1. Call to Order - Called to order at 7:10
2. Recognition of Senators
3. Special Guest/Speaker

No guest/speaker

1. Approval of Minutes:
   1. GSS meeting minutes, 7, December, 2016 *(to be approved by Senate)* – Approved by voice vote
   2. GSS Executive meeting minutes, 25th January 2017 *(to be approved by Executive)* - Approved by voice vote.
2. Unfinished Business
3. Executive Committee Reports
   1. President – Chriss Sneed
      1. Meeting Updates
         1. Taskforce on Free Speech/Civility – Chriss attends this task force. They are still discussing new language on free speech and civility.
         2. University Senate – The next meeting is next Monday.
         3. Senate Executive Committee - Chriss met with SEC but they cannot discuss the details due to confidentiality.
         4. New Provost - Provost Mun Choi’s last day was today. Chriss emphasized importance of establishing and maintaining a relationship with the provost. They urged importance of having discussions about funding and other things.
      2. General Tier III (GSS) Fiscal Information
         1. SASFAC UPDATE - Tony Patelunas will update the Senate during the External Committee Reports.
         2. Disbursements - Most groups should have their disbursements at this point. If you do not yet have it, please come by the GSS office as soon as possible so that we can discuss what issues may be delaying the process. Also, email updates have been sent regarding any disbursements that have issues. If you have not been notified, please see us immediately.
         3. Outstanding Checks
         4. Quarterly Bills - Forms have been sent to Kimberly Miller. We are awaiting confirmation that everything is complete on the Executive Committee’s end.
         5. Conflicts of Interest (Chriss Sneed) - SAGE and GSS conflict was presented at the Halloween event. The co-sponsored event was originally funded and put together by both
         6. Tier II Budget Submissions - Budgets were due yesterday (1/31). Ross noted that he has emailed each group back who submitted their budget.
      3. GSS Loan Fund
         1. Comment from Ross about 2/1/2017 Meeting- The Executive Committee feels that they don’t really have enough control over the Loan Fund. There seems to be a miscommunication with the Bursar’s office about the process and the responsibilities.
            1. Ross got a lecture on financial responsibility and how we should educate students on how to manage their finances. The Bursar switched to Core CT and did not inform us. This has created more issues for us. It was recommended that he make changes when giving out the loans. Change 3-5 day disbursement to 5-8 days. Payroll deduction is no longer available now beyond the first 10 days of the semester. No flexibility is being offered.
            2. Temporary holds were once able to be lifted so that students could register for class, but the Bursars said that they never actually allowed this. However, they suggested that we violate our bylaws and allow indefinite 30 day extensions.
      4. International Student Visa Compliance Fee (discussion to follow in Issues Forum) - Chriss looked at the Fee and has some concerns about what they see. They did a FOIA search and pulled the 2016 Fact Sheet and noticed a discrepancy. They asked the Union how many international GAs there were (705 appr.). There is a difference between ISSS and BOT reporting of amount of SEVIS-approved employees. See attachment. Noted that the fees are excessive and that the allocation applies to some programs that are available for all students while only a subset of students are required to pay for it.
         1. Ruth Yuste noted that she also has data regarding the fee that shows that the fee may be unjustified. Ruth also noticed that there is some negative language about the fee that discusses the English language program participants, who pay $7000 already.
         2. Victoria notes that the grad school has grave concerns about the fees and suggests that we talk to Scott Jordan and Dan Weiner and invite him to the next meeting. Chriss has noted that we have reached out to them in order to invite them already and are patiently waiting.
         3. Tom Briggs noted that UConn seems to be using a mix of both targeted fees and broad fees, which is highly inconsistent. He also noted that we invited Scott Jordan last year and he failed to mention this fee at all.
         4. Gayatri has concerns about when the town hall meetings were held last semester. They were held around the midterms and holidays and so many people were unable to attend.
         5. There are concerns about the allocation of Visa Fees to international student recruitment.
      5. ISSS Update / Executive Officer Status
         1. December Meeting Summary - Executive committee are considered employees and they must complete dual employment forms. Chriss issued stop payment on their account to prevent issues that came up within their department.
         2. Resignation of Treasurer - Deepthi Varghese decided to resign due to the frustrations created by this employment decision surrounding her Visa.
         3. Resignation of President - Chriss announced that they would be resigning due to their feelings about Deepthi’s forced resignation. They announced that they do not agree with the way that these situations had been handled by the University in general, in that it marginalized a group of students. They have resigned effective at the close of this meeting.
   2. Vice President – Matthew Parent
      1. Meetings/Report
      2. At-Large Senator Elections Reminder
   3. Communications Director – Jordan Rees
      1. Communications Report - Ross noted that if there are questions or comments about the Public Relations committee, please contact him.
   4. Activities Director – Bahare Deljoo
      1. Grad Prom - Feb. 24th is the date. Bahareh has booked the room and ordered the food. She will post the theme options soon.
      2. Updates
   5. Parliamentarian – Donyeil Hoy
      1. Bylaw Amendments
      2. Parliamentarian Update
4. External Committee Reports
   1. Diversity Council – Gayatri Phadke
      1. First meeting in Dec. The structure is 2 grads and 2 undergrads from different departments. Gayatri is serving the Student Recruitment and Retention Committee. The other graduate student serves on the Staff Recruitment and Retention Committee.
         1. This council is more like a policy-making body rather than an enforcing body, which is upsetting. Another meeting in Feb. Will ask if they are only there in name or will they have influences on decisions. She encourages grad students to speak with Joelle Murchison if they are interested.
   2. SASFAC – Tony Patelunas - Represented in place of the Treasurer. It was a half-hour meeting and only 4 out of 12 members were in attendance. They handed out information basically stating that they will have a lot more meetings.
   3. Student Life and Welfare Committee – Thomas Briggs – They discussed interest in building better mental health services, but not much more detail to report.
   4. The University Senate Diversity Committee – Mayra Reyes-Ruiz
      1. Discussed the goals of what achieving diversity would actually look like, particularly in terms of faculty of color.
5. New Business
   1. By-Law Amendment (Donyeil Hoy)
      1. Proposed Change (Donyeil Hoy) - See attached proposal
      2. Statement from Executive Committee (Jordan Rees)
   2. Senator-at-Large - Interest was expressed. Passed around sheet for support of a senator-at-large.
   3. Tony Patelunas made an announcement that it is essential that graduate representation is on the UConn Foundation Board. The hope is to get a permanent grad and undergrad seat each year. He is running for the position and requires 276 signatures.
   4. Election of New Treasurer (Matthew Parent)
      1. Candidates:
         1. Dominic Albino - Dominic was not present at the meeting. Opened the position to suggestions or interested parties. No one expressed interest.
6. Issues Forum
   1. International Student Visa Compliance Fee - Chriss states that ISSS has warned that students are careful in traveling, even domestic, as there have been reports of some issues. Chriss urges that all international students, regardless of status, go see ISSS to learn what precautions they need to take. Victoria Blodgett encouraged people to follow Chriss’s advice that all international students SHOULD GO SEE ISSS FOR ANY INFORMATION as they are specifically designated for this purpose. Matthew Parent stated that we should all be severely concerned about the present burden being presented to international students at the social and political level as well as the presentation of the financial burdens at the University level.
   2. Executive Officer Employment Status
   3. Victoria Blodgett - Graduate Career Presentations (March 30th and April 27th).
      1. STEM fields in particular – Melanie Sinch - Next Gen Ph.D. (spelling) – graduate school will buy books
   4. Cynthia Furman – product - my I.D.P.
7. Adjournment - Meeting adjourned at 9:01