1. **Call to Order: Meeting started at 6:07 pm**
2. **Recognition of senators: Quorum was met with 29 senators.**
3. **Guest Speaker(s):**
4. N/A
5. **Approval of consent agenda:**
	1. GSS Senate meeting minutes – 12/07/2022 meeting
	2. GSS E-board meeting minutes - 1/19/2023 meeting

*Senator Saurabh Goswami made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Senator Maham Liaqat seconded the motion. The consent agenda was approved unanimously.*

1. **New Business:**
	1. **UConn Foundation- Student Director Election-** Maggie Khuu talked about her position as the Student Director at UConn foundation and encouraged others to run for her position. UConn Foundation is a separate entity form UConn. The term for the Student Director position is for two years and the position might be good for students who want to work for non-profit organizations. Gianna asked if both undergraduate and graduate students can run for the position. Maggie said that the position applies to both undergraduate and graduate students. She mentioned that the last two directors were affiliated with GSS. The objective of this position is to serve as a student representative at the board meetings. Senator Zachary Muscavitch asked if the student director is a voting member or not. Maggie replied that the Student Director does not have voting power. Usman asked if students in the transition period can apply. Maggie replied it is possible but is not encouraged.
2. **Issues Forum:**
	1. **GEU representative**- Louvins Pierre- Sandip spoke on behalf of Louvins. There will be a townhall meeting by GEU on Feb 1st. There will be a Coffee hour on Feb 9th. Sandip reminded that GAs could sign up for payroll deduction until day 10 of the Spring semester.
	2. **Koushan Mohammadi-** SAGEfacedaproblem with the reimbursement for the SAGE Halloween event. Sandip said that it will be handled, and he will talk to Krista. GSS office assistant Gopi has a Big Y card now and he can go with the members of Tier 2 organizations to buy supplies for their events.
3. **Executive Board Reports:**
	1. President – Gabrielle Corso
		1. Graduate Student Fee Increase Update- Sandip and Gabrielle were notified about the fee increase a week and a half before. She mentioned that faculty members in SEC were supportive of the students. However, President Radenka Maric was not ready to negotiate. Only the visa fee increase for the international students was dropped.
		2. Graduate Student Town Hall- Dean of the Graduate school, Kent Holsinger, and the newly appointed Provost of UConn, Anne D’Alleva reached out to Gabrielle. They want to have a townhall meeting with the graduate students. The townhall meeting will be held with the senate meeting of February. The townhall meeting will start at 6:00 pm. Gabrielle will send a poll asking graduate students to share their opinion on what they think is the most important aspect for graduate students. Students can email their questions ahead of time. Senator Jackson Calhoun asked if the senate meeting will resume after the townhall meeting. Gabrielle said that the townhall meeting will last for 1 hour and then the senate meeting will resume.
		3. Meeting with the Graduate School- Dr. Chen, Faculty Affiliate for Inclusive Excellence at the Graduate School, invited the E board members for a lunch where he had a discussion with the E board members on graduate students’ need. The necessity of summer pay was raised among other issues. Mohsian said that the graduate school is planning to start a mentorship program as mentioned by Dr. Chen.
		4. Miscellaneous:
* Gianna mentioned that faculties in the GFC meeting did not know about the fee increase. Senator Ethan Gossett said that GSAC has a draft email about the fee increase and he can email the draft to the GSS E-board members.
* Senator Maham Liaqat asked if there was any update on graduate student housing. Senator Hannah Collins mentioned that they are also trying to have some housing units reserved for grad students like the undergraduate students.
* Senator Maham Liaqat raised the problems with transportation. Buses are often as late as 1 hour. She also said that the house rent is increasing every year. Even though UConn hosts housing fairs, the services offered by those housing management are subpar. Khaled suggested to ask the University to provide transportation to locations where there is no bus line, such as Walden apartments in Willington.
* Senator Jackson Calhoun mentioned that University of California has a hotel on campus and allows students to stay there for two months at a certain rate so that new students can get to know the nearby housing better. Mohsina Rahman said students who live on campus have to pay a higher parking fee. Khaled added that area 2 parking lots are often far from the place of work. There are some parking spots in front of some buildings which are reserved for faculties, however, those spots are unoccupied most of the time. He asked if those parking spots could be offered to graduate students. Senator Ethan Gossett said that the south garage parking is frequently shutting down.
	1. Vice President – Mohsina Rahman
		1. Public Hearing Prep- The Governor of Connecticut is going to announce the budget for state universities on Feb 8. Public hearing for all the state funded universities will be held between Feb 10-14. UConn will have a townhall meeting before that hearing. Students will go to the capitol and explain the budget they need. The budget will be passed on the first week of June. University is asking for students who can go to the hearing to give testimonies.
		2. Student Trustee Election Committee- Election for undergraduate student. Deadline for nominations is Feb 10.
	2. Treasurer – Sandip Roy
		1. Tier II Budgets- Due on Jan 31st at 11: 59 pm. Budgets submitted after the deadline will not be accepted
		2. New PR Form- Starting from March, Tier 2 organizations can file their own PR. Sandip will hold a training session on filing the new PR form.
		3. Signatures Needed for Fee Increase- 200 signatures from graduate students are needed to implement the proposed grad activity fee increase. Otherwise, budgets for Tier 2 organizations and GSS events will need to be cut down. Sandip will give a presentation in front of SASFAC committee explaining the necessity of the fee increase. Sandip also mentioned that 40% of the GSS budget goes to fund events held by different Tier 2 organizations.
		4. Special allocation- Doctoral Association for Business School (DABS) requested for a special allocation for 3 events in Spring. They requested $720 per event, $2160 in total. Gabrielle asked if they pay the grad activity fee as some business students do not pay the fee. Sandip replied that PhD students in the Business school pay the fee.

*Senator Gawtam Bhat made a motion to approve the special allocation request by DABS. Senator Saurabh Goswami seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.*

* 1. Activities Director – Usman Ali
		1. Welcome Back Happy Hour- Around 330 people attended the happy hour.
		2. Grad Formal-The date has been set, 3rd March from 7:00 pm-10:00 pm. Sandip asked Usman if there was any update on having happy hour on campus next time. Usman replied that there was no update yet.
	2. Communications Director – Israt Jahan
		1. Community Service Award Committee- Israt needs 5 members for the community service award committee. This award is given to a graduate student who has made a significant contribution to the graduate student community and comes with a cash prize. Israt will call for nominations and keep the applications open until the end of February. The committee will meet in March to select the recipient of the Community Service award. Maham Liaqat, Ranjana Burman and Adaze signed up for the committee. Two other students signed up before.
	3. Parliamentarian – Gianna Raimondi
		1. Tier II Orgs in Good Standing- If organizations have not heard anything from Gianna about their standing, they can consider themselves to be in good standing. Gianna remined that if attendance criteria are not met by the senator of an organization, budget of that organization for the next fiscal year will get cancelled.
		2. Report on Fee Paying Graduate Programs- Some programs do not pay grad activity fee. Gianna showed an excel that shows which programs do not pay the fee. The non-fee-paying graduate programs are mostly Nursing/Med/Education/Health Sciences. Majority of the business programs do not pay grad activity fee as well.
1. **Committee Reports**
2. **Senate Executive Committee-** GabrielleCorso- The committee was concerned about the lack of all-gender restrooms. Recently two all-gender restrooms were added in the NEAG building. Another topic that was discussed was the closing of the Up and Atom Café which was closed with very short notice. There is a petition going on to reopen Up and Atom Cafe. Senator Zachary Muscavitch said that faculties were also not happy about the closing of the cafe. Gabrielle said that the reason for the closure was due to the new Science Building Café opening and the Universirty not having the funds to keep both cafes operating. Gabrielle said that she will ask whether it is possible to have coffee or snacks served in the old space.
3. **SASFAC-** Sandip Roy- Senator Saurabh Goswami has been delegated by Sandip as the new SASFAC representative.
4. **Marth Mentorship Award-** Israt Jahan- Marth Mentorship award for the year 2022 has been conferred. This award is given to a UConn Graduate faculty member who has been an outstanding mentor to graduate students. There were three nominations last year: they were from Department of Chemistry, History Department and Department of Sociology. Dr. Nancy Naples from Department of Sociology was awarded after taking votes from the committee members.
5. **Graduate Student Welfare Committee**- Ashok Gurung- The committee has made a proposal for the Fall break. The proposal was shown to the senate. There were two suggestions:
	* + 1. Return the Monday and Tuesday of Thanksgiving week to provide the opportunity to have Indigenous People’s Day and the Tuesday after to create a two day all break.
			2. Have the university observe Indigenous People’s Day creating a three-day weekend.

According to the proposal 1, Thanksgiving break would get shortened. Senator Ethan Gossett said that a fall break before the Thanksgiving break is needed, otherwise students feel burnt out. Senator Hannah Collins raised the question that if there an option to start the semester on Thursday rather on Monday. Senator Jackson Calhoun said that with Wednesday, Thursday and Friday as Thanksgiving break, students might not attend classes on Monday and Tuesday either. Senator Ashok Gurung said he would bring up the issues that the senate raised in front of the committee in their next meeting which is one month later.

1. **Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.**

*Senator Ashok Gurung made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Senator Ethan Gossett seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.*

**Attendance:**

Ranjana Burman

Madeline Killegger

Michael Griffith

Laura Lapham

Theodor Mayer

Maggie Khuu

John toribio

Elizabeth Zavodny

Muhammed Masudur Rahman

Amit Pinsker

Geevanesam Devakanmalai

Adaeze Maduako

Mohammed Albayati

Amit Hasan

Jinzhou Liu

Zachary Muscavitch

Kooshan Mohammadi

Veera Venkata Praveen Raja Kosuri

Suman Kumari

Martina

Ethan Gossett

Saurabh Goswami

Jackson Calhoun

Jairo Orea

Maham liaqat

Hannah Collins

Adanma Akoma

Spencer Brooke Hayes

Gawtam Bhay

Ashok Gurung

Shangyan Pan

Gretchen Geer

Mikayla Moody

Lindsay Barnum