



# General Assembly

Wednesday, July 29th, 2020 – 1:00 pm  
<https://gvsu-edu.zoom.us/j/97398355603?pwd=e mRicURzRE9PSVd6SWt3VC9zRnQ3UT09>

Chair: Eric-John Szczepaniak  
Parliamentarian: Kelly Dowker

*Student Senate will cultivate a student body that is engaged, healthy, and empowered.*

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## Call Meeting to Order:

- a. Moment of Silence
  - i. Native Land Recognition
- b. Student Senate Creed
  - i. We, as members of Grand Valley State University’s Student Senate, dedicate ourselves to cultivating a student body that is engaged, healthy, and empowered. We pledge to represent all students and their diverse, ever-changing needs. With persistency, intentionality, and integrity, we strive to create a Laker experience that is equitable, accessible, and sustainable.
- c. Pledge of Allegiance
- d. Roll Call
  - i. Taken by EVP Dowker
  - ii. 21 senators present
- II. **Public Comment – Part I**
  - a. Gavin Marlowe: “We’re all Alexander Hamilton’s in this moment”
- III. **Five (5) Minutes to Pass the Papers**
- IV. **President’s Report**
  - a. Adoption of the Agenda
    - i. VP Benoit: Motion to approve the minutes
    - ii. EVP Dowker: Second
  - a) EJ: We will be online through December. Be sure to run for senate in the fall. The form is on the website.
  - b) APSC attendance policy. ECS approved something pending discussion by UAS. It looks as though they are in favor of passing a policy that would result in no academic related/grade bearing policies for attendance. You could not be punished grade-wise for not being able to come to class if you are sick. GV wants students to stay home if they are feeling sick at all.
  - c) The GA dates for the fall are listed on the website, so you can look at what will be discussed and the dates you need to be there. The Cabinet nominations and elections will be taking place the first two GA’s so people don’t have to have a zoom marathon for cabinet elections. The other Thursdays are required



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- d) Siegrist: Regarding cabinet elections, my concern is that we could be using the time for valuable legislation. Why are we waiting even longer to do cabinet elections? We are already going to be further behind.
- e) EJ: As our normal elections are a two week process, we discussed making this process 5 and 4 to make it better for people. The thought process was also that this would allow regular legislation to occur as long as people are meeting that 2 week deadline. Any other questions?
- f) Moine: Do you know what any COVID testing is going to look like on campus for GV students?
- g) EJ: GV does intend to have COVID 19 tests that can be administered. There are going to be certain thresholds for when classes need to be tested.
- h) Ed Abofadel: We will have testing available in the health centers on campus. If you combine Kent and Ottawa county there are over 2,000 tests being given daily. The question is about how much testing we are going to do on campus come mid-August.

## V. Executive Vice President's Report

### a. Approval of the Minutes

- i. EVP Dowker: Any changes or additions to last meetings minutes. Seeing none, those will stand approved.

## VI. Unfinished Business

- i. EJ: We want to be aware of people's time so we're are going to have discussion for all four right now and then vote after or in a google form if necessary.
- b. Discussion and Voting on [W-20-05: Urge Grand Valley State University to Declare a Climate Emergency and Take Measurable Steps Towards Preventing the Advancement of Climate Change](#)
  - i. Hicks: We took the resolution from the winter and changed it a bit. We got rid of the request for a task force. We requested GV declare a climate emergency and then take more measurable steps towards being better. Some is new, but there aren't any "hot takes"
  - ii. EJ: The floor is open to discussion now.
  - iii. Is there still a part for fossil fuel divestment.



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- iv. Hicks: It is mentioned in the first furthermore, let it be resolved. It is a short statement because we didn't have the data from specific meetings.
- v. Siegrist: When we first discussed this people were concerned about the University not knowing.
- vi. Hicks: At first, I didn;t support this resolution, but we made some big changes to make sure it was what we wanted it to be. These are very measurable steps that can be taken by the University.
- c. Discussion and Voting on [W-20-06: Urge Grand Valley State University to Implement a Student Bereavement Policy and to Clearly State this Policy within the University Academic Policies and Regulations](#)
  - i. Garton: Senator Armstong and I thought it was very important for Gv to implement a bereavement policy. It allows students to take time off if a family member or themselves gets sick. There currently is no policy. Currently, it is up to the individual professor. We thought it was important that there be official language.
  - ii. Senator Armstrong: Grief is considered a mental disorder in the DSM and if not treated properly it can further impact a students mental health and academic performance.
  - iii. EJ: If APSC does approve the attendance waiver, hopefully they can take this up in the fall. We will open this up for discussion now.
  - iv. Siegrist: Is there a limit to how much time to how much time a student can take off and are they required to get the coursework done? Also does this apply to any family member?
  - v. Garton: We were planning on leaving this up to the University. We linked similar policies from other Universities in the resolution. We were planning on letting the University decide how long they would give. We're assuming coursework would be on a case by case basis.
- d. Discussion and Voting on [W-20-07: Request that Allendale Charter Township Establish a Satellite Clerk's Office on the GVSU Allendale Campus in Advance of the 2020 U.S. General Election, and to Request that a Voting Precinct be Established at an On-Campus Location, or Location Accessible by a GVSU Bus Route](#)
  - i. EJ: This has been in the works with Melissa Baker Boosamra and the Allendale township clerk. There is a really good chance that it will be done. The process is already occurring,



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we're just showing our support. The satellite office will be open prior. The CSLC and the provost's office will be offering this for students who are registered to vote in Allendale. Provides a really good option for students to vote. The long term goal is to get a precinct on campus so students can access it by the bus route.

- ii. Senator Thayer: I have been talking with Justin, Lori, and Steve. The plan right now is for me to be running the satellite office in the fall and it will be open a couple of hours each day. We're pushing this to encourage people to vote by mail because of COVID.
- iii. EJ: I would encourage you all to vote by mail. There is an election coming up on August 4th. You should go fill in a ballot at your clerk's office to make sure you're counted.
- iv. Senator Holcomb: Do we know how many students have allendale as their voting address?
- v. EJ: We do not but the GIS data is available. You are eligible to vote in Allendale or your hometown if you are living anywhere in Allendale charter township this fall. I also want to thank Melissa for all her hard work that has gone into this.

## VII. New Business

- a. Discussion on [Recommendations Regarding Cultural Competency On-Campus](#)
  - i. EVP Dowker: This is mainly a DAC project that has been going on for a while. This is in regards to the President's task force. This list is not comprehensive but has been worked on for a while.
  - ii. EJ: Regarding the last point, our report did not include a breakdown of the gender and race/ethnicity and GV did not share the information. We will be working with University partners to encourage them to include it.
  - iii. Hicks: Whenever we talk to the administration about Aramark, they never really listen because we don't present an alternative, so having some in the attached document would be really beneficial.
  - iv. EVP Dowker: Thank you to everyone who has worked on this because it took a really long time and it looks really great.
- b. Discussion and Voting on [S-20-01: Show Strong Opposition to the Title IX Amendments Proposed on May 6th, 2020 by the Department of Education](#)
  - i. Hicks: We passed a resolution really similar to this in December 2018. Title IX does a lot of great work to make sure there is no discrimination towards people and they do a lot of great work surrounding helping student with sexual assault/harassment.



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- ii. Siegrist: You did a lot of great work on this. I'm in strong opposition to this resolution because the changes are important and valuable for students. It defines sexual assault and uses the strong force of the law, takes action against sexual assault on Fraternities and Sororities. Shouldn't be opposing something.
- iii. Hicks: Only k-12 has to implement this because they are fully funded. We would be saying don't fully do this. Cross-examination is one example of how inequitable the system is. Victims are not given equal resources due to difference in socio-economic class. Our greek life is held to a pretty high standard, however most sexual misconduct doesn't occur within organizations or on campus and these changes say we don't have to protect our students outside of those realms. The new definition of sexual conduct effectively leaves the decision up to the title IX coordinator on whether or not to further investigate sexual violence. It is also unethical to try and implement the new policies during COVID.
- iv. Thayer: I think that this is really being done to silence victims. I think we need to value victims rather than allowing perpetrators to get away with things because of wealth.
- v. Raak: It would be better to cite the federal law rather than the NCAA website.
- vi. EJ: The part about mandated reporting included in the amendments by DeVos. One of these amendment changes who is defined as a mandated reporter. It takes out coaches from being mandated reports. These amendments try to reduce the liability that Universities have, I don't think this is the right way to go. If this is passed something we can do would be to encourage Senators to push the University to be better and encourage mandated reporters to be included in contracts. These amendments lower the responsibility.
- vii. Siegrist: Important to recognize that Title IX applies to federal institutions. I think it's important to make a resolution that includes GV policies and procedures. To me this seems like a political statement. I think it's important to make the distinction between Grand Valley's procedures and what is being required by us. We have to increase the due process in the situation and make sure it's not a political statement. This should be more focused on Grand Valley's policies.
- viii. Pearson: I think this is a great resolution. Since a lot happens off campus, it is important the University investigates off campus matters. I think this is a good way to support students.



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- ix. Thayer: The process is already weighted towards the perpetrator and the system is not good. We have to speak out towards injustices like this. This isn't getting rid of due process, it's about not making this easier for the perpetrator. This isn't a political statement, it's about the right and wrong.
- x. Hicks: The title IX coordinator's job is to understand these documents. These documents are hard to understand for students and a lot of people. We have made this statement before as senate and we would be naming the secretary of education whether or not it was Betsy DeVos. This is about leveling the playing field for victims, especially regarding mandated reporting. Having GV continue to support all people who experience sexual assault. We have to adopt certain parts.
- xi. Samuels: This is a really complex issue and statistically victims/survivors are at an extreme disadvantage. There are still cases where people are wrongfully accused. We really should be listening to people who have been studying this for a long time. I strongly support this resolution.

## **CALL FOR NEW ORDERS OF THE DAY**

EJ: New orders of the day. Outstanding advisor bill for Bob. We wanted to say thank you. Motion to pass by Unanimous Consent, unless there are any objections. Seeing none, this is passed. \*Plays video\*

Bob: That was really special, thank you so much. I really appreciate that a lot. It's not about me, it's about you and I'm grateful for you. Melissa is gonna take over the reins and support you. You gots some real challenges, but I know with her support and your leadership, you'll be successful. Thank you for the recognition, I really appreciate that.

EJ: Thank you for your continued support. Your work inside and outside the office is greatly appreciated. I wish the best.

## **VIII. Public Comment – Part II**

EJ: Any comments

Gavin Marlowe: I want to thank my colleagues and friends for doing this. I want to note the problems I experienced as a Senator. This body promotes the. Admin is represented more than students. We aren't able to react quickly. We aren't the leaders the students should have. Listen to your constituents and not the admin. Here are some ideas, reform police, refund toxic influencers, immigration/students being allowed to study. I would also recommend no in person classes.



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Carter Houtman: I really appreciate all of the work all of you have done throughout the summer, I'm proud of everything we accomplished last year. Strongly oppose the climate resolution, there is not enough content there, there aren't actual goals in there. I disagree with not following parts of the title IX resolution, I think it would be a better use of time and resources to figure out what title IX lacks and help GV write policies. I hope someone takes over the Alumni mentorship program.

Melissa: I appreciate the opportunity to be here today and I also want to offer my HTanks to Bob for the example he set. I'm looking forward to digging in and supporting all of you as you pursue your agenda. I'll be here as a sounding board. I'll be here to help you figure out how to get things done.

IX. **Call for Announcements**

a. Samuels: There are some changes for the funding rules for this year, please reach out.

X. **Adjournment:**

a. 2:37 pm