

# Grand Valley State University Student Senate

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY MINUTES

Thursday, April 3rd, 2025

Kirkhof 2204, 4:30pm

Chair: Quinten Proctor / Evan Jackson

Vice Chair: Paris Lawson / Ty Vanlerberghe

Parliamentarian: Evan Jackson / Bryseida Gonzalez



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### Part One

#### 1. **Call To Order 4:30 PM**

- a. Approval of the Agenda
  - i. Agenda stand approved
- b. Approval of the Minutes
  - i. Minutes stand approved
- c. Passing of the Papers

#### 2. **Public Comment**

#### 3. **Introductions**

- a. Student Senators introduced themselves to the new body.

#### 4. **Overview of the Basics**

- a. Robert's Rules
  - i. President Proctor completed a quick review of Robert's Rules of Order, and how the Student Senate utilizes them.

#### 5. **Farewell Address**

- a. **President -**
  - i. It has been an absolute honor to have had the opportunity to serve as the Student Senate President. I'm sitting up here tonight at the tail end of my second term as President, and it feels a little bittersweet. I'm going to miss all of you so I'm sad to leave, but I'm also happy about beginning the next chapter of my life, and I'm excited to see all that you accomplish moving forward. As many of you know, I do intend to return to Grand Valley for grad school in the Fall, so I'll make sure to come visit, and if you ever need anything, you can always feel free to reach out to me. I'm here for each and every one of you.  
Now, before I pass the torch tonight, I did want to leave you all with two pieces of advice:
    1. Use your voice. Ask clarifying questions, make sure you fully understand what's being said, and contribute your thoughts to discussions. Don't be afraid to disagree! The best solutions come when we fully discuss as many different perspectives as we can, so you need to make sure you raise counter arguments or opposing points. In the Student Senate, we make decisions on behalf of all

students at Grand Valley, so you really need to make your voice heard to ensure our decisions are well thought out and beneficial for the student body.

2. Your experience is what you make of it. Student Senate is a great opportunity to get involved on campus and really make a difference for our fellow students, but there are occasional times where it can be a little stressful. Just know that it's okay to take a step back sometimes, and try not to take things personally. But overall, your contributions and what you put into this organization is what you get out of it, so I'll encourage you to make the most of your time on Student Senate. Get some meaningful work done, contribute to discussions and initiatives, and most importantly, this is your experience, so remember to enjoy it.
3. This is going to be a great year on Student Senate. President-elect Jackson, Vice President-elect Vanlerberghe, you are both capable and phenomenal leaders. It's been amazing to work alongside both of you, and you guys have my full confidence that you will lead Student Senate, and the student body, into a bright future. I am so proud of both of you, and I cannot wait to see what you accomplish, and what you all accomplish over the next year. Best of luck to all of you, I'll be rooting for you.

And with that, thank you all so much, and I will yield to Vice President Lawson.

**b. Vice President - Paris Lawson**

- i. It is amazing how my experience with Student Senate has profoundly shaped me, not only as a leader but as a person. It has been a key piece in helping me build confidence in both my abilities and intelligence. Through this journey, I've proven not only to myself but to those who doubted me that I am more than enough. For that, I am deeply grateful to all of you for your support through both the highs and the lows. As I move forward, I want to share a couple lessons I'll carry with me from my time in this body.
- ii. First, always trust your own voice, your perspective matters more than you might think. The power of speaking up cannot be underestimated. At times, it's easy to question if your thoughts are worth sharing, but I've learned that every voice has the potential to spark change and create connection.
- iii. Second, remember that leadership is not about perfection. It's about growth, resilience, and the willingness to learn from every experience. Leadership is a constant journey, one where mistakes are as valuable as the wins, and every lesson along the way shapes us into stronger, more empathetic individuals.
- iv. I want to thank you all for being such a significant part of my life, my growth, and my journey at GVSU. Know that I am only a call or DM away. I will always be here for you if you need anything, and I'll cherish the bond that I have built with you all during our time together. Thank you.

**6. Transition of Power**

**a. Oath of Office**

- i. President Jackson and Vice President Vanlerberghe are sworn into office.

**7. Recess**

## **Part Two**

### **8. President Emeritus Award Ceremony**

- a. **President Quinten Proctor**
  - i. Former President Quinten Proctor is awarded the President Emeritus Award. President Jackson, Vice President for Student Affairs Jenny Hall-Jones, and President Proctor himself gave remarks on the award.

### **9. Executive Reports**

- a. **President - Evan Jackson**
  - i. Good afternoon, Senators,
  - ii. I'm incredibly excited to share my first report as your Student Senate President. It's a real honor to step into this role, and I want to thank each of you for the trust you've placed in me. My focus is to keep the momentum going from the previous term, build on our wins, and ensure we're not just maintaining, but pushing forward with purpose.
  - iii. **University Updates & Bill Progress**
    - 1. **Digital ID Bill – University Response:** The university has formally responded to our Digital ID bill, and while there are still logistical questions to address, they've expressed openness to exploring its implementation further. We'll continue working alongside administrators to bring this student-focused innovation to life.
    - 2. **Communications Challenge – University Response:** Similarly, we've received a response regarding the Communications Challenge initiative. We're using that feedback to inform a broader strategy on student-university communication and accessibility. More updates will be shared as we shape next steps.
    - 3. **Course Marking for Cost Transparency Bill:** I'm thrilled to share that this bill has officially passed through ECS and is on its way to a vote in UAS next Friday. This is a big step toward financial transparency for students navigating textbook and course material costs.
    - 4. **Health Vending Machine Bill:** Another exciting update—this bill also passed through ECS and will be voted on by UAS next Friday. Thank you to everyone who supported its development. This initiative has the potential to greatly improve accessibility to essential health items on campus.
  - iv. **Cabinet Opportunity in Washington, D.C.**
    - 1. This year, the 2024–2025 Cabinet has been invited by the university to travel to Washington, D.C., for a two-day experience focused on leadership development and federal relations. This opportunity was extended directly by university leadership, and while it's an exciting way for us to represent GVSU, I also want to acknowledge the importance of transparency and inclusion. Our work must always reflect the priorities

of all senators, and I am committed to making sure this experience brings back value for the entire body—not just a few. If you have questions, please reach out directly and I’m happy to talk more.

v. Looking Ahead

1. Today, we’ll be discussing our schedule, policy priorities, and interests in guest speakers. If there’s something or someone that stood out to you last year—an initiative, a topic, a speaker—please bring that up. We’ll also send out a Google Form later this week to give everyone another opportunity to share their thoughts on these areas.

vi. Cabinet Nominations & Elections

1. Finally, we’ll be holding cabinet nominations today, with elections taking place at next week’s General Assembly. When nominating, you’ll be asked to provide a brief rationale for your nomination—please take a moment to think through who you believe is best suited for each role and why.

- vii. I appreciate everything you’ve done to be here and stay involved. Let’s carry that energy forward and start the year with purpose and momentum.

b. **Vice President** - Ty Vanlerberghe

- i. First off, I want to give a huge, huge, huge congratulations to everyone in this room for being elected to the 2025-2026 Student Senate body! You all worked very hard to be here today, and I know that President Jackson and I are super excited and eager for what is ahead. For everyone who this is your first Student Senate meeting, welcome! You are going to love it here.
- ii. Second, in a few minutes, we are going to have a short discussion about what we feel some of our policy priorities will be for this coming year. I will be taking record of all of these ideas on a document inside of the legislation folder of the new drive. Although it is very early in this term, if any of the ideas that we have resonate with you, feel free to start looking at the other resources inside of the Legislation folder, such as Legislation 101, which is a general guide to legislation, and the legislative dashboard, which is a tracker that will help us track ideas throughout the summer
- iii. Third, I know several of our returning members had scheduled meetings with campus stakeholders before the end of the year/during the summer. If you are one of these members, please be sure to CC me in all of your correspondence going forward, so I can see all progress that is being made!
- iv. Finally, we will be holding interviews for Chief of Staff shortly after we adjourn. If you submitted an application for the position, please meet President Jackson and I in the Senate office downstairs. We will start conducting interviews in the order that applications were submitted.

## 10. Discussion

- a. Scheduling
- b. Policy priorities
  - i. Taylor: Student employee wages

- ii. Annis: Student Outreach
- iii. Dychies: Accessibility
- iv. Westbrook: Diversity and inclusion
- v. Hartley: Vibrant campus, partnerships with RSOs and CAB
- vi. Hardgrave: Sustainability
- vii. Eschlmen: Student Parking Prices
- viii. Robach: Seconds Eshleman, also admissions practices
- ix. Hartley: Updating certain outdated buildings
- x. Vettori: Seconds Hartley, also mentions sustainability, trash, and recycling
- xi. Uppla: Expansion of graduate assistantships, need to reduce tuition or housing costs through university programs, lowering barriers
- xii. Rodgers: Spend more time with resource centers
- xiii. Dykhuis: Focus on letting students know that we are a resource for them
- xiv. Hardgrave: Dining and food improving that for everyone
- xv. Finley: More parking options
- xvi. McDonough: More emphasis on the Allocations Committee
- xvii. Dolnik: Expanding university resources, campus counseling and AOD
- c. Guest speakers
  - i. Theakston: Counseling center
  - ii. Eshleman: SLT members, more of them
  - iii. Annis: Second Theakston, more mental health focus
  - iv. Hartley: Parking services, more clarity
  - v. Shackelford: Admissions and retention
  - vi. Dykhuis: GVPD and SCOUT!
  - vii. Laurin: IT was enjoyable, interest in cybersecurity
  - viii. Robach: Marketing and financial aid
  - ix. McDonough: Sustainability
  - x. Driver: Campus Health Center, more emphasis on sexual health protection
  - xi. Robinson: Another visit from Institutional Marketing
  - xii. Schwallier: Reach Higher, see next steps and goals for the future
  - xiii. Hardgrave: Sustainability, Laker Food Co.
  - xiv. Taylor: Seconds Technology, especially for cyber security for digital IDs
  - xv. Shackelford: Marketing, would like to see updates
  - xvi. Wright: TRIO and OWS
  - xvii. Robach: Career Center and Housing
  - xviii. Driver: Seconds housing, more discussion on housing education and simplifying processes
  - xix. Hardgrave: Trinity Health and off-campus housing
  - xx. VanDyke: Admissions office first and then see how housing looks next year based on admissions numbers
  - xxi. Richards: Seconds Laker Food Co. from personal experience, lots of food being wasted
  - xxii. Eshclemen: Has had conversations from Dr. Kyle Boon, knows he wants to come to GA

- xxiii. Shackleford: Let's get more specific about housing
- xxiv. Annis: Dr. Boone will answer any questions, that we need
- xxv. Driver: On housing, cleanliness, mice in buildings, safety, and RA quality
- xxvi. Robach: Answers some questions about the realities of RA life and encourages anyone unhappy with RA experience to contact their Living Center Directors
- xxvii. Annis: Since Dr. Boone had spoken before, he wants to leave Dr. Boone to just the Policy Committee
- xxviii. Hartley: I disagree, I think it will be important in the coming year, and we will need to have a better line of communication
- xxix. Taylor: I agree, and second because we have huge admissions numbers and need communication
- xxx. McDonough: As a transfer student, I have never lived on campus and would like to speak to them directly
- xxxi. Eshelman: I think that the master plan is very complicated, and I think that Dr. Boone can be a good translator for that. We should bring him in
- xxxii. Robach: I have been an RA for Three years, and can answer some questions if they can't get to Dr. Boone
- xxxiii. Garrett: Off-campus housing
- xxxiv. Hartley: I would like to see absolute security
- xxxv. Gemmen: GVSU Votes, there are several elections coming up and I think that would be beneficial

## **11. Overview of the Cabinet Positions**

- a. President Jackson and Vice President Vanlerberghe review the different cabinet positions that Senators can be nominated for.

## **12. Cabinet Nominations**

- a. Allocations Chair
  - i. McDonough: I Nominate Senator-Elect Laurin
    - 1. Laurin: I accept
  - ii. Wright: I nominate Senator-Elect Hartley
    - 1. Hartley: I accept
- b. Public Relations Chair
  - i. Dykhuis: I nominate Senator-Elect Gemmen
    - 1. Gemmen: I accept
- c. Advocacy Chair
  - i. Hartley: I nominate Senator-Elect Wright
    - 1. Wright: I accept
  - ii. Buchannan: I nominate Rodgers
    - 1. Rodgers: I accept
- d. Policy Chair
  - i. Laurin: I nominate Senator-Elect Annis
    - 1. Annis: I accept
  - ii. Dolnik: I nominate Senator-Elect Eschleman
    - 1. Eschleman: I accept
  - iii. Gemmen: I nominate Senator-Elect McDonough

1. McDonough: I accept the nomination
- e. Events Chair
  - i. Driver: I nominate Senator-Elect Theakston
    1. Theakston: I accept the nomination

**13. Call for Announcements**

**14. Public Comment**

**15. Adjournment**