



THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE

Graduate Student Senate Meeting of the Whole January 15th, 2020

29 People in Attendance

Executive Council Attendees: Jessica Bocanegra, Avery Rasmussen, Aayudh Das, Kevin Fischer, Berke Tinaz

Attendance was taken via sign-in sheet.

Senator attendees and clubs that had a representative present can be found in [Appendix 1](#) at end of this document.

Minutes were recorded by Berke Tinaz.

Meeting was called to order by Vice President Avery Rasmussen at 4:31pm.

Previous meeting minutes were approved unanimously as electronically distributed.

Cynthia Forehand – Dean of Graduate College

Dean Forehand talked about issues that were raised during conversation hour with Annie Stevens, Vice Provost and Dean of Students.

- Graduate College will be working with Center for Health and Wellbeing (CHWB) to have more detailed information on the student health insurance on the CHWB website.
- Graduate students were interested in a discount with the YMCA – Burlington. Graduate students that are interested in the possibility should reach out to gradcoll@uvm.edu to explore.

Parental leave policy for graduate students is being finalized. There are a few more details that are being figured out. Once the policy is final, it will be sent out publicly.

There will be changes to the graduate student curriculum. Starting in Fall 2020, “Special Topics” courses that are 200-level (i.e. 295) will no longer be approved for graduate credit. Graduate College will also be examining rest of the 200-level courses that are approved for graduate credit in order to ensure that the syllabi contains clear distinction between undergraduate and graduate student requirements in line with NECHE requirements.

Graduate College will be establishing a “graduate mentor award”. Any graduate students that would like to be involved with establishing the award should reach out to gradcoll@uvm.edu

Executive Board Updates

President: Jessica Bocanegra

General Updates

There will be a three-part workshop for bias training in April.

UVM Rally Cat Cupboard will be opening in February.

There will be two new nursing mothers’ pods. They will be located in STEM and Athletics buildings.

UVM will be inquiring about the GMT Board representative process.

Vice President: Avery Rasmussen

General Updates

Graduate student nominations have been reopened for the President’s Commission on Inclusive Excellence (PCIE). If you have a passion for inclusive excellence, equity, justice and interested in effecting change by directly advising the President on these issues, apply to serve on the President’s Commission for Inclusive Excellence. Application information and additional details were sent out in the GSS Newsletter and can also be found in go.uvm.edu/pcie.

Communications Director: Kevin Fischer

General Updates

Student Engagement Committee (formerly Student Worker’s Engagement Committee) will help Communications Director advertise and disperse news and information about upcoming events. This is not limited to Student Engagement Committee. **Senators**: please help share as well!

Feedback to Communications Director:

Are your constituents aware of our events? General feelings about events, GSS? Any ideas on how to better spread the word? Social media posts, e-mails adequate? Too many puns? Any feedback (comments, criticism, etc.) welcomed, especially constructive criticism! Don’t be shy!

Grads Give Back (GGB) Updates – Michelle DiPinto

2019 Highlights

Over **1,300 pounds** of potatoes were gleaned at Barber Farm in Jericho to be used as fresh produce at local food banks.

16,362 meals were packaged for the commodity supplemental food program at the Vermont Food Bank.

7,850 pounds of produce was sorted at the Vermont Food Bank.

This semester we are trying something new with a friendly competition! When you and at least one other grad student give back at any service event in VT and submit a photo and a blurb (what you did, when you did it, who you did it with) you will be entered to win a special prize! More entries = more chances! And every time you give back is an opportunity to meet new grad students, learn about the community, and make the world just a little better off!

Upcoming Opportunities to Give Back

More details on these and future events in the GSS newsletter!

Penguin Plunge: Plunge Bag Stuffing on January 22nd from 5-7pm

Rally Cat Cupboard: Ongoing volunteer opportunities starting in February. More details to come.

All Breeds Rescue: Fridays 11am-12pm

Committee Updates

Graduate Student Life Committee – Mara Hintz (Chair)

The committee will be focusing on making information more accessible to future grad students by making a tour video of the campus and focusing in parts that are relevant to grad students.

We also will be working on planning a social event(s) for grad students earlier in the semester to help students get to know each other better.

Graduate Student Mental Health Promotion Committee – Michaela Schuster (Chair)

Committee met with John Paul Grogan, Dr. Chen, Carrie Frieder from CAPS, and Michelle Paavola, the Medical Director from Student Health Services.

- Discussed survey results and student needs in mental health.
- Discussed attainable short-term and long-term goals.

Housing Committee – Alexander Daniels (Chair)

Created a Detailed Plan for Housing Resource Document Revision and Dissemination

Representative updates

Faculty Senate Education & Research Technologies Committee – Scott Vanson (Representative)

Dean of Libraries, Bryn Geffert presented on our subscription to Elsevier. The University of Vermont is considering not renewing our subscription to Elsevier, which currently costs ~\$1.8 million per year. The California university system has already done so. UVM libraries are exploring ways to expand their inter-library loan system as well as considering recreating the University of Vermont Press.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:48 PM.

Appendix 1 - Senator Attendees

#	Name	Last Name	Department
1	Robert	Worley	CEE
2	Lindsay	Worley	CEE
3	Marcus	Weinman	CMB
4	Gepy	Bernstein	Biomedical Engineering
5	Erin	Cullen	Neuroscience
6	Scott	Vanson	CMB
7	Alexander	Daniels	Complex Systems
8	Rodrigo	Penide Fernandez	Mechanical Engineering
9	Jaspreet	Nagi	Biomedical Engineering
10	Andy	Klem	EBE
11	Anika	Gillwald	English
12	Baxter	Worthing	Plant Biology
13	Amelia	Trello	Public Health
14	Pannu	Khin	Clinical Psychology
15	Bharat	Poudel	Material Science
16	Kirtika	Chatri	Pharmacology
17	Nawaf	Nazir	Electrical Engineering
18	Sanish	Paramadam	Material Science
19	Naomi	Cunningham	CDAE
20	Lauren	Bass	SIMBA
21	Joy	Solomon	Special Edication
22	Alexandra	Polla	SIMBA
23	Montana	Lara	Neuroscience
24	Anoob	Prakash	Plant Biology

Clubs with a representative present: IRSA, CMC