

UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION
GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING
January 29th, 2026, 7:00 PM

Zoom Conference Call

<https://oklahoma.zoom.us/j/93772247533?pwd=sBRbHEL3MOD2aTipaH9URXpz3t1Fcr.1>

Call to Order: 7:01 pm

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 Approval of the Minutes: (minutes from previous meeting:
(<https://www.ou.edu/sga/branches/graduate-student-senate/agendas-and-minutes>)

Motion to approve the minutes from last meeting by Senator Odunfa (13), seconded by Senator Jensen (3)

Officer Reports:

- Chair:
 - Welcome back everyone! If you are new, please email Summer using the GSS email gss@ou.edu in order to confirm your Senator number and put you in a subcommittee.
 - Summer's Office hours: Tuesday 1:30-2:30. Wednesday 12-3, Thursday: 1:30-7:30 and these will be located in the Conoco Student Leadership wing of the Union (separate entrance in the union courtyard).
- Vice-Chair:
 - Dana's Office hours: MWF: 10-11, TTh: 9-11:30
- Secretary:
 - Submit your committee reports on engage!
 - If you have a proxy attending the meeting, please submit a proxy form also located on GSS engage page.
 - Updated bill submission process! We have a new form available on the SGA page. This is the big SGA page, separate from the GSS page. If you have an interest in authoring a bill, please check it out. There are links to bill templates in the instructions of the form which may be helpful as well or you can email me and I will send you templates. The first step of the process is located here:
<https://ou.campuslabs.com/engage/submitter/form/start/711734>

Congress will also be using the same forms but there is a place to indicate which house your bill will route to and which house(s) need to see the bill (for example if your bill will be a joint resolution, it will be seen in both houses but if your bill will be a senate resolution, it will only be seen in the Senate). Phase 2: You only have to complete phase two if your bill is a joint resolution. Once your bill passes in one house, you upload the bill in its final form (including any amendments to the bill) to the phase 2 form also located on engage here:
<https://ou.campuslabs.com/engage/submitter/form/start/711750>

Committee Reports: (submit your meeting minutes [here](#))

- Academic Affairs:
 - Decided on a deadline and submission form for the graduate student awards. Within the next week we will be reaching out to a couple different people including the graduate college

and PR so that we can spread the word and make sure everyone is aware that those forms are open and accepting submissions.

- Development & Philanthropy:
 - Our meeting is immediately after this one and we will be discussing some of our upcoming events.
 - Cold weather clothing drive: starts on February ninth and will continue through the end of February
 - Event with OU Women's Gymnastics to put on a big collection during their meet vs. Auburn (February 27)- more details to come!
 - Monthly happy hours
- External Affairs:
 - Change in leadership- Tatiana Estava-Ingram (56) will be taking over as vice chair. Alexis Jones (67) will be taking over as secretary.
 - Higher-Ed day at the capitol: please fill out the interest form in the chat- we would love to get a big group together to speak with representatives about issues pertaining to graduate students. No date has been announced yet, but if we have enough interest, we can make appointments and go up as GSS on our own day. Historically, higher ed day has been in early February, but it has not been announced yet.
 - Concerns with House Joint Resolution 1037: allows lawmakers to temporarily freeze, suspend, or withhold up to 100% of state funds for a maximum of 2 years for higher education in order to control what professors are teaching at the state level.
- Internal Affairs:
 - Change in leadership will be decided upon in the committee meeting immediately following general body.
- International Student Affairs:
 - Finalizing the international student survey.
 - International student potluck
 - Working with GSS on the issue with taxes for international students on GSS grants.
 - Monitoring immigration policies
- Public Relations:
 - Nothing new to report
- Sustainability:
 - Nothing new to report
- Ways and Means:
 - Already received lots of emails and questions about the spring application deadline. The application window will be set in the WAM committee meeting immediately following this one.
 - Working on a statement that addresses the use of generative AI on GSS grant applications
 - Taxes on the grants given out to international students. In the past, GSS has paid the taxes on these grants to not diminish the amount of money given out to international students; however, there have been significant increases to the taxes owed. We are going to discuss how to approach budgeting for this and how to deal with the taxes moving forward. We have a short term plan for the semester and Summer is looking into additional funds to hopefully continue to cover these.

Student Concerns:

- No student concerns brought up at this time.

Special Orders:

- **GS26-02:** “Chief of Staff Appointment Act of 2026”
- **GS26-03:** “SGA Executive Cabinet Appointment Act of 2026”
 - Motion to move GS26-02 and GS26-03 as a block by Senator Cunningham (82), Seconded by Senator Jensen (3).
 - **SGA President Mercer:** Appointment bills for Chief of Staff Henry Christensen and one for the entire executive cabinet. All candidates were selected through a process of applications, grading and interviews.
 - Senator Jensen (3) Motion to approve via unanimous consent. No objections. Motion carried.

Old Business:

- No old business to present

New Business:

- **GS26-01:** “Call for Accountability, Transparency, and Academic Integrity” (Do Pass)
 - Motion to move GS26-01 to the floor by Senator Hurst (59), seconded by Senator Fellman (55)
 - Presented by Senator Jensen (3):
 - This new resolution is a follow up to our resolution that we passed at the end of last semester regarding the Samantha Fulnecky case. Since we passed our last resolution, there have been several new developments.
 - On December 22nd of last year, after the semester had ended, and after most people had left campus, the university quietly released a statement on X, formerly Twitter, that indicated that they had made a decision in the case, and that they would be terminating the instructional duties of the graduate teaching assistant. This decision obviously deprives this graduate teaching assistant of valuable teaching experience, but it also damages their personal professional reputation. This decision also does significant damage to the academic integrity and the reputation of the University of Oklahoma, and thus hurts each and every one of us and the rest of the campus community.
 - Additionally, since our initial resolution passed, Samantha Fulnecky has made comments in an interview to Oklahoma News 9, that indicates that she may not have read the article assigned to her, or completed the assignment as instructed, which calls into question the university's decision in this case. It also opens up the university to potential complaints and lawsuits.
 - The university's statement indicates that in the process of the investigation, the university's provost and academic dean both had some hand in reviewing the evidence in this case. Now, neither the Dodge family college policies regarding grade disputes, nor the institutional equity offices policies regarding complaints of discrimination, indicate that either of these people should have been involved in any part of this process, which calls into question whether the university followed any of their own policies as they made this decision.
 - It indicates that we may lack protections from university policies, and it directly contradicts the values and pillars of the university's strategic plan.
 - The resolution calls for:
 - We condemn the university's decision in this case, and we maintain that all of these negative consequences that I've outlined are the direct result of the actions and inactions of the university's administration in this case.
 - We also call do several things:

- First, we call on them to hold a meeting with GSS executives, faculty senate, and other administrators to discuss how we can move forward from this while increasing transparency, accountability, and academic integrity.
- It calls on the university to reinstate the graduate teaching assistant to their instructional duties.
- It calls on the university to submit to an independent audit, to determine if the university followed the appropriate policies in this case. If any false statements were made by anyone in this case that might have affected the university's decision, and if there was any improper prejudice or coordinated action against LGBTQ+ individuals during the investigation.
- It also calls on them to respond to the calls from our previous resolution, which the university has not taken any public action on, as well as to calls in a petition that was submitted to the university by the Oklahoma Chapter of the American Association of the University Professors.
- By passing this resolution, we're telling the university's administration that the only way that they can begin to repair these damages that they have caused is by taking us seriously and by hearing the calls that we outline in this resolution. It's particularly important that we pass this resolution now, as again, it outlines a way forward for the university, and it also encourages the university to stand up to further attacks on graduate students, and the university as a whole, such as the House Joint Resolution 1037 that was mentioned earlier during committee updates.
- Myself and the other authors of this resolution feel that this is an important next step in holding the university accountable for this decision, and ensuring that graduate students have real protection as we perform our jobs and conduct research here at the university.

- Senator Hurst (59): Motion to pass via unanimous consent. No objections. Motion carried.

Announcements:

- Announcement from the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences:
 - Undergraduate course fees for the College of Arts and Science will increase by \$15
 - However, the fee increase will not increase for graduate students
 - Money from the fees will be used to increase student services including hiring 6 additional graduate teaching assistants and a couple other full time coordinators
 - Graduate stipends also have planned increases with this money

Adjournment

- Motion for Adjournment by Senator Jensen (3) seconded by Senator Wilson (79)

THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT CONGRESS
CONGRESSIONAL SESSION CXV
January 27, 2026

GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE
SENATE SESSION GS26
January 29, 2026

CONGRESSIONAL RESOLUTION CB-115-03
SENATE RESOLUTION NO. GS26-02

AS INTRODUCED

An Act of legislation appointing the Chief of Staff of the Executive Branch; providing for short title, and providing for an effective date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION:

Section 1: Title: This resolution shall be known and may be cited as the “The Chief of Staff Appointment Act of 2026.”

Section 2: Purpose: The purpose of this act shall be to appoint the Chief of Staff of the Martin-Nicholson administration within the Executive Branch.

Section 3: In accordance with the SGA Code Annotated §Title X, Chapter 5, Section 2, which delineates the appointment process for the Chief of Staff position, the following student shall thus be appointed:

- Henry Christiansen

Section 4: This act shall become effective when passed in accordance with the SGA Constitution.

Author(s): Mercer Martin, SGA President
Josephine Nicholson, SGA Vice President

Submitted on a motion by:

Action taken by Congress:

Verified by Chair of Congress: _____ Date: _____

Submitted on a motion by: Senator Cunningham (82), Seconded by Senator Jensen (3).

Action taken by Senate: Pass via unanimous consent.

Verified by Chair of Senate: _____ Date: _____

Approved by SGA President: _____ Date: _____

THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT CONGRESS
CONGRESSIONAL SESSION CXV
January 27, 2026

GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE
SENATE SESSION GS26
January 29, 2026

CONGRESSIONAL BILL CB-115-04
SENATE BILL GS26-03

AS INTRODUCED

An Act of Procedure appointing the SGA Executive Cabinet; providing for short title, providing for codification, and providing for an effective date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION:

Section 1: Title: This act shall be known and may be cited as the “SGA Executive Cabinet Appointment Act of 2026.”

Section 2: Purpose: The purpose of this act shall be to appoint the SGA Directors & Cabinet positions for the Martin-Nicholson administration.

Section 3: In accordance with Title III, Chapter 1, Section 5, Subsection C(i) of the SGA Code Annotated, “The members of the Executive Cabinet shall consist of the Chief of Staff, and any other coordinators, assistants, and liaisons deemed necessary by the President and appropriate by the Legislative houses through advice and consent.”

The following students shall be appointed as Director to their respective posts:

Director of External Affairs – Ava Burnett
Director of Internal Affairs – Xander Donald
Director of Technology – Abby Gross
Director of Student Betterment – Jada Cannon

The following students shall be appointed to their respective positions.

Secretary of Speaker Series – Reese Walsh
Secretary of Liberty & Representation – Kaela Theuri
RSO Liaison – Garret Brooks
SGA Interbranch Liaison – Alaina Jawed
Press Secretary – Stephen Pendely
Social Media Coordinator – Hannah Hamby
Secretary of Student Services – Jemay Leow
International Student Liaison – Nicolas Suarez-Antelo

Section 4: This act shall become effective when passed in accordance with the SGA Constitution.

Authors: President Mercer Martin, Student Government Association
Vice President Josephine Nicholson, Student Government Association

Submitted on a Motion by:

Action taken by Congress:

Verified by Chair of Congress:

Date:

Submitted on a Motion by: Senator Cunningham (82), Seconded by Senator Jensen (3).

Action taken by Senate: Pass via unanimous consent.

Verified by Chair of Senate:

Date:

Approved by SGA President:

Date:

THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE

SENATE SESSION GS26

January 29, 2026

SENATE RESOLUTION GS26-01

AS INTRODUCED

A Senatorial Resolution outlining the damages and harm caused by the University's decision to terminate a graduate teaching assistant; calling for actions to ensure accountability, transparency, and academic integrity at the University of Oklahoma; and providing for distribution.

Whereas: The Graduate Student Senate (GSS) at the University of Oklahoma was established to represent the interests of graduate students at the University and to serve their needs.

Whereas: On December 22, 2025, following the conclusion of the Fall 2025 semester, but before final grades were due, when most students and faculty had left campus for the winter break, the University released a statement indicating that it had concluded its investigation into accusations of religious discrimination made by Samantha Fulnecky against a graduate student instructor.¹

Whereas: The University's statement indicates that the University has ruled against the graduate student and that "the graduate teaching assistant will no longer have instructional duties at the University."¹

Whereas: The University's decision to terminate the instructional duties of the graduate teaching assistant has caused direct harm and damage to the graduate student by depriving them of valuable teaching experience and tarnishing their professional reputation.

Whereas: The University's decision to terminate the instructional duties of the graduate teaching assistant has caused irreparable damage to the academic integrity and the reputation of the University.^{2,3}

¹ University of Oklahoma (@UofOklahoma). "A statement from the University of Oklahoma." X, December 22, 2025, 3:02 p.m. <https://x.com/uofoklahoma/status/2003209457195741653?s=42>.

² Siatkowski, Abigail, Sierra Pfeifer, and Hannah France. "University of Oklahoma Students March in Support of Suspended Instructor," *KOSU*, December 5, 2025. <https://www.kosu.org/local-news/2025-12-05/university-of-oklahoma-students-march-in-support-of-suspended-instructor>.

³ Kallner, Abigail. "OU-AAUP Calls for University to Honor Transparency, Academic Freedom After Removal of Instructor," *OU Daily*, December 9, 2025. https://www.oudaily.com/news/ou-aaup-academic-freedom-graduate-instructor-bible-based-essay/article_e76fb193-9899-4d03-84ed-a74334036f9a.html.

Whereas: The University's decision to terminate the instructional duties of the graduate teaching assistant over this particular assignment and case has drawn sharp criticism from students, faculty, and diverse organizations representing a broad range of political interests.^{3,4}

Whereas: In an interview with Oklahoma News 9⁵, Samantha Fulnecky was unable to correctly identify the main idea and conclusions of the article assigned in this case.⁶ Additionally, Ms. Fulnecky admitted that, rather than reading the article carefully and thoughtfully completing the assigned work as is expected of an OU student, she "wrote it in maybe, like, 30 minutes" as she rushed off to see a play.⁵

Whereas: The University has now created an opportunity for appeals and lawsuits alleging:

1. Failure "to examine whether the student [Ms. Fulnecky] may have had an ulterior motive in pursuing such a complaint."⁷
2. That the University "continued to issue public statements regarding the investigation, despite confidentiality rules that kept [the graduate teaching assistant] from being able to discuss any details of the situation, while the student [Ms. Fulnecky] was going on a circuit of local and national television interviews."⁷
3. Potential participation in "a political movement that seeks to silence and/or oust LGBTQ people from academia."⁷

Whereas: It is unclear what, *if any*, official policies the University followed as it conducted its investigation into this case given:

1. The University's statement indicates that "At the same time of the investigation, the Provost—the University's highest ranking academic officer—and the academic Dean reviewed the full facts of the matter. Based on an examination of the graduate teaching assistant's prior grading standards and patterns, as well as the graduate teaching assistant's own statements related to this matter, it was determined that the graduate teaching assistant was arbitrary in the grading of this specific paper. The graduate teaching assistant will no longer have instructional duties at the university."¹

⁴ Burger, Jason. "Groups Made Up of OU Professors, College Republicans Reject Student's Religious Discrimination Claim," *KOCO News 5*, December 8, 2025. <https://www.koco.com/article/oklahoma-ou-samantha-fulnecky-college-republicans-professors-essay/69665742>.

⁵ Fulnecky, Samantha. "University of Oklahoma Student Essay Controversy | OU Junior Samantha Fulnecky Full Interview." Interview by Matt McCabe, *Oklahoma News 9*, December 11, 2025. <https://youtu.be/WMU7RCVlixo?si=SseAEG63PQTIDShz>.

⁶ Jewell, Jennifer A., and Christia Spears Brown, "Relations Among Gender Typicality, Peer Relations, and Mental Health During Early Adolescence," *Social Development* 23, no. 1 (2014): 137-156.

⁷ Greco, Jonathan. "Former OU Graduate Instructor Files Appeal, Says She's Become the 'Target of a Political Movement,'" *KOCO News 5*, December 30, 2025. <https://www.koco.com/article/samantha-fulnecky-oklahoma-graduate-instructor-statement-no-longer-teaching-ou/69888222>.

2. According to the Dodge Family College of Arts and Science's policy for an Academic Grade Appeal⁸, neither the Provost nor the academic Dean are involved in grade appeals within the college in which the allegations of Ms. Fulnecky occurred.
3. According to the University's non-discrimination policy⁹ and the University's published Investigative Process for Internal Complaints Under the Non-Discrimination Policy¹⁰, the Institutional Equity Office is responsible for investigating all claims of discrimination in a process that does not involve the Provost or academic Dean.

Therefore, it is unclear why either of these individuals should have been involved in the investigation of the graduate teaching assistant's grading. Additionally, it is unclear that the University followed official policies when making a final decision in this case.

Whereas: The University has not taken any public action regarding a previous Senate Resolution (*Call to Action Regarding the University's Responsibilities to Students in Investigations*, Senate Resolution GF25-21) **and** a petition from the OU chapter of the American Association of University Professors^{11, 12} calling for greater transparency, increased action to protect academic freedom and academic integrity at the university, greater protections for the campus community against harassment, and greater protections for OU instructors.

Whereas: The University's actions in this case directly contradict the values of and directly hinder the pillars of the University's strategic plan, *Lead On, University*.¹³

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE
THAT:

Section 1: Title: This resolution shall be known and may be cited as the "Call for Accountability, Transparency, and Academic Integrity."

⁸ The University of Oklahoma Dodge Family College of Arts and Sciences. "Police and Procedures." Electronic document, <https://www.ou.edu/cas/students/policies-and-forms>, Accessed January 23, 2026.

⁹ The University of Oklahoma Institutional Equity Office. "Policies & Procedures." Electronic document, <https://www.ou.edu/eoo/policies-and-procedures>, accessed January 23, 2026.

¹⁰The University of Oklahoma Institutional Equity Office. "Institutional Equity Office Investigative Procedures." Electronic document, <https://www.ou.edu/content/dam/eoo/documents/nondiscrimination-policy-procedures-updated.pdf>, accessed January 23, 2026.

¹¹ University of Oklahoma AAUP. "Defend OU Instructors and Academic Freedom." Electronic petition, <https://actionnetwork.org/forms/defend-ou-instructors>, accessed December 22, 2025.

¹² American Association of University Professors. 2026. "AAUP Condemns OU Suspension, Political Interference." Electronic document, <https://www.aaup.org/news/aaup-condemns-ou-suspension-political-interference>, accessed January 23, 2026.

¹³ The University of Oklahoma. "Lead On, University: The Next Phase." Electronic document, <https://www.ou.edu/leadon стратегический план>. Accessed January 20, 2026.

Section 2: GSS maintains that the University's decision to terminate the instructional duties of the graduate teaching assistant in this case has damaged academic integrity and the institutional reputation of the University of Oklahoma.

Section 3: GSS maintains that the negative effects of the University's actions are the direct result of the University administration's failure to take a stand to defend their instructors and the University's academic integrity. Such a failure and its associated, disastrous results indicate that the current University administration is potentially unfit to lead the University.

Section 4: Given the facts, assertions, and concerns above, GSS calls for the following:

1. For the University administration to hold a meeting with the leadership of the Graduate Student Senate and Faculty Senate to discuss actions to increase transparency, accountability, and academic integrity following this case.
2. The reinstatement of the graduate teaching assistant to their instructional duties.
3. An independent audit into the University's decision in this case to determine:
 - a. If University policies were properly followed in the course of the University's investigation,
 - b. If Ms. Fulnecky or any other party made any false or misleading statements in the course of the University's investigation that affected the University's decision to terminate the graduate teaching assistant, and
 - c. If there was improper prejudice or coordinated action against LGBTQ+ individuals in the course of the University's investigation.
4. Immediate action by the University to address the requests in *Call to Action Regarding the University's Responsibilities to Students in Investigations* (Senate Resolution GF25-21) and the OU-AAUP's petition¹¹, including:
 - a. Initiate a process with GSS, the AAUP, and other faculty and student organizations to develop a specific Harassment Response and Prevention Plan that provides clear guidelines for the campus community for responding to political attacks¹¹,
 - b. Provide a public condemnation of bullying and harassment directed toward any member of the OU campus community,
 - c. Within the bounds of the law, release full details on the policies and processes that resulted in the graduate teaching assistant being placed on administrative leave and subsequently terminated from their teaching duties. If the law prevents the disclosure of any of this information, the University should provide a written explanation detailing which law prevents the disclosure.
 - d. Provide a public statement “[reaffirming] the right of OU faculty and instructors to teach, grade, and research free from political interference, unlawful mandates, or pressures that inhibit authentic engagement.”¹¹

Section 5: GSS maintains that *only* by heeding the calls detailed in Section 4 of this resolution can the University begin to repair the damage it has done to its students, its faculty, its staff, its alumni, and the broader OU campus community.

Section 6: Copies of this resolution will be sent to:

- Joseph Harroz, Jr., President of the University of Oklahoma
- André-Denis Wright, Senior Vice President and Provost of the University of Oklahoma
- David Surratt, Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students at the University of Oklahoma
- Michael Markham, Dean of the Dodge Family College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Oklahoma
- Randall Hewes, Dean of the Graduate College at the University of Oklahoma
- Lara Mayeux, Chair of the Department of Psychology at the University of Oklahoma
- All members of the OU Faculty Senate
- Michael Givel, President of the Oklahoma Chapter of the American Association of University Professors
- *OU Daily*
- *OU Nightly*
- *The Oklahoman*
- KFOR
- KOCO
- *The Norman Transcript*
- *NBC News*
- *The New York Times*
- *Inside Higher Ed*

Authors: Sam Jensen, Graduate Student Senate Ways and Means Chair
Dana Mahmoud, Graduate Student Senate Vice Chair

Sponsor: Libby Ryan, Graduate Student Senate Secretary

Submitted on a motion by: Senator Hurst (59)

Action taken by Senate: Passed via unanimous consent.

Verified by Chair of Senate: _____ Date: _____