4%. The highest-rated aspect was related to software installation and minimal setup time, with 86.4% of respondents expressing satisfaction. This indicates a relatively smooth onboarding process for graduate instructors using classroom technologies.

When comparing the results to the 2023–2024 survey most items remained stable or showed slight improvements. However, the survey identified one notable change. The perceived quickness of response times from ITS decreased from 79.2% to 76%.

These findings suggest that while some systems and services are functioning well, there remain persistent issues in the areas of responsiveness, reliability, and classroom adaptability. The open-ended comments echoed these concerns, particularly highlighting inconsistent classroom setups, limited tech support during evening classes, and occasional delays in troubleshooting.

This survey continues to serve as an important feedback loop between graduate student instructors, GSS, and ITS. The Graduate Student Senate has shared the findings with ITS leadership and advocated for continued improvements.

Representation and Service

As part of its mission and purpose, the GSS maintains an active participation in a multitude of key governance structures. This Section outlines selected contributions and influence of the GSS within the university from the 2024-2025 academic year.

External Committees

Through representation on university senates, committees, councils, and boards, GSS ensures that graduate student voices are present in institutional decision-making processes. These arenas allowed for the GSS to contribute to academic policy, non-academic policy, student life, curriculum, and a variety of other shared governance issues.

Faculty Senate

The Faculty Senate is a central and vital space for shared governance at BGSU. In Faculty Senate policies, institutional responses, academic planning, and any issue pertaining to faculty were deliberated throughout the year. Faculty senate includes the main senate and several committees including: (1) Senate Executive Committee, (2) Committee on Academic Affairs, (3) Committee on Professional Affairs, (4) Committee on Committees, (5) and a few other committees that GSS does not have representation on. Additionally, The GSS' relationship with Faculty Senate is memorialized within the Academic Charter.³

Representing the GSS in the Faculty Senate committees were GSS President David Fisher, GSS Vice President Syeda Zainab Akbar, Academic Affairs Representative Madison Altieri, and Representative-at-Large Ariel Esposito. David Fisher addressed the full Faculty Senate during each meeting, ensuring a consistent and informed presence for graduate student concerns.

GSS representation repeatedly emphasized the complex identity of graduate students as both scholars and laborers. We highlighted the tension between professional responsibilities—such as teaching, research, and administrative support—and the inconsistent recognition or compensation these responsibilities often receive.

Throughout the academic year, GSS used its position within Faculty Senate to advocate for a range of issues, including stronger support for graduate assistantships, inclusive planning in university-wide initiatives, and careful consideration of artificial intelligence policy. Updates on GSS internal initiatives were regularly shared, reinforcing a culture of transparency and collaboration.

A wide array of topics was addressed during the year. These included the implementation of early alert systems, the need for expanded support for grant funding, considerations around collective bargaining agreements, retiree benefits, and the challenges and opportunities surrounding AI integration in teaching and learning. Discussions were dynamic, often revealing the tensions and synergies between faculty responsibilities and institutional mandates.

Toward the latter part of the year, much of the Senate's attention turned to Senate Bill 1 (SB1), which significantly shaped the legislative and governance context for higher education in Ohio. This sweeping legislation prompted urgent institutional dialogue around its impact on curriculum design, diversity and inclusion efforts, faculty evaluations, and freedom of expression. The GSS delegation monitored these developments closely, voicing the potential downstream effects of these changes on graduate student learning environments, advisor relationships, and program stability.

³ <https://www.bgsu.edu/faculty-senate/academic-charter.html>

The Faculty Senate also undertook a substantial review of the faculty workload policy, emphasizing the need for clarity and equity across disciplines. Although this policy primarily targeted faculty, its outcomes are closely tied to graduate student mentorship and academic support. The Graduate Student Senate ensured that this connection was acknowledged in discussions.

It was also valuable for GSS representatives to hear directly from President Rodney Rogers and Interim Provost Dr. Glenn Davis during Faculty Senate meetings. Their participation reflected a university-wide commitment to collaborative governance and provided graduate student leaders with a clearer view of institutional priorities at the highest levels. These conversations were timely, especially given the evolving legislative landscape, and helped position GSS as a credible, responsive, and informed body within the broader shared governance framework.

As the year progressed, the Senate passed several resolutions reinforcing the university's commitment to inclusivity and open dialogue, even as it prepared for SB1 compliance. GSS's role within these conversations remained critical, providing a steady and student perspective.

Graduate Council

The Graduate Council primarily functions as the university's forum for discussing graduate education and administrative concerns. The Graduate Council includes Graduate Curriculum Review, and Graduate Policies and Standards, and Graduate Student Issues subcommittees. Graduate Council is representative of the wide array of graduate program with a variety faculty-administrative leaders from across the colleges with graduate degree programs. The Council was chaired by Interim Dean Dr. Ali Eskandarian with the support of Associate Dean Dr. Mary-Jon Ludy, whose leadership during a year of transition brought steadiness to graduate governance. While tensions lingered from previous years—particularly in light of leadership transitions within the Graduate College—the tone of meetings improved significantly. This shift reflected both a more inclusive atmosphere and the impact of sustained engagement by graduate student leaders. GSS representatives GSS Vice President Syeda Zainab Akbar, Academic Affairs Representative Madison Altieri, Student Affairs Representative Mmaduabuchi Godsgrat Akujuobi, and GSS President David Fisher participated throughout the year, ensuring strong representation across the council's full meetings and its subcommittees. The council this year discussed multiple changes to graduate curriculum.

The Graduate Council deliberated on several critical topics that had far-reaching implications for graduate education. The development of an academic forgiveness policy, for example, sparked in-depth conversations about how graduate students might be supported after periods of academic hardship—recognizing the unique pressures they face that differ from undergraduate populations. The policy, once finalized, would allow students to reset their GPA under defined conditions, offering a pathway to recovery without erasing accountability.

The Council also addressed the emerging role of artificial intelligence in graduate coursework. Recognizing both its potential and its risks, members debated

the need for a formal policy guiding ethical and pedagogical use of AI technologies in research, writing, and teaching. This was particularly relevant for programs where academic integrity and authorship are foundational.

Another major policy discussion centered on updating background check procedures in conjunction with Human Resources, aiming to standardize expectations while respecting the diverse pathways through which graduate students enter academic and research positions. Additionally, the creation of a new admission appeals process for applicants with felony convictions marked a step toward more equitable access to graduate education. The grad council also addressed issues related to international students and their unique challenges, especially related to visa policies, and campus climate. As immigration laws under the current administration continue to evolve, graduate program coordinators across various disciplines used this platform to amplify concerns raised by students whose academic success is deeply affected by shifting federal policies and institutional limitations.

Curriculum revision timelines also came under review, as departments struggled to adapt to frequent changes in state-level expectations, including those prompted by Senate Bill 1. These discussions emphasized the pressure on faculty and staff to maintain program relevance and compliance without compromising academic freedom. The Council remained a space for working through these tensions. Together, these discussions reflected a deepening awareness of how macro-level policy decisions intersect with the everyday realities of graduate education. GSS's contributions throughout ensured that student perspectives were not only present but prioritized in these decision-making processes.

One of the most significant contributions from GSS this year was through GSS President David Fisher's role in the Graduate Student Initiatives (GSI) Subcommittee. Under Fisher's co-leadership with Dr. Greg Decker, this subcommittee began the academic year with self-assessment to refine its goals, purpose, and relationship with the full Graduate Council. The subcommittee sought to elevate student-driven concerns into meaningful proposals and to serve as a feedback loop between students and graduate faculty. The subcommittee presented its discussions to the full council and provided recommendations for moving forward with a more balanced relationship with the GSS.

University Council

The University Council included leadership from across the university including representatives from administration, faculty, and student leadership to discuss campus-wide priorities, institutional governance, and external policy developments. Graduate Student Senate was represented by Syeda Zainab Akbar and David Fisher, who participated in conversations that touched nearly every facet of the university's strategic planning.

The year began with detailed discussions on the 2024 Campus Master Plan, which set the stage for multiple institutional initiatives designed to modernize and unify the campus experience. Initiatives included proposals to enhance pedestrian safety, create more sustainable and green-friendly zones, and reevaluate parking infrastructure in response to shifting transportation needs. As a forward-looking

vision for BGSU's physical and academic landscape, the plan aimed to reflect the values of accessibility, innovation, and environmental responsibility.

Following these foundational conversations, the Council turned its attention to key academic trends, including the university's focus on improving undergraduate retention rates. These discussions acknowledged progress in stabilizing undergraduate enrollment but also highlighted the continuing decline in graduate enrollment—a concern echoed by GSS. GSS representatives emphasized how issues such as assistantship funding, workload expectations, and affordability were affecting graduate student recruitment and retention across programs.

Graduate student assistantships surfaced as a topic with potential long-term implications. While recent increases in stipend levels were broadly viewed as a positive step, questions remain about whether funding allocations will keep pace. Some concerns were raised that, without corresponding adjustments, programs could eventually face difficult decisions about reducing the number of stipends or available hours. These considerations prompted early conversations about how such changes might impact program stability, student workload, and equitable access moving forward.

As state legislation began to affect campus climate more directly, the passage of the so-called “bathroom bill” (SB104)⁴ prompted serious discussion. The bill's implications for bathroom access based on gender identity raised questions about compliance, student dignity, and safety. University leaders discussed strategies to ensure that all students, particularly trans and non-binary individuals, would continue to feel safe and supported on campus. GSS emphasized the need for transparent communication, inclusive facilities, and policies that affirm student identity.

These conversations flowed into the university's response to the U.S. Department of Education's Dear Colleague Letter and Ohio Senate Bill 1, which reignited concerns about civil rights protections and institutional funding. President Rogers explained to the Council that compliance would be legally sound and measured. University leadership further described all the areas that the new laws would impact.

Provost Search

The search for the next Provost of BGSU was a significant institutional process this year, and the Graduate Student Senate was actively involved in ensuring graduate student perspectives were part of the conversation. GSS representatives participated in two key sessions: one with leaders from all major shared governance groups (including Administrative Staff Council, Classified Staff Council, Faculty Senate, and Undergraduate Student Government), and another session dedicated specifically to student leaders. Additionally, members of the GSS attended open presentations by the two candidates and provided feedback to the administration.

Throughout the process, GSS emphasized the importance of selecting a provost who is responsive to graduate student needs, advocates for inclusive

⁴ https://search-prod.lis.state.oh.us/api/v2/general_assembly_135/legislation/sb104/06_EN/pdf/

academic leadership, and fosters open communication across all levels of the university. In discussions, many graduate students and GSS members noted a desire for a leadership style and personality similar to that of Interim Provost Dr. Glenn Davis, whose student-centered approach has been widely appreciated.

GSS also encouraged senators and graduate students to voice the specific challenges they face—such as academic workload, mentorship, funding, and curriculum development—to help shape a candidate profile that reflects graduate student priorities.

Following a comprehensive national search supported by an external firm, Dr. Ravi Krovi was selected as the next Provost of BGSU. Dr. Krovi is expected to begin his role for the 2025 summer session. GSS intends to establish a strong, collaborative relationship with the new provost and to approach this with a focus on mutual value and dialogue.

Dr. Krovi brings a particular interest in curriculum innovation, including adult learning, modular coursework, and interdisciplinary education at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. He has also emphasized the importance of building “durable skills,” a concept closely aligned with transferable skills that support long-term student success.

As leadership transitions, GSS remains committed to advocating for graduate student voices and ensuring that the next phase of academic leadership continues to prioritize equity, innovation, and student well-being.

GSS Vice President’s Remarks

A Note to My Fellow Falcons

Serving as Vice President of the Graduate Student Senate this past year has been one of the most demanding, revealing, and transformative chapters of my time at BGSU. In writing this reflection, I find myself drawn not only to the victories we celebrate in these pages but also to the spaces in between—the moments of uncertainty, the invisible labor, and the lessons etched quietly into the everyday work of governance.

Leadership, as I’ve come to learn, lives in the tension between what we dream and what the system allows. One of the most persistent challenges we faced was the absence of formal structures for preserving institutional memory. When I stepped into this role, we lacked a centralized system for documentation. There were no consistent handbooks, no streamlined archives, and little guidance on how to pass down the intangible knowledge that lives in calendars, chats, and conversations. And yet, year after year, graduate students like us stepped into these roles and built anew. We began the long-term work of establishing a records system—from second Canvas shells to monthly reports and handbooks—but the path was slower than I had hoped. Without a historian or deeply embedded documentation culture, we were often working backwards while trying to move forward.

Our efforts to update the Constitution and Bylaws mirrored this challenge. For over a year, we labored to revise governing documents that no longer reflected

our current structures. The Governance Committee, under President David Fisher's leadership, brought clarity and vision to a process that had long been overdue. We drafted language that was inclusive, flexible, and forward-looking. But in the end, the proposed revisions did not pass—not for lack of support, but due to abstentions and procedural thresholds we couldn't overcome. It was a reminder that sometimes, the technical can eclipse the transformative. And yet, I believe the work mattered. It laid the groundwork for change, even if the vote didn't.

Throughout the year, I was reminded time and again that some of our most important work is also the least visible. The quiet hours spent mentoring a senator. The conversations held with a struggling student. The emails advocating for clarity in international orientation materials or raising concerns about regalia costs. These moments don't carry headlines or hashtags. But they do something more meaningful: they keep the institution human. They carry the weight of care.

Financial strain was another recurring challenge. While our programming scaled in both impact and participation—particularly with Professional Development Day and the Shanklin Colloquium—so too did our expenses. We faced difficult choices in reallocating funds, always asking where the greatest student need lay. The demand for Professional Development Funding reminded us that graduate student needs are distinct from our undergraduate peers. Conferences, academic memberships, and research-related travel are often essential—not optional—and yet uneven departmental funding means many students rely on GSS for these costs. Balancing this demand with other priorities often felt like threading a needle through a moving target.

We also wrestled with role overlap and leadership turnover. Several officer positions remained vacant early in the year, and many of us took on responsibilities far outside our defined roles. We did what needed to be done. But the experience underscored how fragile student governance can be without strong onboarding and transition systems. I'm proud that we laid the foundation for bridge training materials and officer-specific handbooks, which I hope will serve future leaders in steadier waters.

There were, of course, frustrations—the kind that come from watching good ideas stall or seeing advocacy efforts brushed aside in institutional red tape. But there was also growth. I learned to lead from the margins, to find power in persistence, and to reframe silence not as absence but as a space where listening begins. I also learned that our loudest work is not always our most enduring. The structures we imagine today—the records we archive, the systems we build, the trees we plant—are often for students we may never meet.

And so, to my fellow graduate students: thank you. Thank you for your trust, your critiques, your resilience, and your partnership. Whether you saw me at a GA meeting, organizing Shanklin, writing funding policies, or just wandering McFall lost in thought—you were the reason I showed up every day with purpose. This year reminded me that representation is not about being in the room for yourself. It is about holding the door open—quietly, firmly, persistently—so that others can enter, belong, and lead.

In gratitude and solidarity,
Syeda Zainab Akbar



Vice President, Graduate Student Senate

Incoming Leadership



Graduate Student Senate's 55th President
Ariel Esposito
Leadership Studies, PhD



Vice President
Shubham Sundriyal
Data Science, PhD



Secretary
David M. Fisher
Higher Education
Administration, PhD



Student Experience
Representative
Radhika Srivastava
Computer Science, MS



Professional and Outreach
Development
Syeda Zainab Akbar
Media and
Communication, PhD



Environmental Affairs
Representative
Tanner Hurst
Geology, MA



Treasurer
Zachary Matthews
Leadership Studies, PhD



Academic Affairs
Representative
Aryan Miriyala
Computer Science MS



Representative-at-Large
Morgan Poole
Sociology, PhD



International Student
Representative
Mmaduabuchi Godsgant
Akujuobi
Leadership Studies, PhD



Online Student
Representative (Interim)
Mohammed Shakeel Shaik
Computer Science, MS

Appendix A

Graduate Student Senate—General Assembly Meeting—September

Date and Time: September 13, 2024, 3-5PM

Location: Hybrid Zoom and Olscamp 221

Call to Order 3:00 PM

Roll Call:

- Quorum Met

Approval of the Minutes

- Motion to approve the General Assembly April Minutes: Sociology MA
 - Second: Theatre and Film
- Minutes stand approved by unanimous consent

Chair Remarks

- Presented video welcome on the role, purpose, responsibilities, and expectations of a senator with printed introductory material and video transcript.

New Business

- Removal of Officers
 - Motion to remove Sarah Olesky as 2024-2025 Treasurer: Theatre and Film
 - Second: Psychology
 - Discussion: The motion was presented to the GA after being carried in the Senate Executive Council by a unanimous vote.
 - Question: How does the removal of the Treasurer impact our programs.
 - Answer: Having a Treasurer is a requirement imposed by the university and is tied to the good standing of GSS. Having an inactive treasurer prevents GSS from properly administering the Funding for Professional Development and Regalia Awards.
 - Vote: 17 in favor, 0 opposed, 14 Abstain
 - Carried by simple majority⁵
- Informational Item
 - The Senate Executive Council accepted the resignation of the Online Graduate Student Representative

Speakers

- Dr. Eskandarian, Interim Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate and Professional Programs, and Dr. Ludy, Associate Dean of the Graduate College
 - The Graduate College focuses on removing obstacles for graduate students and promoting success at BGSU and after BGSU
 - Graduate College Mission Statement
 - Provided information on enrollment numbers, graduate student demographic statistics
 - Note that doctoral enrollment is on the rise with the recent creation of the Doctorate of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Doctorate.
 - Recommendation to become more familiar with the university's strategic plan *Forward*

⁵ Error in procedure later corrected.

- The Graduate College takes “Inspired Action” based on feedback from graduate students including: updating the TA/TI training, the sharing of the meal swipe benefit with contracted graduate assistants, etc.
- Question regarding the Student Emergency Fund and how many times a student can utilize the fund
 - Answer: Information is on the Office of the Dean of Students Website. As of last spring the limit was once per year.
- Question regarding stipend amounts and process of stipends
 - Answer: The university sets a total amount of allocation. The university differentiates between scholarships and assistantships. The total allocations for scholarships and assistantships have been stable at BGSU for graduate students, but this is not the case for most other universities. The Graduate College works with the other colleges to allocate the totality of scholarships and assistantships. Primarily the colleges (Arts and Sciences; Business; Education and Human Development; Health and Human Services; Musical Arts; Technology Architecture, and Applied Engineering), set the total allocations for programs. There is an issue with whether more assistantships are given at lower amounts or larger assistantships are given to fewer GAs. The Graduate College wants to hear more from students and for program faculty to collaborate more with graduate students on attaining external grant funding.
 - Recommendations: VP of Research Laura Regassa, Heidi Bouza, and CFE. Recommendation to engage in more advocacy and share more stories in increasingly public settings. Acknowledgement that doing more and providing more is the goal.
- Motion to extend time for Q&A by 5 minutes⁶
 - Moved: Sociology
 - Second: History

Officer Reports

- Kathryn Ware
 - BG Save Our Neighborhoods Group (BG SONG)
 - Housing insecurity is a growing issue and this external group has been founded to address the issue
 - There is an open forum on October 12 9:30 am-2:30 pm
 - The group is calling for more people to help represent and advocate. If you are interested in helping out reach out to gss@bgsu.edu

Committee Reports

- Service and Engagement Committee, as chaired by Ariel Esposito
- Completed a recent day of service event
- Sign up for BGSU Serves to track your service

⁶ Time was extended by 11 minutes.

- There will be service opportunities through the year, reach out to gss@bgsu for more information or to express your interest in joining the committee

Special Elections

- Treasurer
 - Candidates
 - Ginikachi Ifenatuora: Self-nomination accepted as motion
 - Second: Theatre and Film
 - Acquaaah Boakye
 - Self-nomination accepted as motion
 - Second: Philosophy
 - Floor Nominations
 - None
 - Point of Order
 - Theatre and Film: Question of if the vote to remove Sarah Olesky as 2024-2025 treasurer met the 2/3 majority vote
 - A revote was conducted to correct the procedural error
 - Vote: 25 in favor, 0 opposed, 6 abstain
 - Motion to enter Q&A: Theatre and Film
 - Second: History
 - Motion to Enter Deliberation: Sociology
 - Second: Logistics and Engineering
 - Motion to Vote: Theatre and Film
 - Second: History
 - Results
 - Ginikachi Ifenatuora: 27
 - Ackquaah Boakye: 4
 - Ginikachi Ifenatuora Elected as GSS 2024-2025 Treasurer
- Secretary
 - Candidates
 - Pranavesh Sunil: Self-nomination accepted as motion
 - Second: Theatre and Film
 - Floor Nominations
 - None
 - Motion to enter Q&A: Psychology
 - Second: History
 - Motion to Enter Deliberation: Theatre and Film
 - Second: Sociology
 - Motion to Vote: Theatre and Film
 - Second: History
 - Results
 - Pranavesh Sunil: 28
 - Pranavesh Sunil Elected as GSS 2024-2025 Secretary
- Representative-at-Large
 - Candidates

- Halima Akter Rube: Self-nomination accepted as motion
 - Second: Theatre and Film
 - Ariel Esposito: Self-nomination accepted as motion
 - Second: World Languages
- Floor Nominations
 - None
- Motion to enter Q&A: Theatre and Film
 - Second: Philosophy
- Motion to Enter Deliberation: Theatre and Film
 - Second: World Languages
- Motion to Vote: Theatre and Film
 - Second: Curriculum and Teaching
- Results
 - Halima Akter Rube: 1
 - Ariel Esposito: 22
 - Ariel Esposito Elected as GSS 2024-2025 Representative-at-Large
- Professional Development Representative
 - Motion to Table until the October General Assembly Meeting: Theatre and Film
 - Second Communication and Speech Disorders
 - Carried by unanimous consent
 - Motion to Extend the Interim Appointment of Abiola Sobayo as Interim Professional Development Representative until the October General Assembly Meeting: President
 - Second: Theatre and Film
 - Carried by unanimous consent

Old Business

- None

Announcements for the Good of the Order

- None

Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn: Vice President

- Second: Theatre and Film
- 5:02

Graduate Student Senate—General Assembly Meeting—October

Date and Time: October 11th, 2024, 3-5pm

Location: Hybrid Zoom/Olscamp 221

Call to Order

- 3:01 PM

Roll Call

- Quorum met

Approval of Minutes

- Motion to approve the minutes: Theatre and Film
- Second: Psychology
- Minutes approved by unanimous consent

Chair remarks

- Introducing the SEC body
 - Vice President: Syeda Zainab Akbar
 - Parent-Student Representative: Saadia Farooq
 - First-Year Master's Student Representative: Allison Kidd
 - Graduate Student Trustee: Kathryn Ware
 - Treasurer: Ginikachi Ifenatuora
 - Secretary: Pranavesh
 - Outreach and Marketing Officer: Samantha Imrie
 - Data and Research Officer: Richard Maguire
 - Environmental Affairs Representative: Nancy Ransom
 - Student Affairs Representative: Mmaduabuchi Godsgrant Akujuobi
 - Academic Affairs Representative: Madison Altieri
 - Interim Professional Development Officer: Abiola Sobayo
 - International Graduate Student Representative: Adwowa Osei
 - Representative-at-Large: Ariel Esposito
 - President: David Fisher
- Follow on social media: Facebook and Instagram
- Internal Committees – open seats
 - Governance
 - Update bylaws and constitution this year
 - Write a policies document/handbook
 - Constitution for external advisory board
 - Years past, this takes approximately eight hours
 - This year may be approximately ten hours
 - Finance
 - Combined with funding for professional development
 - Primarily for spring Funding for Professional Development
 - Takes approximately six hours in meetings
 - Service and Engagement
 - Rolling basis, most variable regarding hours
 - Keeping our presence on campus known
 - Awards and arbitration

- Focused on Shanklin or internal issues
- Shanklin will need approximately six hours in the spring semester

Special Elections

- Professional Development Officer
 - Motion to move into Election for Professional Development: MA Theatre and Film
 - Second: Data science PhD
 - Candidates
 - Abiola Sobayo: Self-nomination accepted as motion
 - Second: MA Theatre and film
 - Floor Nominations
 - None
 - Motion to move into questions: MA theatre and film
 - Second: Data Science PhD
 - Motion to move to deliberation: MA Theatre and Film
 - Second: Psychology PhD
 - Motion to move into voting: Philosophy PhD
 - Second: Psychology PhD
 - Abiola Sobayo, Elected
- Online Graduate Student Representative
 - Motion to move into election for Online Graduate Student Representative: MA Theatre and Film
 - Second: Psychology PhD
 - Candidates
 - None
 - Floor Nominations
 - None
 - Motion for discussion: Philosophy PhD
 - Second: Data Science PhD
 - Motion to reopen application for position and table elections until next meeting: MA Theatre and Film
 - Second: MA Theatre and Film
 - The motion carries

Officer Reports

- David Fisher: Leadership meetings, Provost search profile
 - Provost search has begun
 - Hired an external group to assist and facilitate the finding of candidates
 - Have participated in two meetings where we presented graduate student concerns and needs
 - Senators and graduate students should feel confident reaching out to their faculty and administrators and the GSS with issues they are having and how a provost might be able to help that.
 - Leadership meeting updates:

- Graduate council: Graduate student issues do surface, but not elsewhere on campus
- Mmaduabuchi Godsgrat Akujuobi: BGSU resources
 - BGSU resources:
 - BGSU emergency fund (<https://www.bgsu.edu/dean-of-students/support-and-guidance/EmergencyAssistancePrograms.html>)
 - BGSU Scholarships (<https://www.bgsu.edu/admissions/scholarships-and-financial-aid.html>)
 - BGSU Counseling Center (<https://bgsu.edu/counseling-center.html>)
 - Student legal services (<https://www.bgsu.edu/student-legal-services.html>): Cannot help if there appears to be conflict of interest with the University
- Abiola Sobayo: Professional Development Day
 - Keynote Speaker: Dr. Donald Asher
 - Workshop with Dr. Asher
 - Kat Williams and Rachel Froman from the Kuhlin Career Hub
 - Gabiel Dunbar, Assistant Director of Life Design

Committee Reports

- Finance and allocation committee: Ginikachi Prisca Ifenatuora
 - Reported on Professional Funding
 - Requested: \$63,000
 - Conference Funding: \$62,640.76
 - Membership Funding: \$3,318.50
 - Other FPD: \$5,862.80
 - Available Budget: \$11,000
 - Allocated \$10,000
 - Conference Funding: \$8,640
 - Membership Funding: \$1,404
 - Other FPD: \$600
- Service and Engagement Committee: Ariel Esposito
 - Banner painting: Won 3rd place, donating the award to the Firelands student government
 - Homecoming tabling
 - There are opportunities for volunteering
 - Sign up for BGSU serves so we can better track our impact
- Ad hoc Faculty-Student Interaction and mentorship initiatives: Madison Altieri
 - Everyone is invited to join
 - Faculty-Student interactions and mentorship styles study
 - Potential survey to be created
 - Working in conjunction with the Graduate Student Initiatives subcommittee of the Graduate College

Guided Open Forum

- Motion to table the Guided Open Forum indefinitely: president

- Second: Psychology

Announcements for good of the order

- None

Adjournment

- Motion to Adjourn: MA Theatre and Film
- Second: MA History
- 4:58

Graduate Student Senate—General Assembly Meeting—November

Date and Time: November 15th, 3-5pm

Location: Hybrid Zoom/Olscamp 221

Call to Order

- 3:04

Roll Call

- Quorum met

Chair remarks

Panel: Funding opportunities on campus (Reordered before approval of minutes)

- Alexia Coffman, Senior Administrative Assistant from the Graduate College
 - Oversight of the GSS FPD process
 - Funding for professional development
 - Oversight and support for the graduate college awards
 - Oversight of awards administered by the GSS
 - Helps with scholarships and stipends within the graduate college
- Stacey Allen, Associate Director of Student Engagement
 - Funding for student led organizations
 - Semesterly funding for anticipated events
 - Weekly funding for events, travel, and supplies

Approval of minutes

- Motion to approve last meeting's minutes by Data Science PhD
- Second: Psychology PhD
- Minutes approved by majority vote

Special Elections

- Online student representative
 - Motion to move into election for online student representative: Theatre and Film MA
 - Second: Sociology MA
 - Candidates
 - Damilola Osamika: Self-nomination accepted as motion
 - Second: Data Science PhD
 - Floor nominations
 - None
 - Motion to move into questions: Theatre and Film MA
 - Seconded by Sociology MA
 - Motion to move into discussion: Theatre and Film MA
 - Seconded by Sociology MA
 - Motion to move into voting: Theatre and Film MA
 - Seconded by Sociology MA
 - Damilola Osamika, elected as the Online Student Representative

Officer Reports

David Fisher: listserv, parking and meal swipes

- Listserv
 - Used for administrative purposes only

- A separate listserv would be duplicative of Canvas
- A listserv would require more intensive maintenance than our Canvas
- A listserv would not be an adequate replacement of Canvas
- Parking
 - Costs are not the primary concern
 - Focus on raising stipends to address the financial concerns
 - Costs are one of the lowest in the state and nationally
 - Availability and proximity is the greater concern
 - Trying to adjust where students can park
- Meal swipes
 - Secondary benefit from during COVID as a result of faculty benefit
 - Concern that if the issue is pursued, we may lose the benefit entirely
 - Can go to the Dean of Student's office to request donated meal swipes on a card with 5 swipes precharged on it

New Business

- Position of secretary
 - Accepted the resignation from the previous secretary
 - Opening up applications for secretary to be voted on in the December meeting
- Senator training: Discussion and questions for consideration
 - What do you require in your position?
 - PowerPoint was good but not helpful when it won't be seen again. Instead it would be beneficial to have a more readily available set of materials
 - How do you understand your role?
 - Being a go between for the GSS and your department.
 - Faculty don't always understand your role, and only want representatives to have access to funding
 - The SEC can help communicate with faculty the importance of a senator's role.
 - Advocating for the department and students
 - How can we get the constituents engaged in what the GSS does?
 - What is the ideal format for senator training?

Old Business

- None

Announcements for good of the order

- Shanklin awards on March 31st
- Zainab will not be chairing the next GA

Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn: Theatre and Film MA
- Second: Sociology MA
- 4:54

Graduate Student Senate—General Assembly Meeting—December

Date and Time: December 6th, 3-5pm

Location: Hybrid Zoom/Olscamp 221

Call to Order

- 3:00

Roll Call

- Quorum not met
- Meeting cancelled due to lack of quorum

Adjournment

- 3:09

Graduate Student Senate—General Assembly Meeting—January

Date and Time: January 24th, 3-5pm, 2025

Location: Hybrid Zoom/Olscamp 221

Call to Order

- 3:01

Roll Call

- Quorum met

Chair remarks

- Open question and discussion: What would you like to hear about and what should be brought to GA
 - Health Insurance
 - Parking
 - Stipends
 - Actionable Items
 - SOAB Funding and how to obtain funding
 - Housing
 - Resources

Approval of minutes

- Motion to approve November 2024 Minutes: Theatre and Film
 - Second: Psychology
 - Motion carried by show of hands
- Motion to approve December 2024 Minutes: Theatre and Film
 - Second: Psychology
 - Motion carried by show of hands

Special Elections

- Secretary
 - Motion to move into election for Secretary: Theatre and Film
 - Second: Psychology
 - Candidates
 - Alexis Norris: Not present
 - Prabhjot Kaur: Not Present
 - Floor nominations
 - Hallie Ruby: Self-Nomination
 - Second: Representative-at-Large
 - Motion to move into questions: Theatre and Film
 - Second: Data Science
 - Motion to move into discussion: Theatre and Film
 - Second: President
 - Motion to move into voting: Theatre and Film
 - Second: World Languages and Cultures
 - Hallie Ruby, elected as the Online Student Representative

Officer Reports

- David, President:
 - Provost Search Update

- External Advisory Board Update
- Recommendation for GSS to increase awareness, focus, advocacy, and representation for non-stipend bearing, part-time, accelerated-time, and off-campus graduate students
- Ariel, Representative-at-Large:
 - MLK Day of Service
 - Spring Campus Fest
 - January 30th
 - Call for volunteers
 - Open Forums in February for each college
- Ginikachi, Treasurer:
 - Spring FPD: applications Due February 16, March 10 notification of award
 - Regalia: Due February 7

New Business

- Canvas (David)
 - Creation of new user role called StudentLimited which is similar to the student role but without the ability to send messages to other users in the shell
 - Solves issue of students sending messages/emails to all other users in the Canvas shell without permission or oversight
- Stipend Levels (David)
 - Stipend level increases from 2022-2025
 - Master's levels \$4,000 each level (50%, 40%, 33%, 29%)
 - Doctoral levels \$3,000 (25%) for Level D; \$4,000 (29%) for Level C; \$5,000 (31%) for Level B, \$6,000 (33%) for Level A
 - Allocations down ~0.3% for stipends \$10,050,111 from \$10,070,788
 - Allocations down ~10% for tuition waivers \$11,318,838 from \$12,692,148
 - Recommendation for GSS to focus on increasing allocations
- Charles E. Shanklin Colloquium and GSS Awards (Zainab)
 - Applications are open will close February 24
 - Description of Awards and Amounts
 - Call for Volunteers

Announcements for good of the order

- This is a good time to announce things happening in your programs
- Theater Departments Dance Concert is January 31
- Ray Brown Association: Class Con 2025 March 14 and 15
- ITS survey will upcoming week

Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn: Theatre and Film
- Second: Psychology
- 4:20

Graduate Student Senate—General Assembly Meeting—February

Date and Time: February 21st, 3-5 pm

Location: Hybrid Zoom/Olscamp 221

Call to Order:

- 3:02 p.m.

Roll Call

- Quorum met

Approval of Minutes

- Motion to approve the minutes: Theater and Film.
- Second: Pop Culture.

Chair Remarks

- Thank you to all those in GSS.
- Vice President, Zainab, wants to thank President David Fisher for:
 - His efforts in rewriting the Constitution and Bylaws.
 - His advocacy for higher student stipends.
 - His dedication to graduate student senate.

Guest Speaker

- Dr. Jeremy Zilmer, Dean of Students Academic Honesty Coordinator Clery Compliance Coordinator: Academic honesty process and policy
- Due to an unforeseen illness, Dr. Jeremy Zilmer will be unable to speak during today's meeting.
- Motion to postpone his presentation until next year: Theater and Film.
 - Second: Data Science.
 Motion Carried.

Officer Reports

- David Fisher, GSS President:
 - President Fisher is proposing that the internal classification of “graduate degree program” be renamed as “graduate academic units” to accommodate for different terms used to define programs, departments, schools, and colleges. The use of the term “graduate academic units” will allow for more equal representation within GSS.
 - The primary graduate academic units will be departments and schools.
 - President Fisher proposes that schools in underrepresented colleges be given the option to add an additional GSS representative.
 - Departments with only master or doctoral level programs will only have one GSS representative while departments with both programs will be allowed two representatives.
 - The proposal is mainly to better define senator seats and improve representativeness within GSS.
- Ariel Esposito, Representative at Large:
 - The IT survey closes tonight. Ariel asks that all senators consider taking this survey before it closes.
- Damilola Osamika, Online Student Representative:

- Damilola is leading an online open forum for nontraditional graduate students of various programs to create a dialogue, discuss concerns, resources, and create a sense of belonging.
- These online open forums will allow nontraditional graduate students to be better represented within their college.
- The deans of each respective college will be present, and all students are welcome.
- This open forum will ideally focus on topics other than parking, stipends and other well-documented concerns.
- This open forum will occur via Zoom and should be sent out to each college.

New Business

- Updated Constitution and Bylaws (President David Fisher):
 - President David Fisher is presenting and discussing updates for the constitution and bylaws.
 - These edits reflect changes in GSS, BGSU as an institution, and in the culture of higher education that have occurred within the past 20 years. Changes include:
 - The membership section has been rewritten to be more accessible.
 - The structures section has been rewritten to better differentiate between committees and task forces.
 - Article IX of the Constitution details a new process governing revisions to the Constitution and Bylaws that surpass the scope or magnitude of a more common major amendment or change. This will include a two-year process where two different General Assemblies will have the opportunity to review the proposed revisions.
 - Changes to the bylaws include better definitions of senator positions and responsibilities including the minimum service requirements per semester.
 - Changes to SEC membership and positions include the combination of professional development and outreach officers.
 - Article III of the Bylaws will better define the differences between committees and ad-hoc committees and task forces.
 - Possible changes to Article VII.2 of the Bylaws proposes an option for some SEC positions to remain vacant.
 - Article IX includes a direct statement of the Regalia Award.
 - Article X includes a directive to have a set of policies.
 - Article XI includes the addition of an external advisory board outside of the board of trustees.
 - Online students will still be required to complete 4 service hours per semester. These service hours can be met by attending meetings (including task force and SEC meetings).
 - President Fisher asks that all senators review the updated constitution and bylaws and prepare to vote “Yay” or “Nay” on the matter at next month’s GA

meeting (which will be online). President Fisher reminds senators that feedback, reviews, and changes are welcome.

- Renting in BG: A Survivors guide, Senator Tanner Hurst
 - “Lease in Peace” is a new event led by BGSONG and is co-sponsored by the Undergraduate student senate and Graduate Student Senate among other organizations.
 - This event will be two pronged: educating renters and advocating for renters.
 - The event will take place at Olscamp 203 on March 19th from 5 to 7 p.m.
 - Marketing material should be sent out soon by members of BGSONG.
 - Pizza and soft drinks will be available for attendees.
 - Vice President Zainab reminds senators that they can drop by the event and are not required to stay the entire 2 hours.
- Upcoming Elections (Vice President Zainab)
 - The marketing and professional development positions have been combined into one position.
 - The next two general assembly meetings will be online and will include SEC elections.
 - Applications for set 1 opened on February 15th and will remain open until March 10th.
 - Elections will occur on March 14th.
 - Applications for set 2 will open on February 24th and will remain open until March 17th.
 - Elections will occur on March 21st.
 - There will be no incumbents running for the positions of vice president and president (these positions require previous GSS membership (20 weeks of time for GSS president and 5 weeks of time for the GSS vice president)
 - Only full-time students (those with 8 credit hours) can apply to the positions of treasurer, vice president, and president due to the Office of Student Engagement and Residence Life.
<https://www.bgsu.edu/content/dam/BGSU/general-counsel/policies/student-affairs/student-organizations.pdf> Policy 3341-2-36 E.7
 - President David Fisher encourages all senators to apply for the positions.
 - The stipend for the GSS president is \$10,000 and the stipend for the GSS vice president is \$4,000 these are paid for by the Graduate College, not by the GSS budget. There are stipends for additional positions paid for through the GSS budget.
 - International students would need to negotiate with their respective programs to ensure that their contracted 20 hours (as per federal law) will not inhibit their service in the position.
 - Attending SEC is a way individuals can better understand the responsibilities of SEC members.
 - The next SEC meeting is February 28th.
- SB1 Resolution (Ariel Esposito, Representative at Large)

- Motion to include discussions on the SB1 resolution: Theater and Film
- Second: English
- SB1 has passed through the senate and will likely pass throughout the house. This bill is reminiscent of SB83 from last year and specifically targets public universities.
- SB1 restricts the educational curriculum of educational institutions including restrictions placed on DEI.
- SB1 reduces faculty and employee striking and collective bargaining.
- SB1 inhibits open discourse on various topics deemed controversial.
- Motion to take 5 additional minutes to discuss the matter: Theatre and Film
 - Seconded by Data Science.
- A resolution would pass with a simple majority vote.
- Motion to extend the conversation by 10 minutes: Psychology.
 - Second by Music DMA.
- Motion to suspend discussion until the next GA meeting: President Fisher.
 - Second by Theater and film.
 - Motion Carried.

Announcements for the Good of the Order

- Deadline for Shanklin is this Monday, February 24th, 2025. There are currently no submissions for senator of the year.
- The theater department is currently showing “The Legend of Georgia McBride” at the Eva St. Marie Theater in the Wolfe center. Running Friday and Saturday night (one show on Friday and two shows on Saturday). Tickets for the show are \$5. There was a brief disruption to the order. President Fisher called for order (Point of Order).

Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn theater and film.
- Seconded by philosophy.
- 5:10 p.m.

Graduate Student Senate—General Assembly Meeting—March

Date and Time: March 14th, 3-5 p.m.

Location: Microsoft Teams

Call to Order:

- 3:02 p.m.

Roll Call

- Quorum met.

Approval of minutes

- Motion to approve the February 21st meeting minutes: School of Inclusive Teaching Education
- Second: Master of Business Administration.
- Objection: Theatre and Film
- The senator from the Theatre and Film department informed the general assembly that the minutes sent out by the GSS email were not minutes but were instead the agenda.
- The motion on the floor was amended to be a motion to postpone the approval of the February 21st meeting minutes until the March 21st meeting: School of Inclusive Curriculum and Teaching
- Second: Theatre and Film
- Motion to postpone approval of the February 21st meeting minutes until the March 21st meeting carried by unanimous consent.

Chair remarks

- President David Flsher and Vice President Zainab Akbar are postponing elections until the March 21st GA meeting to allow potential applicants more time to apply.
- David is acting as chair for this meeting at Zainab's request.

Unfinished Business

- SB1 Resolution
 - Motion to take the motion to discuss the SB1 Resolution from the table: Theatre and Film
 - Second: Media and Communication
 - The motion on the floor was amended to be a motion to approve the revised resolution in opposition to SB1: Theatre and Film
 - Second: English
 - Representative from the Theatre and Film department expressed support for the amended SB1 resolution.
 - Motion to adopt the proposed SB1 resolution as presented carries.
 - 18 votes in favor, 1 vote opposed, 5 votes abstaining.
 - The number of votes in opposition to the SB1 resolution was revised. The number of votes was changed after a senator stated they were in support of the updated SB1 resolution but accidentally left their hand raised during the voting process.

New Business

- Constitution and Bylaws

- Motion to approve the constitution and bylaws as presented: Theatre and Film
- Second: Data Science
- Representative from the Theatre and Film department expressed support for the updated constitution and bylaws.
- Point of Order: Theatre and Film. An objection to the vote was made because the attendance at the meeting did not meet the requirements of the Constitution and Bylaws to have 4/5 of voting members present.
 - David ruled in favor of the point of order and the objection to the vote.
- The motion on the floor was amended to be a motion to suspend discussion until the next meeting on March 21st: Theatre and Film.
- Motion carried by unanimous consent.
- Elections
 - Motion to discuss what the GA needs for the upcoming elections on March 21st: Representative at Large.
 - Second: Psychology PhD.
 - David informed the general assembly that many of the elected positions did not receive the required number of applicants to hold an election. David reminded the GA that information on the elected positions is available on the GSS Canvas. David encouraged all senators to reach out to constituents who may be interested in the positions.
 - Multiple senators expressed that constituents in their respective programs are unable to serve in any elected position due to their duties as graduate assistants and due to their programs only lasting 1 school year.
- GSS logo
 - Motion to move to the GSS logo agenda item: Representative at Large.
 - Second: Theatre and Film
 - David presented the proposed logo and discussed the history of both the current and proposed GSS logo designs. David asked that all senators review the new proposed logo design and prepare to vote on a potential logo change at the next meeting, March 21st.

Officer Reports

- Motion to move to officer reports: Representative at Large.
- Second: Logistics System Engineering
- President David Fisher
 - David informed the GSS general assembly of the Dear Colleague letter. The letter officially denounces DEI and discrimination based on an individual's race. David informed the general assembly that Dear Colleague letter indicates that the federal government is likely target publicly funded universities for non-compliance. David remarked that this issue is relevant to universities across the country not just Ohio, unlike the reach of SB1.
 - <https://www.ed.gov/media/document/dear-colleague-letter-sffa-v-harvard-109506.pdf>
- Representative At Large, Ariel Esposito

- April 6th is the Spring Day of Service and will occur from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- Lease and Peace: A Renter's Toolkit Event will take place on March 19th, 2025, from 5-7 p.m. at BTSU.
- Shanklin Banquet is on March 31st from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the BTSU Ballroom.
- Treasurer, Ginikachi Ifenatuora
 - Spring FPD has been officially approved or denied. Applicants will be emailed their application status by Monday, March 17th.
 - The approved amount for individuals who applied for conference funding was \$320.
 - The approved amount awarded to individuals who applied for membership funding was \$70.
 - The approved amount awarded to individuals who applied for other FPD funding was \$180.
 - In total, \$26,620 is being awarded to approved applicants.
 - Any individual who was denied FPD funding can appeal their denial to gss@bgsu.edu.
 - Should applicants have questions about their award status or the reimbursement process, they can email gssawards@bgsu.edu.

Announcements for good of the order

- Ariel reminded all senators that applications for SEC positions are due Monday night at 11:59 p.m. However, the GSS website may be down on Sunday night which could cause issues for potential applicants. Ariel suggested that potential applicants should apply as soon as possible to avoid any technical issues.
- At the request of senators, David indicated that the final deadline for GSS elected positions will be changed to Tuesday night at 11:59 p.m.

Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn: Representative at Large.
- Second: Theatre and Film
- Meeting adjourned at 4:11 p.m.

Graduate Student Senate—General Assembly Meeting—March

Date and Time: March 21st, 3-5 p.m., 2025

Location: Teams

Call to Order

- 3:04 p.m.

Roll Call

- Quorum met.

Approval of Minutes

- February 21 meeting minutes approved by unanimous consent
- March 14 meeting minutes approved by unanimous consent

Chair Remarks

- Welcome back from Zainab
- Highlighted the Shanklin Colloquium on March 31
 - The schedule is available on the slide for abstract presentations, poster presentations, research excellence, finalist presentations, and the banquet
 - Asked for this to be shared by senators to their constituents
- Encouraged senators to attend to celebrate

Old Business

- Met regular quorum, but not four-fifths quorum needed to vote on the constitution.
- Motion to change the agenda to move officer reports before old business by Sociology MA
 - Seconded by Theatre and Film MA
 - Motion carried by unanimous consent

Officer Reports

- David Fisher
 - Discussed SB1
 - Passed in the house, ready to be signed or vetoed by the governor. Anticipated to be signed into law
 - A 10-day period between passing in the house to be signed or vetoed by the governor. Anticipated to be signed into law.
 - Sociology MA: Are there any further options the GSS can do?
 - We could write a second resolution, but need to ask what new would we have to say? What impact would it make?
 - A smaller option would be to make a statement, but it would not be different from a resolution for the General Assembly

Old Business

- Updated Constitution and bylaws
 - Unable to vote on this due to lack of attendance
 - Motion to have a binding vote via Qualtrics to adopt the Constitution and Bylaws and to adopt the proposed logo by Curriculum and Teaching MA
 - Seconded by English MA
 - Motion to separate the motions by President
 - Seconded by Theatre and Film MA

- Amended motion to vote to adopt the Constitution and Bylaws online carried by show of hands
- Proposed logo
 - Motion to adopt proposed logo contingent on University approval by Representative-at-Large
 - Seconded by Theatre and Film
 - Motion carried by a show of hands (20 in favor)

New Business

- SEC member Elections for 2025-26:
 - Process of elections outlined by the Chair
 - 3 minutes to present their candidacy
 - 5 minutes for questions and answers
 - Questions are asked to both candidates in the reverse order that they previously presented or answered questions
 - 3 minutes to deliberate
 - Immediate announcement of winner during the meeting
- Elections
 - President
 - Ariel Esposito
 - Seconded by Sociology MA
 - Shubham Sundriyal
 - Seconded by Data Science MA
 - Candidate addresses
 - Q&A
 - Deliberation
 - Vote: 20 for Ariel, 3 for Shubham, 2 abstained
 - Ariel Elected
 - Vice President
 - Shubham Sundriyal
 - Seconded by Representative-at-Large
 - Lifton Square
 - Ineligible due to lack of time in the GSS
 - Candidate addresses
 - Q&A
 - Deliberation
 - Vote: 20 for Shubham, 1 opposed, 1 abstained
 - Shubham Elected
 - Treasurer
 - Zachary Mathews
 - Candidate addresses
 - Q&A
 - Deliberation
 - Vote: 23 for Zachary, 1 opposed, 0 abstained
 - Zachary Elected

- Secretary
 - Aryan Miriyala
 - Seconded by Representative-at-Large
 - David Fisher
 - Seconded by Representative-at-Large
 - Candidate addresses
 - Q&A
 - Deliberation
 - Vote: 14 for David, 7 for Aryan, 1 opposed, 1 abstained
 - David Elected
- Academic Affairs Representative
 - Aryan Miriyala
 - Candidate addresses
 - Q&A
 - Deliberation
 - Vote: 23 for Aryan, 1 opposed, 1 abstained
 - Aryan Elected
- Student Experience Representative
 - Lifton Square
 - Not in attendance
 - Radhika Srivastava
 - Seconded by Data Science MA
 - Candidate addresses
 - Q&A
 - Deliberation
 - Vote: 19 for Radhika, 1 opposed, 2 abstained
 - Radhika Elected
- Representative-at-Large
 - Point of information from David: Is the Representative-at-Large position contested?
 - Yes, which would take longer than the remaining 10 minutes in the meeting
- Motion to continue the meeting until after Representative-at-Large is election is complete by English MA
 - Seconded by Representative-at-Large
 - Motion failed by show of hands (11 in favor, not majority)

Announcements for the good of the order

Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn by Theatre and Film MA
 - Seconded by Curriculum and Teaching MA
 - Motion carried by unanimous consent
- Meeting adjourned at 4:54 pm

Graduate Student Senate—General Assembly Meeting—April

Date and Time: April 11th, 3-5 p.m., 2025

Location: Teams

Call to Order

- 3:04 p.m.

Roll Call

- Quorum met.

Approval of Minutes

- Motion to approve meeting minutes: Theatre and Film, MA.
 - Second: Geoscience, MS

Chair Remarks

- Vice President Zainab expressed gratitude to all senators for their work, for the opportunity to serve in the position of vice president, and thanked those who assisted with, participated in, and attended the Shanklin Colloquium. Vice President Zainab informed the general assembly that participation was at an all-time high this year.
- Vice president Zainab additionally acknowledges the concerns of international graduate students regarding visas and international travel. The executive committee is currently in conversation with BGSU administration about these concerns.

Old Business

- Discussion on voting for Constitution and Bylaws
 - Currently, there are not enough votes to pass the proposed changes to the Constitution and Bylaws. This was due to a lack of votes and a significant number of abstentions.
 - Question: When it was mentioned there were a significant number of abstentions was it a significant number of people not participating in the vote or people participating in the vote by selecting the abstain option?
 - Answer: It was specifically a large number of people participating in the vote by selecting the abstain option.
 - Film and theatre, MA, Nikolai Dignoti suggested that voting members be reminded that any concerns or need for clarification should be brought forward during the discussion to avoid having a generally positive discussion followed by a large numbers of abstentions during voting because no one felt the need to comment.
- SEC member elections for 2025-26:
 - Motion to elect executive officers: Sociology, MA.
 - Second: Film and Theatre, MA.
 - Carried by unanimous consent.
- Motion to enter elections for Representative-at-Large: Sociology, MA.
 - Second: Curriculum and Teaching, MA.
 - Carried by unanimous consent.

- Motion to hear the first candidate: Mohammed Shakeel Shaik
 - Self-nomination accepted as motion.
 - Second: Logistics System and Engineering, MS.
 - Carried by unanimous consent.
- Motion to hear the second candidate: Morgan Poole
 - Self-nomination accepted as motion.
 - Second: English.
 - Carried by unanimous consent.
- Floor nominations:
 - None
- Motion to enter into Q & A: Theatre and Film, MA
 - Second: Logistics and Systems Engineering.
 - Carried by unanimous consent.
- Motion to enter into deliberation: Representative-at-Large
 - Second: Theatre and Film, MA.
 - Carried by unanimous consent.
- Motion to enter voting: World Languages and Cultures
 - Second: Logistics System and Engineering, MS.
 - Carried by unanimous consent.
 - Results of vote:
 - Vote Mohammed: 8
 - Morgan Poole: 16
 - Abstain: 1
 - We will proceed to voting for Morgan Poole as an uncontested candidate.
- Motion to elect Morgan Poole as Representative-at-Large: Representative at Large, Ariel Esposito.
 - Second: Science of Applied Statistics, MS.
 - Yes: 22 votes
 - No: 1 Vote
 - Morgan Poole Elected as Representative-at-Large
- Motion to enter elections for Professional and Outreach Development Officer: Theatre and Film, MA.
 - Second: American Culture Studies, PhD.
 - Carried by unanimous consent.
- Motion to hear the first candidate: Syeda Zainab Akbar
 - Self-nomination accepted as motion.
 - Second: Sociology, MA.
- Floor Nominations:
 - None

- Motion to enter Q and A: Logistics Systems and Engineering, MS.
 - Second: Curriculum and Teaching MA, Ashleigh B.
- Motion to enter deliberation: Sociology MA
 - Second: Theatre and Film, MA.
- Motion to enter Voting: Data Science, MA.
 - Second: Social work, MA.
 - Carried by unanimous consent.
- Motion to elect Syeda Zainab Akbar as Professional and Outreach Development Officer
 - Yes: 21
 - No: 1
 - Syeda Zainab Akbar elected as Professional and Outreach Development Officer.
- Motion to enter elections for International Graduate Student Representative: Theatre and Film, MA.
 - Second: Sociology, MA.
 - Carried by unanimous consent.
- Motion to hear first candidate: Mmaduabuchi Godsgrant Akujuobi
 - Self-nomination accepted as motion.
 - Second: Theatre and Film, MA.
 - Carried by unanimous consent.
- Motion to hear second candidate: Mohammed Shaik
 - Self-nomination accepted as motion.
 - Second: Theatre and Film, MA.
 - Carried by unanimous consent.
- Motion to hear third candidate: Nayeem Alimul Hasan Nahid
 - Self-nomination accepted as motion.
 - Second: Professionalism and Teaching, MA.
 - Carried by unanimous consent.
- Motion to enter Q & A: Theatre and Film, MA.
 - Second: Curriculum and Teaching, MA
 - Carried by unanimous consent.
- Motion to enter deliberation: Theatre and Film, MA.
 - Second: Curriculum and Teaching, MA.
 - Carried by unanimous consent.
- Motion to enter into voting: Theatre and Film, MA.
 - Second: Rep. Media and Communication, PhD.
 - Carried by unanimous consent.
 - Question: why are we running multiple votes for the same position?

- Answer: to be in alignment with the Constitution and Bylaws and to ensure the minimum threshold is met to duly elect the officer.
- Results of Vote
 - Mmaduabuchi Godsgrant Akujuobi: 12 Votes
 - Mohammed Shaik: 6 Votes
 - Nayeem Alimul Hasan Nahid: 2 Votes
 - Abstain: 0 Votes
 - We will proceed to voting with Godsgrant and Mohammed.
- Results of vote:
 - Mmaduabuchi Godsgrant Akujuobi: 15 Votes
 - Mohammed Shaik: 6 Votes
 - We will proceed to voting for Godsgrant as an uncontested candidate.
- Motion to elect Mmaduabuchi Godsgrant Akujuobi as International Graduate Student Representative: Representative at Large, Ariel Esposito.
 - Second: Science of Applied Statistics, MS.
 - Yes: 21 votes
 - No: 0 Vote
 - Abstain: 1
 - Mmaduabuchi Godsgrant Akujuobi elected as International Graduate Student Representative.
- Motion to reorder the agenda to accommodate, guest speaker, Interim Provost and Senior Vice President Glenn Davis: Theater and Film, MA.
 - Second: Logistics Systems and Engineering, MS.

Guest Speaker, Interim Provost and Senior Vice-president Glenn Davis

- Dr. Glenn Davis acknowledged the important work of all graduate students, the success of the 2025 Shanklin Colloquium, and the efforts of President Fisher, Vice President Akbar, Graduate Student Trustee, Katherine Ware, and Academic Affairs Representative, Madison Altieri.
- Dr. Davis acknowledged that now is a time of change and uncertainty and encouraged all students to be well informed on Senate Bill 1. Dr. Davis encouraged all GSS members to review senate bill 1 in its entirety, if possible.
- Dr. Davis stated he plans to continue to work with the new provost and others to aid faculty and students during these times of change.
- Question: Academic Affairs Representative, Madison Altieri, asked, “How will grants be affected by new policies?”.
 - Response: Dr. Glenn Davis stated that while some avenues for funding will change, many grants will remain the same including external funding sources. Dr. Davis advised that students continue to search for outside grants or funding sources.

- Graduate Student Trustee, Katherine Ware, expressed concerns about graduate student teaching assistants given recent policy changes. Katherine proposed that additional training be made available for graduate student teaching assistants. This would, ideally, allow them to better navigate any potentially difficult situations in the classroom.
 - Dr. Glenn Davis stated that he made note of this suggestion and will discuss it further with his colleagues.

Old Business

- Motion to enter elections for the Environmental Affairs Representative: English.
 - Second: Curriculum and Teaching, MA.
 - Carried by unanimous consent.
- Motion to hear the first candidate: Tanner Hurst.
 - Self-nomination accepted as motion.
 - Second: Representative-at-Large
 - Carried by unanimous consent.
- Motion to enter Q& A: Representative-at-Large.
 - Second: English.
 - Carried by unanimous consent.
- Motion to enter Deliberation: Nancy Ransom, Environmental Affairs Representative.
 - Second: Representative-at-Large.
 - Carried by unanimous consent.
- Motion to enter into voting: Theatre and Film, MA.
 - Second: History, MA.
 - Carried by unanimous consent.
- Motion to elect Tanner Hurst as Environmental Affairs Representative: Representative-at-Large
 - Second History, MA.
 - Yes: 20
 - No: 1
 - Tanner Hurst elected as Environmental Affairs Representative.
- Motion to table election for the Online Graduate Student Representative until the first GA meeting of the Fall, 2025 semester: Theatre and Film, MA.
 - Second: History, MA.

Announcements for the good of the order

- None

Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn: Theatre and Film, MA
 - Second: English, Combined.
 - Motion carried by unanimous consent
- Meeting Adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

Appendix B

THE GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE OF BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY

A Resolution in Opposition to Ohio Senate Bill 1: Advance Ohio Higher Education Act

IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE

Authored by:

Ariel Esposito – Graduate Student Senate’s Representative-at-Large
2/17/2025

Revised by:

Senate Executive Council
2/28/2025

Approved by the General Assembly of the Graduate Student Senate
3/14/2025



David M. Fisher
Graduate Student Senate’s President
Chair of the Senate Executive Council



Syeda Zainab Akbar
Graduate Student Senate’s Vice President
Chair of the General Assembly

A Resolution in Opposition to Ohio Senate Bill 1: Advance Ohio Higher Education Act

WHEREAS, the Graduate Student Senate (GSS) represents the graduate student body at Bowling Green State University; and

WHEREAS, Ohio Senate Bill 1 (SB 1) has been passed in the Ohio senate, and is being reviewed by the House, to implement changes that affect governance, curriculum, and administrative oversight in higher education institutions within the state; and

WHEREAS, the Ohio Senate passed SB 1 despite the concerns of over 800 opponents to the bill, acting against the voice of the Ohio people; and

WHEREAS, the passage of SB 1 raises significant concerns regarding the potential infringement on the ability of faculty and students to engage in open intellectual discourse, research, and critical inquiry without political interference regarding such topics; and

WHEREAS, having named certain topics as controversial, SB 1 will take away the ability of faculty to determine the importance, controversial nature, or necessity in the learning environment for which they are uniquely qualified and tasked to do as part of their duties to the education of students at the university; and

WHEREAS, the restriction of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion programs could create a learning environment that reduces the ability of minority groups, including international students, to feel safe and comfortable on campus impacting their ability to learn, teach, and otherwise perform; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the GSS formally expresses its opposition to the implementation of SB 1; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the GSS supports ongoing advocacy efforts at the institutional, local, and state levels to protect higher education from undue external influence and to uphold the principles of shared governance; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the GSS acknowledges the efforts of the Faculty Senate in their opposition to SB1; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the GSS supports the Undergraduate Student Government in their resolution regarding SB 1.

