

**UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION
GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE
GENERAL MEETING AGENDA**

August 29th, 2024 7:00 P.M.

Zoom Conference Call

<https://oklahoma.zoom.us/j/92662526832?pwd=VGuKxz94KVUMqSIbCSpaC4a7Waq9ha.1>

Call to Order: 7:01 pm

- Senator Chiareli (119), seconded by Senator Bain (111)

Mission Statement: Graduate Students at the University of Oklahoma have a number of unique concerns and interests requiring a voice separate from the usual instruments that express the will of the faculty and of undergraduates. For this reason, the Graduate Student Senate of the University of Oklahoma Student Government Association was established in 1987 to represent all Graduate Students and to serve their needs.

Reading and the Approval of the Minutes: (minutes from previous meeting:

<https://www.ou.edu/content/dam/sga/common/GSS/agendas/2024/4-25-24-GSS-Agenda.pdf>)

- Senator Chiareli (119), seconded by Senator Jordan (91)

Officer Reports:

- Chair:
 - Welcome to all of our new senators and welcome back to those of you who are returning! I am looking forward to getting to work with you all this year. Please don't hesitate to reach out to any of the Executive Officers if there is anything we can do for at any point during the year. A few items to go through:
 - You are here to serve as the representative for your department in the realm of graduate student concerns. While the Senate does not typically involve itself in department-specific issues, we encourage you to serve as advocates for your peers if difficult conversations need to happen. If you find that things are not getting solved at the department level, please come to us so that we can have a conversation about how to help. We want to make sure that graduate students feel like they are being heard, and you as a Senator are a huge part of making that happen. We want to continue building the Senate up as a resource and place to support the graduate student community. The first step to doing that is to ensure that graduate student voices are heard and to do the work necessary to make those voices matter to those who can affect real change.
 - With that being said, if your peers ever have questions about anything the Senate does, you should be their first point of contact. For example, if your peers have any questions about the upcoming GSS grants, they should reach out to you first and you can then direct questions to our Ways and Means chair. You are the first point of communication for your department for all Senate-related items.
 - Two years ago, our Internal Affairs committee distributed a survey to gauge the financial situation of graduate students on campus which was expanded upon last year. The results of that survey were compiled into a report that was shared with administrators. The report generally addressed many of the concerns and difficulties that graduate students typically face here on campus with respect to costs and stipend levels. This effort of gauging graduate student experiences was an incredibly valuable precedent created in the Senate and we plan to continue that this year. Now that stipend minimums have been raised and we shifted to a biweekly pay schedule, I want to see how those changes have impacted graduate students and keep the conversation going with administrators. Hopefully, what we end up with is a dynamic, two-way conversation between graduate students and administrators.

- We've now entered the SEC, I'm really excited to share that our Senate leadership has been actively communicating with graduate student leadership at other SEC schools and it's been a very fruitful relationship. Three years ago, Texas A&M graduate student leadership formed the SEC Graduate Leader Coalition, of which we have been part of it since its formation. I am currently actively engaged and part of executive leadership of this group, so I look forward to sharing the data I gather from this group of leaders as we think of ways to continue to advocate for graduate students at OU. Currently, my focus is on the outcome of the upcoming GradCON event which is a new effort to welcome new graduate students and introduce them to resources on campus. I am using the SEC Coalition to compare similar initiatives to work with the graduate college on ways to improve this event and continue our efforts to establish better engagement and support for graduate students.
- We are working on increased engagement with other grad groups across the nation to increase our connections to federal legislation. Our Senate has historically not been very active in political advocacy, so our external efforts and our collaboration with the SEC leaders offers an opportunity for our body to think about how we might expand our civil engaged as an organization.
- Lastly, and most importantly, I wanted to emphasize that you need to conduct yourself with decorum in these meetings. You are not only representing your department here but the entire graduate student body, so you should not take this opportunity lightly. These meetings are open to the public, and everything that is said goes in our minutes on the record. Please treat your fellow Senators and any guests with respect. If you have questions about legislation or disagree with the contents, we welcome open discussion, but in a way that respects all parties involved. Our authors have worked hard to bring forth the legislation they present here, and we want to be sure we recognize their effort and their point of view and we encourage the same from the authors. Each and every senator comes to the Senate with a different set of life experiences, and that is what makes this Senate such a fantastic body. It is so important that we are kind to one another in all aspects of our operations.
- Again, if you ever have any questions, comments, or concerns, please reach out. Our emails are on the roster that was sent out earlier today and our office hours are posted on the website. We are all here to serve you, and you, in return, are here to serve your peers!
- Vice-Chair:
 - Nothing new to report.
- Secretary:
 - Please submit your committee reports, if you have not already.

Committee Reports:

- Academic Affairs:
 - Chair Goutham Sukumaran (64), Vice Chair Michael Yebisu (60), Secretary Michelle Boyd Waters (69). The committee chose a location and date to meet: Zoom - 7:15 p.m. Monday: Same week as GSS meeting.
- Development & Philanthropy:
 - Chair Summer Edwards (11), Vice Chair Taylor Frentz (53), Secretary Giselle Walker (79). Meeting every other Wednesday from 6:00-6:30, via Zoom
- External and Legislative Affairs:
 - Libby Ryan (98) will serve as chair. Andrea Hernandez (117) will serve as vice chair. Dana Mahmoud (112) will serve as secretary.
- Internal Affairs:
 - Chair Spencer Brickell (37), Vice Chair Ashlie Mendoza (118), Secretary Daniel Karami (16).
- International Student Affairs:

- The International Student Affairs have decided the Chair to be Ganiyat Shodunke (58), the Vice Chair to be Rebecca Greer (22) and Bianca Galletti (60) to be the secretary.
- Public Relations:
 - We elected Mahak Merchant (81) as Chair, Tonni McNeese (77) as Vice Chair, and Maddy Hale (5) as Secretary. We will meet after general body meetings on Thursdays, biweekly.
- Sustainability:
 - Caden Smith (10) was chosen to be Chair, Arianna Jordan (91) was chosen to be Vice Chair, and Abigail Triemstra (9) was chosen to be Secretary. We discussed meeting times for the Sustainability Committee and decided on having our weekly meetings biweekly, immediately after General Assembly
- Ways and Means:
 - Isabella Chiareli (119) will serve as Chair. Elected Ramtin Mirmohammad Sadeghi (7) as Vice Chair; elected Samuel Jensen (6) as Secretary.

Student Concerns:

Special Orders:

- GF24-01 Honoring the 2024 OU Softball Team
 - Move to New Business motioned by Senator Odunfa (21), seconded by Senator Kimbrell (8)

Old Business:

New Business:

GF24-01: Honoring the 2024 OU Softball Team

- Motion to move GF24-01 to floor by Senator Bain (111), seconded by Senator Kimbrell (8)
- Author Congress Representative Shrey Kathuria: The University of Oklahoma Student Government Association congratulates the 2024 OU Softball Team for winning the national championship and demonstrating excellence.
- Author yields time for questions.
 - Senator Bain (111): Motion to pass via unanimous consent.
 - No objections.
 - Motion passes.

Announcements:

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Senator Nwator (59), seconded by Senator Balakrishnan (72).

Adjournment:

Time: 7:45 PM