1. **Graduate Student Town Hall 6:00-7:00PM**
2. Dr. Kent Holsinger, Dean of the Graduate School & Dr. Anne D’Alleva, Provost & Executive VP of Academic Affairs
* Senator Jackson Calhoun said housing is inaccessible to graduate students and rent is too high now a days. He said that University of California systems have hotels in their campus for graduate students. The graduate hotel in the Storrs campus is not very busy and can be used for graduate students so that new students can get to know about the housing price and bus lanes.
* An international graduate student from Brazil shared her struggles of going to campus without a car. There is additional financial burden since F2 dependents of F1 students are not permitted to work in USA. The provost asked her to email her so that she can reach out to personnel who know about visa rules and regulations for international students.
* Senator Lindsay Barnum said that there was once a discussion on shuttle between UConn health and Storrs. It has not been implemented yet and it would help students form regional campuses if there was a shuttle to Storrs. Senator Hannah Collins said that there is no direct public transport from Avery point to Storrs. The provost asked if students in the regional campuses were informed by their advisors that they would need to split their classes between two campuses when they started their programs. Lindsay said her advisor thought there would be shuttle when she joined the program.
* Senator Madeline Kolleger said that apartments near campus are not safe due to lack of sidewalk. Senator Koushan Mohammadi suggested if university could identify off campus housing locations for grad students and extend the shuttle there. Khaled mentioned that operation hours of buses is often not compatible with grad students’ schedule. Housing and transportation issues are not discussed during departmental orientations.
* Gabrielle shared the Gard survey results. Top 3 concerns for the graduate students were as follows: 1. Stipend, 2. Student fee, 3. Summer pay. Family support, summer jobs, paid internships, flexible course offerings are some of the other issues.
* Senator Hannah Collins said that students from regional campus will now be charged the ShaW fee, however, there is no ShaW service in regional campuses. ShaW is not accessible to them because there is no public transport between regional campuses and Storrs. For regional campuses, there is only mental health counselor service which is mainly for undergraduate students. Kent said that the inclusion of ShaW fee might be used to expand the limited mental health service.
* Provost D’Alleva acknowledged that graduate student housing is difficult to find, and transport is a major issue. She said that she would follow up on the idea of extending the shuttle service to off-campus locations. Shuttle service between Farmington and Storrs was discussed at some point in time but there was a report of not having enough riders. She will check on that. She also said that it is important for incoming students to have structured info about housing and transport. Senator Ethan Gossett said that we can have focus groups and conduct surveys to track graduate students’ concerns. There should be a proper feedback system.
* Provost D’Alleva shared that food pantry is now available in 4 regional campuses. There will be a new food pantry at Charter Oaks Apt (Storrs). Dining services helped to set up the food pantry. It will open after Spring break. Search for finding another location for food pantry on Storrs campus is on. Law school is next to have a food pantry. Students can take food for family members from the food pantry.
* Dean Holsinger said that Jeremy Campbell, Associate Director of Finance, will be the guest speaker in the next senate meeting, and he can clarify fees related questions. Senator Jackson Calhoun said that there should be graphics and excels about how fees are spent to make the process more transparent. Dean Holsinger said that he will send a document to Gabrielle about the best practices for faculty and departments to be disseminated to graduate students.
1. **Call to Order: Meeting started at 7:06 pm.**
2. **Recognition of senators: Quorum was met with 30 senators.**
3. **Approval of consent agenda:**
	1. GSS Senate meeting minutes – 1/25/2023 meeting
	2. GSS E-board meeting minutes – 2/13/2023 meeting

*Senator Lindsay Barnum made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Senator Mikayla Moody seconded the motion. The consent agenda was approved unanimously.*

1. **Issues Forum:**
	1. N/A
2. **Executive Board Reports:**
	1. President – Gabrielle Corso
		1. GSS E-board Elections- Call for nominations! Gabrielle nominated Sandip Roy for President. Sandip nominated Khaled Axel Djebbari for Parliamentarian. Ranjana Burman nominated herself for Activities Director. Sandip nominated Israt Jahan for Communications Director and Mohsina Rahman for Vice President.
		2. CT State Budget Hearing- The UConn budget has been cut. The budget will not be finalized until July 2023. There was a student walk-out on Feb 15 with about 1000 students to protest UConn budget cut.
	2. Vice President – Mohsina Rahman
		1. N/A
	3. Treasurer – Sandip Roy –
		1. Finance Committee Update- Senator Ethan Gossett, who is in the Finance Committee for FY 2023-2024, explained that GSS has deficit because of a misunderstanding about how much money GSS had for the previous year. If the proposed grad activity fee increase does not go through, then Tier 2 organizations will have to operate on a limited budget for FY 2023-24. BoT representative for graduate students, Joshua Crow said that activity fee for Law School is $80, and it is around $200 for USG. Finance committee has decided to follow some ground rules to make sure the money is split in a fair way among all the organizations.
* Cut 50% budgets requested by all organizations. Events that are department centric will not be funded by GSS, e.g., brown bag events. Gabrielle mentioned that an exception should be made for satellite campus in this regard. Ethan suggested that organizations should reach out to their respective departments for such events. Sandip further said that GSS will not cut budgets for satellite campus since they are far away from Storrs. Budget for satellite campus will only be cut if the event is department centric.
* Cultural Tier II organizations can have one event per semester.
* If any organization is having an event that GSS will also host (e.g., Halloween event), then that event will not be funded by GSS. Organizations can appeal to the Finance committee if they disagree. Senator Ethan Gossett said that the departments should contribute to funding these events because these events are good for mental health of graduate students.
	+ 1. SASFAC Budget Hearing Update- A proposal to increase the grad activity fee has been submitted to SASFAC. Graduate students will receive emails with a link to vote if they agree with the increase of grad activity fee. At least 10% of all the fee-paying students need to vote in favor of the fee increase. If the fee increase is passed, budgets for Tier 2 organizations will get back to normal from Fall 2024.
		2. GSS Monthly Bills- Bills that GSS has spent over last few months (July/August, Sep/Oct/Nov, Dec - 2022 and January 2023) were presented to the senate.

*Senator Mikayla Moody made a motion to approve GSS monthly bills, Senator Lindsay Barnum seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.*

* + 1. Special allocation for Bongo- Bongo was formed in Fall 2022, and they are in good standing with GSS. E-board has approved their special allocation request. Senator Saurabh Goswami described the events they are requesting the money for. One is International Mother Language Day and the other one is Bengali new year event. There will be cultural dinner and music. Around 50 people are expected. Both events will be open to all graduate students. The requested budget is $2350.

*Senator Lindsay Barnum made a motion to approve the special allocation requested by Bongo. Senator Jackson Calhoun seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.*

* + 1. GSS New Office Computer- GSS office computer is not working. GSS office assistant Gopi has requested a new computer. The price of the computer will be around $500 including software subscription fee.

*Senator Essam Boraey made a motion to approve $500 for GSS office computer. Senator Jackson Calhoun seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.*

* + 1. Stipend for GSS President- Gabrielle has $1900 remaining in her stipend as GSS President. She is graduating and would like to have the stipend paid over the semester.

*Senator Saurabh Goswami made a motion to approve Gabrielle’s remaining stipend to be paid. Senator Jackson Calhoun seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.*

* 1. Activities Director – Usman Ali
		1. Grad Formal- Has been called off. Fire marshal said only 300 people hold an event in SU. It is possible to have the grad formal in April in a location that can accommodate more people. The new venue will be expensive. Graduate students will be charged $5. Guests will be charged $25.
	2. Communications Director – Israt Jahan
		1. Community Service Award- Nominations will be accepted until March 10. Self-nominations are not allowed.
	3. Parliamentarian – Gianna Raimondi
		1. N/A
1. **Committee Reports**:
2. **Board of Trustees-** Joshua Crow- Graduate student representative, Joshua, introduced himself. He is the new graduate student rep since the previous representative, Justin Fang, finished his term 6 months ago. He said that conversation is still going on about UConn budget. He mentioned that subsidized childcare for all grad students including regional campus is in planning phase. He also encouraged any graduate student to reach out to him with any questions or concerns at Joshua.crow@uconn.edu.
3. **Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm.**

*Senator Jackson Calhoun made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Senator Lindsay Barnum seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned unanimously.*

**Attendees:**

Jackson Calhoun

Veera Venkata Praveen Raja Kosuri

Saurabh Goswami

Laura N Lapham

Ethan Gossett

Martina Villa

Olivia Done (Alt for Bryan Greene)

Essam Boraey

Ranjana Burman (Alt for Gaurav Gupta)

Cindy Barretto (Alt for Zachary Muscavitch)

Gretchen Geer

Theodor Mayer

 Michael Griffith

Lindsay Barnum

Adaeze Maduako

Mikayla Moody

Katayoun Matloubi

Athanasois Eliadias (Alt for Shangyan Pan)

Emma Shipley

Hannah Collins

John M. Toribio

Mohammed Albayati

Madeline Kollegger

Ashok Gurung

Jairo Orea

Jinzhou Liu

Md Amit Hasan

Koushan Mohammadi

Muhammed Masudur Rahman

Lanae Drachstin (Alt for Eunice Blemahdoo)