



Graduate and Professional Student Association

The Pennsylvania State University
 315 HUB-Robeson Center
 University Park, PA 16802
 Email: gpsaoffice@gmail.com

GPSA 71st Assembly Meeting	Wednesday, September 1, 2021	6:00 PM	Zoom
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Action Items:

- If you have questions regarding paying for goods or services for GPSA events, please reach out to Matt Billups
- Send newswire items to Alex
- Let Alex know if you don't want your image and likeness included in recordings of special presentations
- Delegates should check their Slack messages regularly, new delegates should reach out to Jalen with committee preferences

Business Conducted:

- Confirmation of the following individuals for the positions listed:
 - Ram Neupane – College of Agricultural Sciences Delegate
 - Caitlyn Martin – Smeal College of Business Delegate
 - Yuki Takahashi – At-Large Delegate
 - Suparna Dutta – Graduate Council Student Caucus Delegate (SIA)
 - Farhan Sadique – College of Education Delegate
 - Yun-Chen Yen – College of Education Delegate
 - Jalen Jeter – Vice President
- Passage of Resolution 71-04: GPSA participation in an event for first-year graduate and professional students

Agenda

- I. Meeting called to order at 6 PM
- II. Roll Call – See Appendix I
- III. Adoption of the Agenda
 - a. **Eli** – motion to approve
 - b. **Sandeep** – motion to add emergency legislation, Resolution 71-04 to the agenda after presidential appointments
 - i. Seconded
 - ii. **Roll call vote passed 24-0-0, item added to agenda**
- IV. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes from April 28th, 2021: Approved
- V. Open Student Forum
 - a. No comments
- VI. Special Presentation: John Papazoglou, AVP Auxiliary and Business Services
 - a. 2022/23 graduate apartment rate recommendations

- i. Rates will remain the same as the current fiscal year (21/22), which were held flat, at \$1168 for 1BD to \$1474 for 3 BD with 1.5 baths, with quad apartments being \$938 per person
- ii. Internet and electricity included
- iii. Free parking no longer included, must be purchased from Transportation department directly
- iv. **Questions and Comments**
 - 1. **Katie** – Curious with regards to the cost of the apartments, what elements were looked at to get to this price, even with internet and electricity this is more expensive than other apartment options available
 - a. We have a different cost structure when it comes to being on-campus
 - b. Labor costs are usually our biggest costs, aside from looking at increases in prices for utilities etc
 - c. Last year no salary increase for employees, this year budgeted at 2% increase, labor costs expected to be higher
 - d. More expensive generally because of living wage paid to employees
 - 2. **Travis** – presentation said 141 apartments set aside from graduate students, what proportion of the total amount is that? As a follow up, is it possible to expand availability for graduate students?
 - a. There are 225 undergraduate apartment spaces, relatively equal because of the 141 apartments many are for graduate students with families
 - b. Approximately about 1/3 of the single beds set aside for graduate students
 - 3. **Matt** – What will the cost of the parking passes be for those who live there, and will there be competition for the spaces?
 - a. Rate will be \$162 per semester
 - 4. **Niladri** – What kind of demand are you seeing from graduate students for White Course Apartments? Is there any specific cost rate to being on campus?
 - a. Originally, White Course was quite far, and parking was included to make apartments more attractive, but now with new developments relatively convenient
 - b. There is an impact fee because White Course Apartments are more likely to utilize Borough resources that isn't paid by undergraduates, otherwise the cost is because of prevailing wages of labor
 - 5. **Schonn** – what resources do we have that say that parking won't be a concern once construction and further traffic will be coming from that side?
 - a. The opening of the West Parking Deck was done to meet demand, currently overbuilt vertically to accommodate future demand
 - b. Parking program sustains all of internal transit services (campus shuttles, e-assist bikes, etc)

c. People living within housing will have priority for sale for spots, and this is also the case for White Course

6. **Claire** – do you know what percentage of White Course graduate student residents are first year and/or international students?

- a. Don't have that specific number but will follow up
- b. Single beds (non-family) are typically first year students
- c. Family housing, pretty significant percentage are international students who have come with families
- d. Typical experience is that non-family graduate students want to live with people they know so they usually move off campus after first year

VII. Executive Board Reports

a. President – **Schönn Franklin**

i. Thank yous

1. Community Outreach team and chair Julia Kelliher for a successful blood drive campaign over the summer, we exceeded our expectations
2. Everyone who participated in the department and college orientations for new graduate and professional students (Niladri, Claire, Alex, Sandeep, Shah, among others), every orientation that we attended was a success
3. Sandeep, our Speaker, for doing a lot of work behind the scenes to make sure our organization continues to function
4. Matt and Alex for very important work

ii. Two notices sent out about meetings held since April, since then:

1. Mobile Advisory Committee (deals with mobile apps like Penn State Go) – testing and vaccine locations recently added to Penn State Go, direct link to Canvas
2. Leadership of the Board of Trustees and administration (today) – COVID-19 response and need for vaccine mandate emphasized, they mentioned that they are doing everything short of a vaccine mandate
 - a. Considering requiring students to upload partial vaccination cards, also discussing increasing the amount of testing moving forward who are unvaccinated due to the Delta variant
3. Sarah Ades (graduate associate dean for student engagement) – discussed Graduate Council/Faculty Senate organizational chart
4. Adam (advisor) – similar to Sarah Ades meeting
5. Will have meeting with Graduate Dean and Associate Graduate Dean upcoming

iii. **Questions**

1. **Travis** – for the Leadership of BoT and administration, any additional insights into why they aren't mandating vaccinations, and did they encounter pushback?
 - a. UPUA in the meeting pushed strongly for vaccine mandate
 - b. BoT doesn't believe adding a mandate would be significant change, says we are doing the same as Indiana just not called a mandate
 - c. Schönn: additionally concern over PA legislature funding

2. **Sandeep** – did they give any indication about how bad it would need to get for them to change their course of action?
 - a. They believe that such determinations should be made by the state health board and also how the Borough reacts
 - b. No clear indication otherwise about what would make them put in place a mandate or change direction
- b. Vice President – Currently vacant
- c. Treasurer – **Matt Billups**
 - i. Introduction of the role of the Treasurer – managing GPSA funds, update budget spreadsheet, and making available on website/shared folder, help Assembly members pay for goods and services, respond to audits, coordinate vendor agreements, submit personal reimbursements/invoices
 - ii. For Assembly members, Matt can help you purchase goods or products on behalf of GPSA for GPSA events, “hire” people or services for GPSA events, co-sponsorships
 - iii. Options for purchasing goods: personal reimbursements (make sure tax free, keep itemized receipts), have another GPSA member purchase, get an invoice
 - iv. “Hiring” professional services (ex virtual cooking class) – lengthier process, vendor must be approved in Penn State SIMBA, can’t pack out of pocket, plan ahead and communicate
 - v. Cosponsorship with other student orgs – can fund up to 90%, requires legislation and process, can only pay for specific line items
 - vi. Shoot Matt an email or message on Slack if you have any questions
 - vii. **Questions and Comments**
 1. **Niladri** – Regarding hiring an individual, do we need to pass legislation one month in advance? Also, are we able to ask for invoice after deliverables?
 - a. For spending bill, yes, typically they specify who we are hiring, so the spending bill needs to be passed before starting the vendor process
 - b. Vendor can be paid after services are provided, so long as we have the details, but having the details by the time the event happens will help make sure payments will be prompt
 - c. Sometimes suppliers will not begin making products before funds, but if we trust the supplier we can submit an invoice first
 2. **Caitlyn** – are purchase orders still available? What 3 people are currently available to sign PO?
 - a. Purchase orders are still available, every vendor with an agreement can be paid by PO
 - b. Right now it’s just Schonn, Matt, Adam
- d. Secretary – **Alex Zhao**
 - i. Please let me know if mispronouncing delegates’ names or if delegates enter the meeting after attendance has been taken.
 - ii. Committee chairs please send him attendance records after each committee meeting.
 - iii. Sending out the newswire tomorrow, please submit any event announcements or graphics by noon.
 - iv. **Questions and Comments**

1. **Claire** - Could you remind us of the attendance policy
 - a. If you miss 2 out of 3 consecutive Assembly and your assigned committee meetings, you are subject to removal proceedings
- e. Faculty Senate – **Ali Watts**
 - i. Resolutions passed over the summer calling for vaccine mandate and vote of no confidence in fall COVID-19 plans
 - ii. Next meeting likely to feature resolutions with votes of no confidence in President Barron and administration
 - iii. Committee meetings will start next week
 - iv. **Questions and Comments**
 1. **Claire** – is there another meeting before our September 15th Assembly meeting? Are we sending a proxy to the meeting?
 - a. No other meetings, will discuss proxy in executive board meeting
 - b. Discussion with undergraduate faculty senators about having a unified voice, at that time UPUA had passed resolution calling for a vaccine mandate, also calling for GPSA to have a stronger voice as well
 2. **Sandeep** – We passed a resolution on our support of the vaccine mandate rally where we made our stance on the vaccine mandate explicitly known. Is that enough or do we need another resolution since it might be repetitive?
 - a. Conversation with undergraduate faculty senators was at the last plenary prior to Faculty Senate meeting, more confident today saying GPSA is in favor of vaccine mandate than before
- f. Graduate Council – **Claire Kelling**
 - i. Nothing to report, first Graduate Council meeting 9/15
- VIII. Confirmation of Presidential Appointment: Ram Neupane (Ag Sciences)
 - a. First year PhD student in Plant Pathology and Environmental Biology from Nepal
 - b. Feel that GPSA is important to build connections between graduate students, and feel that GPSA important to advocate for issues of concern to graduate students
 - c. **Questions**
 - i. **Sandeep** - which committees are you specifically interested in?
 1. Community Outreach, want to get involved in local community as international student
 2. Climate Action Subcommittee, continuing climate advocacy from undergraduate
 - ii. **Niladri** – what previous student government experience do you have?
 1. As undergrad served in student government as delegate for college, acted as liaison between students and administration on student issues
 - iii. **Sandeep** – How was his interview process, and what was your opinion of how he did?
 1. **Schonn** – Ram was very passionate and has served in student government prior, and had specific issues he cared about, making him a good delegate
 - d. **Discussion**

- i. **Claire** – reasoning for being part of Assembly seems great, has relevant experience, would be great addition
 - ii. **Claire** – motion to approve by roll call, Sandeep second
 - e. **Confirmed 22-0-1, see Appendix II for details**
- IX. Confirmation of Presidential Appointment: Caitlyn Martin (Smeal)
 - a. Organizational and Leadership program in Smeal, currently pre-med but long term want to serve in hospital administration
 - b. Want to make a lasting impact on campus
 - c. In undergrad worked with UPUA with Panhellenic Council
 - d. Not being part of UPUA was only regret from undergrad and I see serving as GPSA as a way to correct that
 - e. Representing Smeal and the oath of integrity is important to me
 - f. **Questions**
 - i. **Sandeep** – Which committees are you specifically interested in?
 - 1. Internal development needs support, have experience with updating a lot of bylaws from sorority
 - 2. Advocacy and Diversity, does align with previous work in advocacy and future career path
 - g. **Discussion**
 - i. Motion to confirm, seconded
 - h. **Confirmed 23-0-1, see Appendix II for details**
- X. Confirmation of Presidential Appointment: Yuki Takahashi (At-Large)
 - a. 1st year SIA student from NYC within 2 year program
 - b. Wanted to get involved with GPSA to implement positive change within the student body at large and within the professional student community
 - c. Wanted to apply for at-large so that he can work on behalf of not just his college
 - d. Experience with consulting club for political candidates in NYC
 - e. Want to get involved with Internal Development, strengthening organization in the long run will benefit the future
 - f. **Questions**
 - i. **Katie** – how would you reach out to your multitude of constituents, especially in COVID-19 times
 - 1. Through social media would be the best way to do this, also through email, especially if people are still afraid to meet in person
 - ii. **Katie** – what drew you to Yuki specifically as an At-Large delegate
 - 1. **Schonn:** Yuki was a liaison with UPUA, doing his undergraduate here, worked to reach outside of his bubble, generally it's about finding ways to connect with people outside of your community, and Yuki has shown that not just with UPUA but also with his work on political campaigns
 - g. **Discussion**
 - i. **Claire** - motion to vote on nomination, seconded
 - h. **Confirmed 24-0-1, see Appendix II for details**
- XI. Confirmation of Presidential Appointment: Suparna Dutta (SIA, Grad Council)
 - a. Student in SIA, have also worked as a student mentor
 - b. Served also on DEI committee for college

- c. Very interested in serving in GPSA on Advocacy and Diversity Committee and Community Outreach
 - d. As an international student, to serve in this very diverse committee will be an honor and privilege for me
 - e. **Questions**
 - i. **Claire** – Grad council is a bit different from GPSA, why do you want to serve on Grad Council?
 - 1. Would be able to connect to various members of the graduate and professional student community and bring issues of theirs to the forefront
 - ii. **Niladri** – can you think about some academic policies that you think the graduate school should address at this point for graduate students?
 - 1. Grading system given COVID-19 should be adjusted
 - 2. Mental health policies around needing to produce a certificate to not attend a class
 - 3. Single mother – issues around childcare are especially important to me, subsidized childcare or hybrid options for courses
 - iii. **Claire** – are you available Wednesdays from 3:30PM-5PM, and either Tuesday or Thursday morning?
 - 1. Yes to Wednesday, yes to Thursday
 - iv. **Claire** – why grad council as opposed to Assembly delegate?
 - 1. **Schonn:** Shah is already SIA delegate, Suparna does not have the experience with multiple groups on campus (so not for at-large), but she has served on multiple university wide task forces (ie childcare, health policies)
 - f. **Discussion**
 - i. **Alex** – Jalen needs to resign first
 - 1. **Jalen** – I resign
 - ii. **Shah** – Suparna has done good work organized several events on campus for POC and in general, also has reached out on a personal level
 - iii. **Claire** – looks like she has great relevant ideas, brings great context, looks forward to her policy ideas more specifically, but being a student parent and those issues are important
 - iv. **Niladri** – motion to vote, seconded
 - g. **Confirmed 23-1-1, see Appendix II for details**
- XII. Confirmation of Presidential Appointment: Farhan Sadique (Education)
- a. Previously was in GPSA 70th Assembly with the professional development committee putting on several different events
 - b. Thing I like about working in GPSA is being able to serve graduate and professional students
 - c. Few things want to work on: career service center to support graduate students, which need enhancement, also child care subsidy needs more promotion
 - d. Also interested in working with Programming and Community Outreach committees
 - e. Felt like could make a connection and do something meaningful with GPSA
 - f. **Questions**

- g. **Discussion**
 - i. **Schonn** – Farhan gave more than his fair share of time in GPSA last year, and am honored he is coming back
 - ii. **Niladri** – Farhan was an excellent member of the GPSA and it is good he is coming back
 - iii. **Niladri** – motion to vote to confirm, seconded
- h. **Confirmed 24-0-1, see Appendix II for details**
- XIII. Confirmation of Presidential Appointment: Yun-Chen Yen (Education)
 - a. 3rd year PhD, hope to join GPSA to help support professional development of students on campus
 - b. In undergrad worked in student union (student gov role), invited speakers to campus to discuss their professional development, served as executive officer
 - c. Also interested in programming, plan is to talk to more graduate and professional students on campus to learn about their difficulties and help work on that
 - d. **Questions**
 - i. **Niladri** – For Schonn, why you nominated her
 - 1. **Schonn** – Utilized role as instructor/adjunct to introduce DEI activities to supplement some of the activities that happen outside of the classroom, has served as liaison in previous institution, and as director for program that brought speakers to her school to discuss issues they were having
 - e. **Discussion**
 - i. Motion to vote and seconded
 - f. **Confirmed 24-0-2, see Appendix II for details**
- XIV. Confirmation of Presidential Appointment: Jalen Jeter (Vice President)
 - a. 2nd year SIA student in Master in International Affairs, from Atlanta, Georgia
 - b. Big part of wanting to be VP, truly interested in being part of this community with regards to dialogue and improving the experience for students as part of work of VP
 - c. Working with higher administration on issues of importance (better funding, classroom issues)
 - d. Worked in higher education with undergraduate/graduate students for 4 years prior to Penn State, working with several offices at previous job
 - e. Have understanding of inner workings of higher administration, and overseeing various organizations within previous job's college of business, delegating tasks
 - f. **Questions**
 - i. **Ashley** – Are there women on the executive board?
 - 1. **Schonn** - Yes, Claire and Ali, Jennifer used to be before resignation
 - g. **Discussion**
 - i. Motion to vote on nomination, seconded
 - h. **Confirmed 27-0-0, see Appendix II for details**
- XV. Resolution 71-04: GPSA participation in an event for first-year graduate and professional students
 - a. Event Advocacy and Diversity and Community Outreach have been working on in collaboration with Christian Grads and other organizations on campus

- b. Will be a hybrid event, including virtual panels from various parts of the university discussing different processes on campus
- c. Second part will be held in a park with food outside, helping first and second year students get adjusted given the difficulties faced due to COVID-19
- d. **Questions**
 - i. **Travis** – Is this a combined activity (GPSA + PSU Christian Grads), do have some concern if it's advocated as a combined event with Christian Grads
 - 1. Christian Grads main organizer, their name will be on it, we will be participating along with 11 other organizations just to represent graduate students
 - 2. We will not be a second name on the event
 - ii. **Schonn** – similar to how we did the rally, where it wasn't GPSA's rally, this is about us affirming the tenets of the event
- e. **Discussion**
 - i. **Schonn** – want to throw my support behind this, encourage delegates to support this event, Shah, Julia, Sandeep, Alex have worked behind the scenes in varying capacities to make sure this event meets our standards and the values we espouse
 - ii. **Katie** – seconding Schonn, the name Christian Grad students might lead to certain impressions, but looking at the orgs working on this event and how it's structured, this seems very worthwhile and good for graduate students who haven't had as much of a chance to connect in the past two years
 - iii. **Sandeep** - Motion to approve, **Eli** seconds
- f. **Vote Passed 28-0-0, see Appendix II for details**

XVI. Reports

- a. Speaker of the Assembly – **Sandeep Krishnakumar**
 - i. If you need a proxy for the meeting, please reach out to me
 - ii. For everyone who was confirmed tonight, you cannot have another delegate as your proxy
 - iii. Thanks to Schonn, Alex, Niladri, Julia, Seongryeong, Sherif, Shah, Katie, and Matt McGee, Ali for their work on orientations, we reached about 34 department orientations and 12 of the international student orientations as well, and the involvement fair
 - iv. Please keep checking Slack as well
- b. Advocacy and Diversity – **Shah Soligné**
 - i. Over the summer, we collaborated with State College for Juneteeth collaboration
 - ii. Tomorrow at 3PM we will have first A&D meeting via Zoom
- c. Professional Development – **Niladri Sekhar Mandal**
 - i. We met last week and are meeting this week as well, have decided meeting time
 - ii. Planning a few events this semester, writing bootcamp, professional headshot event, LinkedIn and resume workshops, trying to get collaboration with Smeal about management consulting, collaborating with Grad School with online mentorship program
- d. Programming – **Matt McGee**

- i. No major updates, will have upcoming welcome picnic
 - ii. Future legislation: pottery, coffee hours, try to bring some of the in-person events including football tailgate etc
 - iii. **Question and Comments**
 - 1. **Travis** – when is welcome picnic?
 - a. Not an exact date, will discuss in committee
 - e. Community Outreach – **Haroula Tzamaras**
 - i. Worked on blood drive event, working on Christian Grads event
 - ii. Each member of the committee is working on a community outreach event to present to the committee in the next few weeks
 - f. Internal Development – **Travis Russell**
 - i. Met recently to narrow down priorities for this upcoming term
 - ii. Some upcoming legislation with changes to ByLaws
 - iii. Broad items: Vice chair roles, elevating Climate Action Subcommittee, elections code, mechanism for President to release statements, executive orders, etc
- XVII. Liaison Reports
 - a. **Travis** – liaison to State College Borough Council
 - i. Last council meeting, Borough Council approved a community oversight board (9 person citizen board) to help oversee any ongoing or former cases from police department, very big thing, understand it might be perfect ordinance but very happy seeing this go forward
 - ii. Were able to secure a Penn State student seat on COB
- XVIII. Judiciary – The Honorable **Samuel Altland**
 - a. Nothing to report, want to congratulate all newly confirmed delegates
 - b. In coming weeks additional justices will be nominated
 - c. Looking forward to working with ID committee
- XIX. Student Trustee – Janiyah Davis
 - a. Absent
- XX. Advisor – Adam Christensen
 - a. Wanted to introduce himself to newly appointed delegates, here for support and guidance and to help out where he can
- XXI. Comments for the Good of the Order
 - a. **Alex** – going forward, let me know if you don't want your voice and likeness to be included in special presentations (but can include questions/comments)
 - b. **Schonn** – congratulations to all new and confirmed delegates, it is important to have people step up and work in these roles, reach out to Jalen with your committee preferences, have a great night
- XXII. Meeting adjourned at 8:32 PM

Appendix I

U= Unexcused Absence E= Excused Absence P= Present L= Late

	Name	9/1/21
Executive Board		

President	Schönn Franklin	P
Vice President	Jalen Jeter	P
Secretary	Alex Zhao	P
Treasurer	Matthew Billups	P
Faculty Senator (Graduate School)	Ali Watts	P
Judiciary		
Chief Justice	Sam Altland	P
Graduate Council		
Graduate Council	Claire Kelling (Science)	P
Graduate Council	Katie Warczak (Liberal Arts)	P
Graduate Council	Suparna Dutta (SIA)	L
Graduate Council	Hannah Nolte (Engineering)	P
Assembly		
Agricultural Sciences	Travis Russell	P
Agricultural Sciences	Ram Neupane	L
Communications	Ashley Smalls	P
Earth and Mineral Sciences	Elham Rahimi	P
Education	Seongryeong Yu	P
Education	Farhan Sadique	L
Education	Yun-Chen Yen	L
Engineering	Sandeep Krishnakumar	P
Engineering	Lauren Katch	P
Engineering	Niladri Sekhar Mandal	P
Engineering	Haroula Tzamaras	P
Health and Human Development	Brooke Mattern	P
Health and Human Development	David Desmet	P
Information Sciences and Technology	Matt McGee	P
Inter-Collegiate Degree Program	Maria Isabel Da Silva	P
Inter-Collegiate Degree Program	Julia Keliher	Proxy
Liberal Arts	Nora Tucker	P
Liberal Arts	Frankie Urrutia-Smith	P
Nursing	Sherif Olanrewaju	P
School of International Affairs	Shaheed Soligné	P

