1. **Call to Order: Call to Order: 7:02pm**
2. **Guest Speaker:** Quorum was met with 26 senators**.**
   1. C. Dennis Pierce, *Executive* *Director of UConn Dining Services*
3. UConn Dining will continue providing meals for students up to May 10th (May term)
4. Significant financial losses are expected for this Spring semester due to the Covid-19 crisis.
5. There was a significant amount food leftover, specifically perishables but 707lbs of food was able to be given to food share programs in the community.
6. Students who had meal plans had the option to “donate” their swipes to the “UConn Swipes” program on campus, which is run by the Dean of Students office. If students chose not to donate to this program, they received a prorated refund, assuming that they had moved out of campus.
7. Many Dining workers are seasonal workers and laid off employees were able to receive unemployment benefits in a timely basis.
8. All working employees are being paid appreciation pay (time and a half) since Mar. 22 and will be provided for employees until the early part of July.
9. Once crisis is over, there will be a blend between dining in and takeout which is a problem because if we want to go sustainable, many of those products will not be available. For instance, when UConn went to paper straws, the demand from other companies increased and the supplier was unable to meet the demand.
10. Rob Smith asked why Dining Services did not want to pay student workers when the pandemic hit and dining halls were shut down on campus. Pierce replied that he made a statement onset when the dining halls were closed that was later taken out of context. Pierce’s statement was that at the present time dining services did not have plan yet because they were waiting to hear back from the University to figure out what percentage of rebates the students would receive for housing an dining. Pierce further stated that a large percentage of dining services budget is reliant upon student housing and dining fees which is why he didn’t know if he could pay his student workers. Once he did hear from the University, a plan was implemented that students (other than students on work study) would be paid for an additional two weeks (Mar 22. and Apr. 5- checks believed to be sent out on Apr. 10 and Apr. 24).
11. Gabrielle Corso asks what students would do for meals back in the day when dining services were closed on the weekends. Pierce says students would go out to dinner or cook food in their dorms. Many students would leave on the weekends to go home as well.
12. Rob Smith asks if employees were given health insurance and Pierce confirms that they do.
13. UConn Dining Services has started the UConn Spring Valley Farm and a culinary program, “You can cook” program each year that sells out in 20 minutes.
14. **Approval of Minutes:**
    1. GSS-2020-04-01 Senate Meeting Minutes
    2. GSS-2020-04-27 E-Board Meeting Minutes

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

1. **Unfinished Business:**
2. **Executive Committee Reports:**
   1. President – Justin Fang/Nafis Fuad
      1. University Bylaws Amendment Status- Will likely have to be concluded in Fall.
      2. List of Graduate Student Demands-
         1. First demand is guaranteed funding for all graduate students for 1 year. Traditionally, grad student funding has always been the prerogative and responsibility of the individual academic departments, and this is a right/privilege that the faculty have guarded jealously. Right now, the burden of funding for graduate students are being shifted from Departments to the Central University. Will Biel asks if there is any potential for oversight. As for department heads, the English Department is telling its grads, "go to the university," the university says "go to the department." Justin is most concerned about what will happen in two years because the state budget is already taking a major hit, and UConn receives a major percentage of its total budget from the State. Nafis Fuad mentions that the wording of the demands needs to be more specific. Sara Ailshire states that the average PhD in her department takes 7-9 years and challenges Justin’s view that we should be instead advocating for exceptions. Justin says that most departments will probably limit their number of incoming graduate students that require funding to reduce costs.
         2. Fifth demand- Extend healthcare coverage for all students. Justin suggests that UConn could at the very least, waive the co-pays fees for students that go to a UConn health facility. However, UConn could not legally pay for cost-sharing fees, which are an agreement between the patient and the insurance companies.
         3. Fifteenth demand- Open a legal clinic for Grad Students. Although there are already free legal clinics in Hartford, Justin wants to push for legal clinic in Storrs. Justin has discussed this issue extensively with the incoming Provost Carl Lejuez, who thinks it is a good idea as well and would support this
         4. Sixteenth demand- Any contracts already sent to graduate students could not be repealed.

*Roman asked for a motion to extend the meeting to 9:30pm, Emily Green motioned to approve the extension, seconded by Rob Smith.*

* + 1. P/F grades for Grad Students will be allowed for Spring 2020 and the deadline is by May 15, 2020. This means the grade can be viewed before the P/F option is chosen.
    2. UConn Reopening Status, there are currently discussions on “hybrid” opening models, which would allow certain (but not all) students back on campus.
       1. Model 1- Allowing freshman and seniors on campus which would manage the student load. The difficulty is handling dorms and dining. The benefits are that freshmen and seniors typically don’t take classes together. Any classes above a certain size (still to be determined) would still be held online anyways. Seniors will get their “senior” year, and freshmen will have a reason to come to campus and begin their UConn experience right off the bat. Also, letting students return back to campus on the basis of course requirements is another option.
       2. Model 2- There is talk of ramping up research and the hope is to allow it to happen soon. Therefore, this second model will allow students who have research components or clinical aspects to their studies to return to campus.
    3. Housing for Grad Students- Justin has been talking about the housing issues with Central Administration for years now, but thinks that there is now fresh momentum on the issue, due to the effects of the pandemic. Specifically, Justin has talked to incoming Provost Lejuez, who is supportive of this issue, and is willing to work on it.
  1. Vice President – Erin Curry/Roman Mays
     1. Carpooling App Status- Still is planning to be rolled out for Fall of 2020.
     2. Financial Aid Sources for grad students- Please review the financial aid resources memo for different options to help out graduate students. See the attached document.
     3. GSS Short-Term Loan- Bylaws for the loan have been revised due to the Covid-19 crisis. We are proposing to change the total amount available to loan from $1,500 to $2,000. Additionally, we would like to raise the ceiling to $3,000 during the crisis and depending on turn of events during the crisis, shift the due date to December 31st of 2020.
  2. Treasurer – Nafis Fuad/Robert Daniels
     1. GSS Tier-II RSO payment/reimbursement system going online-will be ready by Fall 2020.
     2. GSS loan extension is going online.
     3. TII-RSO Reimbursement Status- No pending payments that Nafis is aware of. If anyone was unable to cash their check, let Nafis know by sending an email to the official treasurer email, but also copy Nafis and Robert Daniels in the email as well.
     4. Grad Student Survey- Nafis would like any comments or suggestions about a survey for graduate students who are directly impacted by the Covid-19 crisis.

*Roman asked for a motion to extend the meeting to 10:00pm, Robert Daniels motioned to approve the extension, seconded by Cynthia Gerber.*

* 1. Communications Director – Gabrielle Corso
     1. Promotional items status
     2. GSS Service Award Committee
  2. Activities Director – Deepa Shukla
     1. No action items
  3. Parliamentarian – Damaris Thuita/Irio Schiano
     1. GSS Bylaws Revision Vote (In regards to the GSS Short-Term Loan)

1. **New Business:**
   1. GSS Service Award Vote

*Cynthia Gerber motioned to approve the service awards, seconded by Derrick Kamp. The Service Awards were unanimously approved by the senate.*

* 1. Nafis Fuad Travel Presentation- Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry. Toronto, ON CN. November 3-7, 2019.
  2. Gabrielle Corso Travel Presentation- International Society of Protistology Conference. Rome, Italy. July 29-August 3, 2019.
  3. Bylaws Vote

*Cynthia Gerber motioned to approve the amended Bylaws, seconded by Tulika Paul. The Bylaws were unanimously approved by the senate.*

1. **Committee Reports:**
   1. Nafis Fuad (University Budget Committee)- Discussed scenarios for Fall of 2020 with a normal, delayed starts and online only semester and estimates on how funding will be impacted. UConn Health will be losing more than UConn Storrs.
   2. Deepa Shukla (University Senate Growth and Development Committee)- Discussed about the different units of the University and challenges they face.
   3. Gabrielle Corso (Marth Mentorship Award Committee)- The Ed Marth Mentorship Award is awarded to a faculty that has been an exceptional mentor during their time at UConn. There were only 3 nominees and Preston Britner was selected. The committee chair asked me if I had any ideas to increase awareness of this award, specifically to graduate students.
   4. President’s Statement to the Senate- Justin Fang would like to address the Graduate Student Senate, as this Friday will be the last day of his presidency. Please see the attachment for the full text of the speech.
2. **Issues Forum:**
   1. Hand Sanitizer Project at UConn- If anyone knows of any institution that wants or needs hand sanitizer please reach out to Justin so he can add you to the list. Secondly, they are running low on certain materials like squirt bottles so if anyone knows of any suppliers please let Justin know.
3. **Adjournment:** *Cynthia Gerber motioned to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Daniel Pfieffer. The Senate voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:51pm.*

**Attendance for GSS Senate Meeting 4/29/20**

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| 1. Tanu Mehta |
| 1. Robert Daniels |
| 1. Cynthia Gerber |
| 1. Arshiah Mirza |
| 1. Daniel Pfeiffer |
| 1. Hannah Taylor |
| 1. William Biel |
| 1. Emily Green |
| 1. Irio Schiano |
| 1. Derrick Kamp |
| 1. Daniel Quintero Plata |
| 1. Kangzheng Gao |
| 1. Taylor Tate |
| 1. Julianna Herman |
| 1. John Dabrowski |
| 1. Stephany Santos |
| 1. Roman Mays |
| 1. Tanner Matson |
| 1. Alexis Trench |
| 1. Rob Smith |
| 1. Mehdi Behzadi |
| 1. Chung Hao Liu |
| 1. Douglas Stewart (Standing in for H Perry Hatchfield) |