

# General Assembly Meeting

April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2026

## Attendance:

1. Call to Order
2. Attendance
3. No Presentation
4. Approval of [March 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting Minutes](#)

[https://iowa.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/GraduateStudentSenate/IQCVoZdxcp5xRJKkQclmXpb\\_ARn6mKNvj2hAxaTD9yZ7D2w?e=gcHgEE](https://iowa.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/GraduateStudentSenate/IQCVoZdxcp5xRJKkQclmXpb_ARn6mKNvj2hAxaTD9yZ7D2w?e=gcHgEE)

Approved

## 5. Executive Council Reports

- a. President: Travis Fischer
  - i. Please note that this meeting will start at 6PM until all business is concluded
  - ii. Elections will take place following all other business
  - iii. [UI Employee Assistance Program](#)- (UI EAP) is a confidential, short-term counseling and referral service provided at no cost to UI faculty, staff, postdocs, medical residents, their spouses/partners, and insurance-eligible dependents living in Iowa.
    1. Support and Crisis line, Emergency Hardship Fund, Grief and Mourning Support Group, Peer Support, Substance Use, Sleep, Mental Health and Well-Being Course
    - 2.
- b. Vice President: John Stevenson
  - i. Jakobsen Event Update
    1. Successfully completed the conference.
      - a. Recognition of successful conference/event execution.
      - b. Special appreciation expressed for organizers, including Emily for data preparation.
      - c. Positive feedback received from multiple attendees, including Tom Jacobson, highlighting the event's success.
- c. Treasurer: David Ramotowski
  - i. Supporting the purchase materials for Jacobson
    - Currently managing:
      - Purchases and rentals for upcoming events (Jacobson, Friday Night Live).
    - Preparing transition documents for future treasurer.
    - Noted (informally) market downturn; confirmed GSS assets remain in cash.
- d. Executive Associate: Sabrina Ahmed
  - i. Election conduct
- e. Membership Officer: Joey Small

- i. Reminder to inform us whether you are returning or not (and your replacement)
  - Members asked to:
    - Confirm whether they are returning next year.
    - Identify replacements if not returning.
  - If no replacement is identified:
    - Responsibility will shift to next year's membership coordinator to contact departments.
- f. Parliamentarian: Caleb DeWitt
- g. Webmaster: Obatola Layiwola
- h. Social Media Director: Kshitija Kale
  - i. Send in pictures for the Friday Night Vibes slideshow
    1. grad student achievement
    2. Graduate Student Appreciation Week (next week):
      - a. Social media highlight campaign underway.
      - b. Members encouraged to:
        - i. Submit self or peer nominations.
        - ii. Provide photo + short bio.
    3. Slideshow will be shown during Friday Night Live:
      - a. Focus on academic achievements (awards, publications, fellowships, etc.).
- i. Travel Funds Director: Maleeha Naseem

## 6. Graduate College Updates

- a. Discuss student mental health with the Faculties
- b. Travis and Joey sent a list of the departments that do not have any representatives to the departments to send representatives.
  - i. Upcoming DGS meeting (April 15):
  - ii. Focus on student support and communication.
  - iii. Continued outreach to underrepresented departments.
  - iv. Graduate celebration planning underway.
  - v. Encouragement to attend end-of-semester and graduation-related events.

## 7. COGS Updates

- a. nothing

## 8. GPSG Updates – John Stevenson, Travis

- a. New elected committee
- b. Mental health committee
  - i. New initiative: Graduate Student Dialogue Series
  - ii. Focus: student well-being and open discussion space.
  - iii. Tentative date: April 30, 6–8 PM
  - iv. Likely includes food.
  - v. Members encouraged to attend.
- c. Mass email for housing survey
- d. new fitness program only for graduate and professional students

- Elections completed; new executive council formed.
- Upcoming meeting (April, exact date TBD):
- Selection of cabinet directors (health, education, inclusion, etc.).
- Application period for director roles recently closed.

#### **9. Grad Council Updates – David**

- a. nothing

#### **10. Positions that need to be filled:**

- a. None!

#### **11. GSS Reference Presentation for FAQs pinned in General Teams page**

#### **12. GSS Committee Chair Updates**

- a. Jakobsen- John Stevenson
  - i. Important dates and times
- b. Teaching- Alexandra Herron
  - i. Teaching Assistant Handbook
    1. Survey still open.
    2. Current responses: ~23
    3. Goal: 50 responses before compiling.
- c. International Student- Md Abu Ebrahim Siddique, Milad Arzani
  - i. Planning event focused on immigration awareness.
  - ii. Speaker secured (immigration specialist).
  - iii. Working on venue (expected ~50 attendees).
- d. Travel Funds- Tyler Woodward
  - i. cycle 3 application open
    - Cycle 3:
      - 56 applications received.
      - Only 1 application flagged (plagiarism concern).
    - Cycle 4:
      - 71 applications received.
      - Applicants notified via email with:
      - Review assignments
      - Evaluation forms
- e. Service and Social- Airiana Mohr, Malayna Stober
  - i. Friday Night Vibes updates
    1. next Friday at downtown reunion
      - a. 6–9 PM (Reunion, Downtown venue).
      - b. Raffle prizes planned.
      - c. Attendance required to claim prizes.

#### **13. Elections – Sabrina will take over**

- a. Each Position will be elected in order as listed in the constitution
- b. We will call for additional nominations before each position is elected
  - i. Nominee will have the option to accept or decline
- c. Each nominee will be allowed to speak in their favor for being elected (<1 minute)

- d. Once each nominee has given their speech, they will be asked to leave the room and the GSS meeting will go into a closed session
  - i. All matters discussed in closed sessions are to remain in closed sessions and cannot be discussed with those not involved (i.e., the nominees)
- e. Once discussion has been ended by a majority vote (no more than 5 minutes with an optional extension of 5 additional minutes), we will enter a period of voting – only current full senators are eligible to vote in elections
- f. The person receiving a majority vote will be elected to that position
- g. We will then elect the next position until we have elected all positions
  - i. If a position is unfilled in the April meeting, then it will be elected during the May meeting

### Executive Committee

#### President:

- 1. John Stevenson (39)
- 2. Abstain (3)

#### Vice President:

- 1. Shri Vishalini Rajaram (19)
- 2. Emily Hagan (4)
- 3. Rachel Valentine (14)
- 4. Abstain (1)

#### Treasurer:

- 1. Emily Hagan (39)
- 2. Abstain (2)

#### Executive Associate:

- 1. Augustine (Sze Ling) Hung (27)
- 2. Abstain (9)

#### Membership Officer:

- 1. Paul Nystatin (12)
- 2. Rachel Valentine (26)

#### Parliamentarian

- 1. Aidan Schlichting (37)
- 2. Abstain (3)

#### Travel Funds Director

- 1. Sabrina Ahmed (31)
- 2. Abstain (5)

#### Social Media Director:

- 1. Paul Nystatin (35)
- 2. Abstain (2)

#### Webmaster:

- 1. Justin Riggs (4)
- 2. Manisha Keim (33)
- 3. Abstain (2)

## Other elected positions

### GSEC Delegates (3)

1. Brendan Powers (33)
2. Rachel Valentine (33)
3. Priyanka Singh (32)
4. Abstain (1)
4. John Stevenson (ex officio)

### GPSG Delegates (6)

1. Fine Arts & Humanities
  - o Parker Watson (28)
  - o Abstain (1)
2. Physical, Mathematical, and Engineering Sciences
  - Justin Riggs (28)
  - Abstain (1)
3. Social Sciences and Education
  - o Michael N Johnson III (28)
  - o Abstain (1)
4. Biology and Medical Sciences
  - o Aidan Schlichting (21)
  - o Paul Nystatin (5)
  - o Abstain (3)
5. At-Large #2
  - o Nick Bushkofsky (27)
  - o Abstain (2)
6. At-large #1: John Stevenson

### Graduate Council (4)

1. Fine Arts & Humanities
  - a. Parker Watson (27)
  - b. Abstain (2)
2. Physical, Mathematical, and Engineering Sciences
  - a. John Stevenson
3. Social Sciences and Education:
  - a. Sabrina Ahmed (27)
  - b. Abstain (2)
4. Biology and Medical Sciences:
  - a. Paul Nystatin (27)
  - b. Abstain (2)

## 14. Open Discussion

- a. Information videos for students
  - i. **Payroll Presentation**: Learn about pay schedules, tax forms, direct deposit, and Employee Self-Service access.

- ii. **Billing Presentation**: Get a breakdown of the University Billing process, including monthly statements, payment options, COGS funding, financial aid disbursement, and key myUI resources for graduate students.
- iii. **Benefits Presentation**: Understand graduate student health and dental insurance at the University of Iowa, including plan options, costs, assistantship benefits, enrollment deadlines, and how to manage coverage through myUI
- b. [Basic Needs for Winter Preparedness](#)
- c. [Tax Questions and Help from Johnson County](#)
- d. From the floor?
  - GSS members received Council on Teaching Outstanding TA Awards:
    - Nick Bushkowski
    - Bradley Dada
    - Sarah Jordan
    - Alex Karan

## 15. Adjournment

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