1. **Call to Order: 7:04pm**
2. **Recognition of senators:** Quorum was met with 30 senators**.**
3. **Guest Speaker:** 
   1. John Elliott, *Provost, University of Connecticut*
4. COVID-19 crisis has far exceeded the University expectations and in just a matter of weeks, decisions were made to take all classes online. Over the years, The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) has developed many online classes to provide for the faculty which could be utilized. Undergraduate grades will be pass/fail. One big issue for the COVID-19 crisis is that the research of tenure track faculty will be hindered so the Board of Trustees will be voting to increase the time period for tenure track professors. Something to also consider is that while the University went virtual, this was not true for everyone. Many students are international or cannot leave so about 1000 students are still on campus living and eating here. UConn is doing everything they can to make these students feel at home and believe the UConn community is richer for having international students apart of it. Despite the fact that many other schools cancelled their career fairs, UConn did not and proceeded to have a successful virtual career fair.
5. Justin Fang asks what the future of online learning will be in the context of higher education? John responds that we don’t know yet but this experiment will bring faculty in touch with online learning and while it’s not perfect, it can work and can work better in some cases. We will likely not know for at least another year.
6. Justin Fang asks if the UConn Foundation endowments will decrease since the stock market has plummeted. John says that a lot of our Foundation endowment is invested in equity securities and the equity security market is down by 20% but we will not know for a while because the decisions are made on a quarter by quarter basis.
7. Nafis Fuad says that learning is not textbook material, that it is also about the learning and environment and distance learning hinders this. John responds by saying he couldn’t agree with him more but there needs to be an emphasis on face to face virtual meetings etc. John says that hopefully we will be back to face to face in the Fall
8. Pejman Ghelich asks how the decisions are made as to what buildings are closed because ESB was closed while IMS was still open. John responds that UConn acted quickly and closed before the state mandated it. There were different layers of government implementing different rules. UConn made the decision to close buildings based upon the volume of students in those buildings and once the state mandated that all non-essential businesses must close, UConn had to implement this.
9. Justin asked what kind of enforcement actions UConn will take if people do show up at buildings. John responds that some students and faculty do not have the tools to perform their work at home and UConn is doing their best to allow students and faculty access to what they need but UConn will enforce social distancing.
10. Ethan Gossett says that his wife is a nurse and her first patient died yesterday. We as graduate students are focused on the day to day as we try to continue keeping up the pace of our graduate duties during this crisis. John says that Spring of 2020 will be a year that everyone will understand was a difficult year. People in different fields will be affected differently and a single semester will not make or break a student. What will be impactful will be the letters of recommendation that state the student is perseverant and resilient.
11. Stephany Santos asks if faculty and staff hiring effected at this time? John says this for this upcoming Fall of 2020, they sought to hire 93 new faculty for the University and they will not be affected.
12. **Approval of Minutes:**
    1. GSS-2020-03-04 Senate Meeting Minutes
    2. GSS-2020-03-18 E-Board Meeting Minutes

*Robert Daniels made a motion to approve the minutes as shown; seconded by Emily Green. The minutes were approved unanimously by the senate.*

1. **Unfinished Business:**
2. **Executive Committee Reports:**
   1. President – Justin Fang
      1. University Senate Resolution- Pass/fail deadlines have been extended to May 1st for undergrads. Individual colleges and schools will decide if they would like to accept 9 credits worth of P/F if it is a course requirement or core course for their major. Professors seeking tenure need good SET reviews so this would impact tenure track professors significantly. The University has a rule that you need to apply for tenure within a specific time period from the hire and the University is now extending this by 1 year so professors have another year to get their portfolios ready.
      2. Stephany Santos asks if pass/fail will be applied for graduate students as well and Justin says this is still being discussed for graduate students, particularly courses that are hour dependent such as those involving clinical rotations, etc.
      3. Roman Mays asked about the courses that aren’t considered to qualify as a P/F? Will students need to re-take the course and stay for another semester or year? Justin says that very few students are in this situation but they would have to re-take the course(s), as of now.
      4. Daniel Pfieffer asked if PhD funding will be extended to compensate for time-to-degree changes? Justin says nothing from central administration has been determined as of yet but this topic is on the back burner because most discussion right now is stabilizing its financial obligations.
      5. Nafis Fuad asks if the expectations for tenure track professors would be elevated and Justin says as far as he knows, no- typically you need to fulfill a certain set of criteria and that would stay the same.
      6. New UConn Provost named- Welcome Carl W. Lejuez!
   2. Vice President – Erin Curry
      1. Carpooling App- Things are moving along.
      2. GSS E-Board Election nominations- Elections are tonight and if anyone would like to nominate themselves please let Erin know so she can add you to the list of nominations.
   3. Treasurer – Nafis Fuad
      1. Tier II Budget Proposals for 2020-2021- All Tier II appeals have been resolved.
      2. All Spring 2020 TIIRSO events are suspended- Nafis asks senators to submit any old receipts to Nafis so they can be processed. Robert Smith asks if the student business office would allow reimbursements for a virtual event? Nafis says no, they will not be fundable.
      3. Daniel Pfieffer asks if short term loans will still be accepted? Nafis says yes.
      4. Tier II Funding Requests for 2020-2021- Nafis states that GSS Tier II funding requests should be available online.
   4. Communications Director – Gabrielle Corso
      1. Promotional items status- Gifts were still ordered and will be given out to senators once campus opens again. Any senators that will be graduating and leaving campus should send Gabrielle an email to arrange a time to pick them up.
      2. GSS Service Award Committee- Committee selects graduate students that have been active in graduate student community. If anyone is interested please email Gabrielle.
   5. Activities Director – Deepa Shukla
      1. Stuff-A-Husky event for Grad Appreciation Week (Cancelled)
   6. Parliamentarian – Damaris Thuita
      1. Bylaws change- Vote for the multi-departmental TierII’s change will take place today.
3. **New Business:**
   1. GSS E-Board Election
      1. Presidential Nominee- Nafis Fuad with 24/26 votes.

*Erin asks to extend the meeting by 20-30 minutes and Tulika Paul motioned to approve, seconded by Pejman Gehlich.*

* + 1. Vice Presidential Nominees- William Biel (6/26), Roman Mays (13/26), Sergey Galitskiy (5/26) and Irio Schiano (2/26). Roman Mays elected with 13/26 votes.
    2. Treasurer Nominee- Robert Daniels elected with 19/19 votes.
    3. Activities Director Nominee - Deepa Shukla elected with 23/23 votes.
    4. Communication Director Nominees - Gabrielle Corso (15/24) and Tulika Paul (9/24). Gabrielle elected with 15 votes
    5. Parliamentarian Nominee- Irio Schiano nominee is elected with 18/18 votes.

*Erin asks to extend the meeting by 10 minutes and Tulika Paul made a motion to approve, seconded by Robert Daniels.*

* 1. Tier II Budget Proposals for 2020-2021

*Tulika Paul made a motion to approve the Tier II Budget Proposals for 2020-2021, seconded by Renee Rotolo. The budget was approved unanimously by the senate.*

* 1. Bylaws Vote

*Alexis Trench made a motion to approve the amended Bylaws, seconded by Saketh Gudipati. The Bylaws were approved unanimously by the senate.*

1. **Issues Forum:** 
   1. Ethan Gossett says we are on a sinking ship and urges all graduate students to push the University to focus on graduate students. Ethan states that we are facing hundreds of millions of people getting sick and dying and the fact that this isn’t on the forefront is disturbing to him-we need to focus on right now and on graduate student’s health. The University should have been prepared for something like this. Justin responds that he sent out a letter a couple weeks ago that addressed many of these issues. UConn has taken measures to help many students including paying for their plane tickets home no matter what the price was.
2. **Adjournment:** *Tulika Paul motioned to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Robert Daniels. The Senate voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 10:34pm.*

**GSS Meeting Attendance for 4/1/2020**

1. Tanu Mehta
2. Robert Daniels
3. Arshiah Mirza
4. Daniel Pfeiffer
5. William Biel
6. Emily Green
7. Irio Schiano
8. Rafael Concepcion
9. Renee Rotolo
10. Cassidy Burt
11. Pauline Levy Valensi
12. Kangzheng Gao
13. Andres Godoy
14. Taylor Tate
15. Julianna Herman
16. John Dabrowski
17. Stephany Santos
18. Roman Mays
19. Pejman Ghelich
20. Tulika Paul
21. Zaili Hou
22. H Perry Hatchfield
23. Hannah Taylor
24. Saketh Gudipati
25. Utsav Awasthi
26. Rob Smith