

Grand Valley State University Student Senate

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Thursday, August 28th, 2025

Kirkhof 2204, 5:15 PM

Chair: Evan Jackson

Vice Chair: Ty Vanlerberghe

Parliamentarian: William Laurin



Agenda

1. Call To Order

- a. The meeting was called to order at 5:15 p.m.
 - i. Approval of the Minutes
 1. Previous meeting minutes stand approved.
 - ii. Passing of the Papers
 1. Papers passed included potential Commencement speakers, as well as a task force sign-up.

2. Public Comment

3. Swearing-In

- a. President Mantella
 - i. President Mantella swears-in new Senators.

4. Expressive Activity

- a. Aaron Haight
 - i. Haight presented her presentation expressing the importance of activity at Grand Valley State University.
 1. Dykhuis: I've heard things have changed due to the current administration. Can you go into more detail about what is the same and what is different?
 - a. Haight: There are a lot of changes from the current administration that concern antisemitism and what constitutes that and what does not? That is something that we have to consider on a case-by-case basis.
 2. Hardgrave: What is included in the threat assessment guidelines?
 - a. Haight: A lot of information in the threat assessment guidelines comes from previous happenings at both Grand

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Valley as well as other schools. We use these situations as case studies to make sure we are prepared as possible.

3. Gemmen: In regards to buildings such as Neimyer that double as both residential and academic buildings, how is the line drawn?
 - a. Haight: A lot of buildings on campus can be considered in-between spaces, but those are categorized and are all documented by the University online.

5. Executive Reports

a. **President** - Evan Jackson

- i. Good evening. It is an honor to welcome you to the first General Assembly of the year. To our advisors— Valerie and Aaron—thank you for your continued guidance and support. To our visitors, welcome. And to every senator in this room—thank you for stepping up to serve this campus community.
- ii. Before we look forward, I would like to acknowledge the individuals who made tonight possible. This summer, while most of campus was quiet, your Cabinet was working behind the scenes so that today we would not be starting from scratch, but ahead. They worked their hearts out these past few months—and I'd like to ask them to stand so that you can give them the round of applause they deserve. Together, we didn't just prepare—we built momentum. We deepened partnerships with academic departments and administrators, forging relationships that will pay dividends as we move forward. Just last week, Cabinet met with Grand Valley's senior leadership team to share our plans and initiatives for the year ahead. It was a clear sign that student perspectives are welcomed and valued in shaping the future of this university.

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- iii. Now, let me talk about the tone we will set this year. My leadership will be collaborative, decisive, innovative, and supportive. But leadership is not just about me—it's about all of us. Two years ago, the Student Senate underwent restructuring, and last year we concluded the restructuring and achieved a monumental year as we made the final touches. Now, that chapter is closed. There is no more rebuilding to be done. The foundation has been laid. It's time to tip our cap to the student leaders who came before us—and run with it. They did their work; now it is time for us to do ours. This year, there are no excuses for not getting the work done. And what is that work? We will further Senate's reputation as the "go-to" problem solvers and doers on this campus. We will drive strong initiatives around campus vibrancy, creating more access to weekend programming and deeper collaboration across student organizations. We will hold ourselves accountable to follow through on the legislation already passed. We will work to build a culture where every Laker feels a sense of belonging and pride. And we will hold each other accountable in that process.
- iv. Tonight, we were honored to be joined by President Mantella and Dean of Students Aaron Haight. Next week, we'll step off campus for a bonding event at the Whitecaps game with Ferris State's Student Senate. Later in September, we will meet with the Housing department. We will then meet with Academic Affairs to discuss their strategic plan in preparation for a potential endorsement. We'll also welcome Grand Valley's new Police Chief and their team.
- v. In October, our Student Solutions Summit will allow us to bring forward real issues and solutions directly from students. We will then meet with the

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Reach Higher Core Team to better understand their plan ahead of a potential endorsement vote. We will also engage with the Division of Inclusion & Equity to advance our work around campus culture.

- vi. Later in the fall, in November, we will pause for an internal check-in—a chance to take stock of how we’re operating as an organization, reflect on leadership, and assess where we can improve. And to close out our semester of impact, we will meet with Laker Food Co. to identify areas for improvement and ensure student needs around dining and food access are being addressed.

- vii. This calendar is not just a schedule of meetings. It’s our playbook for impact. Every week is an opportunity to show students what Senate is capable of. So here’s my call to action: your service matters. Your presence here is not symbolic—it represents over 20,000 students who depend on us to be their voice. If you are here, be *all in*. Bring your energy, your ideas, and your commitment to the work ahead. This is the year we cement our legacy, and it will take every one of us giving our best to get there. And let me leave you with this line—one I hope you’ll carry with you: “We are not here to rebuild. We are here to build upon — and to leave behind a Senate so strong that the next generation of Lakers won’t just inherit it, they’ll be inspired by it.

- viii. Thank you. Let’s get to work. Now I will turn it over to Vice President Vanlerberghe.

b. **Vice President** - Ty Vanlerberghe

- i. Happy Thursday, everyone, and welcome back! I am so excited to see you all back here in Pere Marquette again and to kick-off this new academic year right! I have a couple short updates for you all today.

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- ii. First, I would like to introduce three new faces to our body. We have Grace Mulvenna, our second College of Health Professions Representative, who is a sophomore majoring in Allied Health Science on the pre-PA track; Mary Dodaj, our new Kirkhof College of Nursing representative, who is a junior studying nursing; and Elena Jimenez, our new EOA, who is a Junior accounting major who also served as a Senator on our 23-24 body.
 - iii. Second, if you RSVP'd to attend the West Michigan White Caps game with us next Thursday, September 4th, please be sure to arrive between 5:15 and the start of game time at 6:35 PM. The ballpark is roughly 25 minutes away, so please account for both travel time and traffic, and be sure to carpool with others. I'll send more information out in Slack soon. Additionally, you should have all received an email from Susan Sigler with information on how to get your tickets and some other helpful tips and tricks. Please let me know if you have any questions on that.
 - iv. Third, last week, I met with VP Jenny Hall-Jones to discuss all of the legislation that we passed last year and to build strategies towards further implementation. Next week, I will be reaching out to stakeholders relevant to our legislation last year and setting up meetings with them to get updates and get work going. If there is a piece of legislation that you feel passionate about from last year and would like to attend the meetings with me, please let me know via Slack.
 - v. Fourth, we have applicants joining us in the public gallery today. If you are an applicant, please meet Genna Wright after the meeting. She and other Cabinet members will guide you down to our office space and then Evan, Will, and I will interview everyone one-by-one while the rest of you

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await being called in. We thank you for your patience in-advance. If anyone has any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to reach out to Evan, Will, or I at any time. I now yield to Chief of Staff Laurin for his report.

c. **Chief of Staff - William Laurin**

- i. Good evening everyone! I hope you all had a fun summer and that the first week back hasn't been too difficult so far. I've been busy this summer getting everything ready for our upcoming year, and I can't wait to dive into our work together! Just a couple updates from me regarding some of the stuff I've been working on over the summer and first week of school. I have been in the process of compiling a list of events to act as our official Event Requirement sheet. If you are a part of any other student organizations on campus that you feel would benefit from the presence of the student senate, feel free to shoot it my way and I will see where it best fits. As of right now, I am set to conduct Judiciary Committee interviews next Tuesday the second in the Student Senate office. I kindly ask that during this time you avoid coming in, as I will likely be interviewing until 4:30. After which it will be completely open again.

6. Onboarding & Inservice

- a. President Jackson, Vice President Vanlerberghe, and Chief of Staff Laurin present the Onboarding and Inservice presentation, explaining the structure and specific details of the Student Senate.

7. Updated Personal Transportation Device and Vehicle Use Policy

- a. President Jackson reviewed the Updated Personal Transportation Device and Vehicle Use Policy created by former Chief DeHaan and other GVSU stakeholders.

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8. Call for Announcements

a. Committee Chair Reports

i. Allocations

1. Hi everyone, hope your summers were great and I'm glad to see everyone back. For today, I will be putting a Google Form for indicating interest in the Allocations Committee in the Slack. Please fill that out. Also, we'll be doing Funding Training on Thursday, September 11th at GA. Thank you!

ii. Public Relations

1. Hello everyone! I hope you all had a fantastic start to what I feel is going to be a fantastic year. PRC has been busy with early Senate promotion work with Campus Life Night and early Student Solutions Summit poster promo, and we are excited to collaborate with you all to continue showing the student body what we're working towards. While I don't quite have pertinent updates at this time, please never hesitate to reach out to me with any questions or comments as we pick up speed on social media, video content, the website, and the bulletin boards. I hope you all have a wonderful holiday weekend.

iii. Advocacy

1. Hi everyone, I hope you all had a great first week of classes! I am so happy to see everyone's smiling faces again. Advocacy committee held our first meeting of the semester as we officially kick off the year. During our meeting, we assigned liaison roles for all of the campus centers we work with, giving each member an opportunity to connect with and support different areas of student

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life. We also introduced our new cross-committee liaison positions, where members will serve as a bridge between Advocacy and other committees such as PRC, Events, Policy, and Allocations, which will help strengthen collaboration across each Senate committee. It is exciting to see the energy and enthusiasm and to reconnect with everyone, and I'm truly looking forward to the important work ahead, and to all of the ways we can continue to uplift student voices and make a positive impact throughout the year.

iv. Policy

1. Hello Everyone! I hope everyone is having a good first week of classes. Policy is starting to reach out to our liaisons within the next couple of weeks. During Campus Night Life, I was able to introduce myself to a couple of our liaison. As of right now, the sustainability liaison team is in the works in scheduling a meeting with the Director of Sustainability to see how we can get more involved in Zero Waste Football games and how we can do across-collaboration during Sustainability month. During our committee meeting, we addressed the recent Lanthorn article regarding the food insecurity that GV faces. We are planning on reaching out to replenish within the next couple of weeks and brainstorm ideas on how to bring awareness. If anyone is interested in joining these soon to be scheduled meetings please let me know.

v. Events

1. Happy first week, Senators! I'm thrilled to kick off the fall term with all of you and to welcome some fresh faces! First up, I'm really looking forward to our first bonding event at the White Caps

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game next Thursday—it's going to be a great time! My committee is already brainstorming ideas for our next bonding event, so stay tuned. We're also organizing a new event, the Senate Office Open House, on September 9th at 4:30 PM. I will give more information next week, but please mark your calendars—this is an important event and we'd love to see most of you there! Later in September, we'll be setting up the 9/11 Memorial on Kirkhof Lawn. Expect a sign-up sheet at the next GA. Lastly, my committee is coordinating tabling opportunities for September, and a sign-up sheet for that will be coming your way soon. To help keep everything organized, I've created an events calendar, which is now available for everyone in the shared Google Drive. If anyone has any questions please feel free to slack me! Looking forward to a great semester with you all!

b. Advisor Reports

i. Haight:

1. Hello, welcome to the new year. Although this is the first meeting, we've already started with planning events to hit the ground running. This is going to be an exciting, fast-paced year!

ii. Guzman:

1. Hello, my name is Valerie Guzman. You all are in really great hands with the Cabinet this year. I have no formal reports, but I am excited to work with all of you this year.

c. General Announcements

- i. Vanlerberghe: Reminder for all applicants that as soon as we adjourn, please follow Genna down to the Senate office for interviews.

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9. Public Comment

- a. No public comments were announced.

10. Adjournment

- a. The meeting was adjourned at 6:46 p.m.