



# GSA Student Council Meeting

April 5, 2021 - *Minutes*

*7pm; zoom*

Meeting Start time: **7:02pm EST**

## I. Voting for GSA Positions

- A. Professional Development (Nicole Sandelier)
- B. Senator (Ashley Bernstein)
  - 1. Voted for both positions - appointments confirmed by council

## II. Review of Reimbursements

- A. Reimbursement Types
  - 1. Post-Event Reports (PER):
    - a) Submitted no later than 2 weeks after an event is held after an event is held
  - 2. Honoraria:
    - a) GSO's can be reimbursed for a guest speaker (See reimbursement limits & speaker qualifications)
    - b) GSO's can request to receive a check prior to the date of an event to ensure that a guest speaker receives payment on the day (See deadlines)
  - 3. Durable Goods:
    - a) Long lasting decorations
      - (1) Think of items that do not get "used-up" Ex: Games, Kuerigs, Tea Trays, Posters etc.
  - 4. NOTE:
    - a) GSO's that overspend their budget will not be reimbursed for the overspent amount
    - b) There are two special cases where funding can be requested and provided prior to the date of an event:

- (1) Honoraria (e.g. guest speakers)
    - (2) Large expenses (> \$500 with an attached invoice)
  - c) Procedures & Policies regarding all reimbursements will be detailed in a separate presentation and/or “how to” video
- B. Pre-Approval Packet for In-Person Events
  - 1. Record of departmental approval
  - 2. EACS approval (for events with 25+)
    - a) This can take 2-5 days: plan accordingly
  - 3. GetInvolved Post
  - 4. A description of the COVID-19 precautions
  - 5. An estimated budget
  - 6. This needs to be submitted in PDF form through the portal. You will then receive a confirmation of approval within 24-48 hours of your submission.
- C. Post-Event Reports
  - 1. Are required for all GSO's that host events, even if no reimbursement is required.
    - a) First step is to send in the pre-approval packet then the next step is this (after the event) Two different portals - if questions then ask!
  - 2. The policy is that PER's must be submitted within 90 Days of the event
    - a) Highly recommend submitting two weeks following your event for timely reimbursements & to keep track of GSO spending
      - (1) Make sure to keep track of everything (excel...) that way there is no stress at the end of the semester
  - 3. What Do I submit?
    - a) Complete PER Form (shared screen)
      - (1) GSA website (new!) - records - PDF forms - post event report
        - (a) Looking for the date of filing, name of event... related info. If no speaker and no honorarium then check programs and events - email to be notified when checks are ready - use the lines ~receipt, fill out as clear as possible to make it easy to write a check Wire transfer (income section) if you are paying a speaker would go in that section
        - (b) If submitting for reimbursement then name and mailing address must be right uner. If mult people are reimbursed then a different name/mailling address for each line and total indicated/person.
        - (c) Submitted by the portal - electronic submission portal - post event reports
        - (d) NEED A SCANNED COPY of all original receipts as well as an email to all invited to show advertisements (in addition to get

involved)

- (e) Right now checks are being mailed to avoid person-person contact.
- (f) If you do not see GSO on there then let me know and I am happy to fix it!
- (g) EVP: On the PER form, scroll down to part B (income) - this section is for if your department is contributing money to the event then you will indicate there. So it is clear to Jess what we need to reimburse you for. (so the \$\$ adds up).
- (h) Question - is the pre-approval packet a part of the link?
- (i) Jess: Yes! Please submit in the PDF form so it's easier to track down.
- (j) Question - Do we need to submit a pic/copy of what you posted on getINVOLVED?
- (k) EVP: Yes so when we look at your documents we don't need to go searching for things. A screenshot of the getINVOLVED page (and any emails or anything of advertisements) would greatly help us!

- b) Pre-Approval Packet
- c) Original Receipts
- d) A sign in sheet reflecting the actual attendance of event
- e) Email advertising the event

4. Under "Name of Payee"

- a) Please indicate who the check will be made out to & write the address underneath
- b) If multiple checks are required
  - (1) Please indicate each name, address & the amount for each check in this section

5. Reimbursements will be processed within two weeks of your submission and an email will be sent once your check has been mailed.

- a) Whatever email address you provide will be the one informed that the check has been submitted.

D. Honorarium

1. GSO may request that a check be made available to be presented to the speaker at their event. For the check to be prepared in time, the GSO must submit an "Honorarium Request Form" available from the GSA website.

- a) must be submitted at least two weeks in advance of the event
- b) four weeks in advance if the recipient is a non-US citizen
  - (1) The speakers address & Social security number will be required.

2. No GSO shall be allocated funding to pay honoraria to personnel or students of Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey.
3. Speakers and Invited Participants: Funding cannot exceed the following
  - a) \$1000 honoraria per person
  - b) \$1000 per person in travel expenses to and from the event o \$250 per person per night of lodging
  - c) \$46 per person per day of meal expenses
  - d) A PER must be submitted following your event w/Honorarium attached (even if no further reimbursement is required)
4. Speakers at events! **Cannot** be used for any RU students or faculty - needs to be an outside person. They need to be submitted >2wks in advance. Most GSOs like to give the speakers the check the day of - we need time to get the check ready. The check will not be mailed please make arrangements to pick it up.
5. If traveling also stipulations (esp with COVID) - speaker's address and SS# will be required (give them a heads up)
  - a) International speakers - they are allowed but generally remote right now; GSA cannot wire \$\$ right now. To do this, you will need the department to pay and then the GSA will reimburse you to reimburse the department - not ideal and very long. Also check may expire if we mail it internationally.
6. After this is submitted and the check has been given, still need to submit a post-event report (even though no \$\$ being allocated)
7. PDF forms - honorarium requests - goes through everything you will need.
8. When you hand them their check, they must sign this document to be returned back to us. SS# and address is for W9 for taxes and for our filing purposes as well.
9. EVP: This form HAS to be filled out <2wks prior to the invitation. Cannot be submitted the day before or the day of the event because checks have to be written. International speakers <4wks in advance.

E. Durable goods form

1. May apply once every 3 years
2. Applications on a rolling basis at EC discretion
3. Absolutely NO durable goods may be purchased with expectation of GSA reimbursement without EXPLICIT APPROVAL signed by the GSA and SGS prior to purchase.
4. "Long lasting decorations" - things that cannot be used (utensils things like that are not acceptable). Need long lasting storage. Need to know what you are going to buy and how to store it.
5. EVP: Once we approve it, it'll go to Dean Bender and once approved then you will get approval. ~4wks
6. EVP: A lot of you had events prior to allocations - prior to when your allocations are known you need to keep track of everything and reach out to us prior so everything is known.

7. Jess - there will be a portal for this form on the website. The top part is self explanatory, photos required, itemised list, signatures for approval all for pre-approval

F. Funding Limits and Prohibitions

1. No GSO shall be allotted funding:
  - a) to pay honorarium to personal or students of RU
  - b) to pay for alcoholic beverages
  - c) to pay for durable goods (i.e. office supplies, sports equipment, kitchen equipments, etc)
    - (1) However, GSO's may receive funding for semi-durable goods that can be reused for future events such as decorations, posters, and name tags
  - d) to pay for or contribute towards payment for prizes (i.e. monetary awards for papers or any exhibited work, gift cards, etc.) or any fundraising events
  - e) for events involving religious proselytizing
  - f) for events that violate the laws of NB, the county of Middlesex, NJ, or the US or any jurisdiction which is relevant to the event in question.
2. May apply once every 3 years
3. EVP: You may only apply once/3years because there are limited funds on a rolling basis and not enough for everyone to withdraw every year. You may not purchase without prior approval before reimbursement.

G. Office Hours

1. Tuesday evenings between 5:30-6:30pm to answer questions.
2. GSA Reimbursement Office Hours:
  - a) <https://rutgers.zoom.us/j/92384579715?pwd=eVZYNNpobVJJWjRZQWE0dWhpZVdrQT09>
  - b) Meeting ID: 923 8457 9715
  - c) Password: 639608
3. Questions about filling out paperwork or any questions you may have about forms, filling them out, what the order may be for the submission...
4. EVP: Slides are available after the meeting so people can come back in and poke around.

### III. Review of Funding Allocations

- A. Funding Allocations for the 2021-2022 AY have been posted on the GSA Website: AY 2021-2022 GSO Funding Allocations (link in slides)
  1. Late Group Funding is on a rolling basis until funding is exhausted and can be applied for here.
- B. As per the constitution, each GSO who submitted by the September 15th deadline's amount is based on the maximum amount they spent from 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 multiplied by 1.5. This number for each GSO is then scaled uniformly based on the funding available for all GSOs

combined.

- C. GSOs with Advanced Status (meeting certain criteria for the academic year) have additional funding as indicated by the AY 2021-2022 GSO Funding Allocations.
- D. Funding allocations have been posted (Oct1) - for GSOs who applied on time (SEpt 15) late approval is available for those who did not put in for funding (on a rolling basis)
  - 1. GSA - records - budgets - can find the 2021 final budget allocations for each GSO
- E. Minimal annual entitlement (\$1000) - those who applied on time get this
- F. Standard entitlement - based on requested amount if did not exceed what you were able to request - scaled across all GSOs based on what we were allowed to spend on GSOs (to make uniform)
- G. Advanced Status (AAE) - GSOs who met certain criteria for previous academic year
- H. If questions about this - email me
- I. ALL IS OUTLINED IN THE CONSTITUTION so feel free to read that first (same verbiage as what I used)

## IV. Report on State of GSA

### A. President (P) [president@gsa.rutgers.edu](mailto:president@gsa.rutgers.edu)

#### 1. Planned Meetings

- (1) Dr. Jonathan Holloway, President
- (2) Dr. Salvador Mena, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs
- b) To discuss the issues affecting graduate student community:
  - (1) Delayed paychecks for grad students at Department of Physics and Astronomy.
  - (2) Discuss the transparency in student fees distribution.
  - (3) Discuss the state of the GSA.
  - (4) New ideas to bring transparency between the graduate student community and the Higher Administration through accountability/town hall meetings.
- c) P: I have a lot of meetings planned with the higher up RU administration - main goal is to build a culture of transparency especially for Student Fees; We've been clear and as graduate students we need to know how our fees are being distributed. As far as I know there has been a delay in paychecks for TA/GAs for astronomy - unsure if the issue is resolved, if not that could be something I could bring up.
  - (1) GSO - it is resolved!
- d) P: I have a new idea this year that I want to implement - I want to bring some accountability from the higher administration - maybe Town Hall meetings where the administration can come and discuss progress/goals that they met each AY and what to do next AY. It's unfortunate that we don't have that accountability right now. Hopeful to start that next year.

2. Welcome Reception & Resource Fair
  - a) **Rescheduled** for October 15, 2021
  - b) **Location:**The Graduate Student Lounge (GSL) and Morrell Street to the Right of Panera and Next to the College Avenue Student Center
  - c) Still deciding on the agenda and speaker list.
    - (1) The event is for ALL GRADUATE STUDENTS.
  - d) Friday (2 weeks from now) Event is 4-7pm outside the GSL on CA. please distribute this flyer to all of your department - especially encourage the 1st and 2nd year students so they understand how the university works and what resources are available to them
3. Questions? Email or visit office hour - weekly virtual meetings / zoom info via getINVOLVED

## B. Executive VP (EVP) [evp@gsa.rutgers.edu](mailto:evp@gsa.rutgers.edu)

1. Electronic Lab Notebooks (ELNs)
  - a) SGS Deans Alder, Millonig, Gelinas
  - b) Vice Chancellor Scotto
  - c) New VP for Research Mike Zwick
  - d) Options:
    - (1) Lab Archives?
    - (2) SciNote?
    - (3) Arxspan?
  - e) Draft Senate proposal
  - f) For those of you in STEM/Science/Research. These are modern standard for all pharmaceutical and other BIG10 and other resource universities. I've been talking to SGS deans about this issue - we've gotten it up to Vice chancellor of research (very interested) - plan to bring it to new VP of research. Not entirely sure which ones we want to use yet but it may depend on your field. Does anyone know if your lab on campus is using an eLABnotebook and paying for a subscription? If so let me know because it should be the university responsibility.
2. Update on in-person events
  - a) Rutgers Event & Activity Certification System (EACS)
    - (1) Top priority is health and safety
    - (2) CDC, NJDH, and Rutgers University guidelines
    - (3) All events must be submitted through EACS
      - (a) An event is 25 persons or more
      - (b) Virtual events exempt
    - (4) After September 1st, **only reporting required by EACS**
    - (5) Department leadership should review programming and content

regardless of size

(6) Reporting is not an approval of event or content, programming & merit

(7) Must follow complete EACS guidelines on EACS website

(a) <https://ipo.rutgers.edu/events>

b) Need to abide by the CDC. Need to submit all events to EACS for approval before the event if expect >25 people - to be used for contract tracing. Make sure you implement protocols so everything is as safe as possible.

3. GSA In-Person Events

a) GSO's must:

(1) Obtain explicit, written departmental review for any in-person event

(2) Submit documentation via the website for GSA pre-approval

(3) Submit events to EACS where necessary (25+ attendees)

(a) Provide documentation of submission and outcome

**(4) Must complete these steps & receive GSA clearance before holding event**

(5) Documents must be included in final reimbursement submission

(6) Masking still required at all times indoors

b) Pre-approval packet that you need to submit - this is just outlining it again (as above). We are highly encouraging online events as possible. If indoors then masks are required at all times.

4. Update on getINVOLVED

a) All GSOs must advertise events on getINVOLVED for reimbursement

(1) No exceptions

(2) Provide documentation in reimbursement submission

b) Future GSA meetings:

(1) Remote: Zoom link shared via getINVOLVED

(2) To do:

(a) Visit:

<https://rutgers.campuslabs.com/engage/actioncenter/organization/gsa>

(b) Ask to join GSA organization

(c) An officer will approve your request

c) EVP: You are required to reach the entire graduate student community so must post on getINVOLVED. Please find the GSA page and ask to join and we will approve it so you can see all events.

5. University Senate

a) GSA appoints all SGS senators

(1) One vacant seats

b) Monthly meetings (Friday afternoons) with additional sub-committee duties



- c) Recommend changes across all aspects of RU to administration
  - (1) Email: [evp@gsa.rutgers.edu](mailto:evp@gsa.rutgers.edu) to learn more
  - (2) Senate Webpage: <https://senate.rutgers.edu>
- d) GSA appoints all Senators - 1 day a month you would commit to the senators. If you are interested in filling the vacancy then please email me so I can get you on the list. We have been inactive in the senate in the past but now we want more involvement to ensure that our voices are heard!

## C. Treasurer (T) [treasurer@gsa.rutgers.edu](mailto:treasurer@gsa.rutgers.edu)

1. Funding Recognition and Allocations Form
  - a) **DUE SEPTEMBER 15TH**
  - b) All GSOs must submit 2021-2022 AY GSO Recognition and Funding Application form found on the new website under Graduate Organizations.
  - c) Maximum requestable amount for GSOs found at the above page and is calculated as per GSA Constitution.
  - d) Academic Year allocations to be determined and announced by October 1st, 2021.
  - e) If you are planning to hold an event before allocations are announced, you must reach out to the Treasurer directly ([treasurer@gsa.rutgers.edu](mailto:treasurer@gsa.rutgers.edu)) for event permission, and your event must abide by the requirements in the GSA Funding Guidelines Section 4.1.2.
2. General Funding and Reimbursement Questions
  - a) All GSO representatives are expected to familiarize themselves with the **GSA Funding Guidelines** document found on the new website under **Records > Governing Documents**. This outlines many of the requirements and stipulations for funding reimbursements.
  - b) The Business Manager and Treasurer will hold a workshop session as an overview of reimbursement procedures in the coming weeks.
3. First slide was presented above. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are following the GSA funding guidelines. There are a lot of requirements in addition to the ones we are discussing in this meeting. Please check the constitution. We are always open to making sure that things are clarified BEFORE you hold an event. Questions can be directed to me or the business manager (Jess) please cc' both of us for the events.

## D. Secretary (S) [secretary@gsa.rutgers.edu](mailto:secretary@gsa.rutgers.edu)

1. N/A

## E. GSA Subcommittees

1. Health and Nutrition (HN) [healthandnutrition@](mailto:healthandnutrition@)

gmail.com

- a) October Event
  - (1) Bubble tea
- b) Planning more events
- c) Social Media posts
- d) Actively recruiting members
- e) HN: Next week (Oct 12) 9-10:30am - Bubble Tea event to kick start the semester. Check out the link on the getINVOLVED page so you are able to find it later.
- f) Future plans - an overnight oats event and a make your own oats. Also want to do an apple cider outside events later in the semester
- g) Social media posts - IG/FB/Twitter. Several posters please check it out and follow us! We also share graduate student foods! So please feel free to share your own foods to us so we can share with the graduate student community.
- h) Event plans or any ideas please email us so we can keep that in mind for future events.

## 2. Mental Health (MH)

- a) Survey opened in May 2021
  - (1) 216 responses
  - (2) **Deadline: October 31st, 2021**
  - (3) Link: [https://rutgers.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_4GH9M9TB3Gu4hRI](https://rutgers.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_4GH9M9TB3Gu4hRI)
- b) Goals for 2021-22
  - (1) Goals for 2021:
    - (a) Analyze the Graduate Student Mental Health Survey
    - (b) Create new mental health resources to support graduate students
    - (c) Reduce stigma around mental health/seeking help by creating a safe space and community
    - (d) Reach out to other GSOs and have a representative for mental health advocacy
    - (e) More virtual events
  - (2) First Meeting 9/29/2021 @ 7pm email us if interested
- c) Updates for Fall Meeting
  - (1) Emotional Wellness & Mental Health in Graduate School
    - (a) Dr. Francesca Maresca
- d) MH: Goals is to analyze the results from the mental health survey - the link has been in every email since May since it opened. Please spread the link amongst your GSOs - we want to hear what your feedback is so we can potentially bring new resources to RU

- e) We are also trying to reduce stigma so we will host events to ensure that there a community created and there are a lot of us feeling stressed and the same
- f) If anyone has any folks in your GSO - they can act as a mental health liaison and come to the MH meetings to pass on back to each GSO - also helps to let us know what is going on with you guys!
- g) MH survey link in the slides - there are ~200 responses now but there are a lot more people who can respond! Deadline is Oct 31.
- h) Upcoming events -
  - (1) Yoga @ the yard
  - (2) a talk on emotional wellness and mental health in graduate school (director of HOPE) - the state of graduate student mental health
- i) Interested in becoming a MH liaison or a part of the MH group feel free to contact us! Then we can add you to our group and you can come to our meetings!

## F. VP of Events and Programming Report

[vpep@gsa.rutgers.edu](mailto:vpep@gsa.rutgers.edu)

- 1. N/A

## V. GSA Open Positions

- A. Open Positions:
  - 1. Vice President of External Affairs
  - 2. Vice President of Events and Programming
  - 3. Academic Development Director
  - 4. SGS Senator (1)
- B. Interested in serving for any of the positions? Want more information?
  - 1. Please reach out to us at [president@gsa.rutgers.edu](mailto:president@gsa.rutgers.edu)
- C. If anyone is interested (or have friends who are interested) in serving any of these positions please let us know - we will be happy to share any information.

## VI. Senate Update

- A. The University Senate met on September 21, 2021
  - a) Meeting agenda (link in slide deck)
  - b) President Holloway gave address to senate (link in slide deck)
  - 2. Discussed charge: Best practices for asynchronous instruction
    - a) Senate voted yes to approve the recommendations from the Instruction, Curricula and Advising Committee
- B. Discussed: Proposed resolution on Mandatory Vaccinations for Faculty and Staff
  - 1. Senate voted yes to approve the resolution: Be it resolved that the Rutgers University Senate urges the administration to require all faculty and staff of the university to be fully

vaccinated against Covid-19.

- C. Next Senate Meeting: October 22, 2021 at 1:10pm
- D. Senate Eboard is still looking for student representatives for each campus
  - 1. Details of what being a Eboard student representative entails are available in the Senate Handbook
- E. The first senate meeting was on 9/21 - I linked the meeting agenda and a link to President Holloway's address to the senate
- F. They addressed best practices for ICAC - they voted yes so now recommended to the university and they will take it from there (does not mean that it is set in stone)
- G. They are also looking for senate E-Board student representatives - people can nominate themselves so if you want to become an SGS senator - link in the slide so you know what it entails.

## VII. GSO Announcements

- A. New group supporting grad student parents! Please advertise that to your GSO - wanted to be inclusive of caregivers who have other responsibilities (elderly parents) that may not be as obvious
  - 1. See GSA newsletter (latest one) for more information on that!

## VIII. Any Other Business - Open Forum

- A. P: Wanted to talk about the pre-approval package for the virtual events
  - 1. We have decided that if it is a virtual event then all GSOs do not need pre approval
  - 2. Pre-approval package is ONLY for in-person events and honorarium events.
- B. EACS review only for events MORE THAN 25 people. But still need a pre-approval package and review no matter the size of the event in person.
  - 1. Regardless if the event is being reimbursed or not - still need pre-approval for all in-person event (no matter the size)
- C. Pre-approval is only for events in-person and honorarium events**
- D. Honorarium request form is needed if it is a virtual event.**
- E. Virtual events do not need screen shots of attendance if no request for reimbursement
- F. All GSOs need to check in within 15min of the meeting - if not then your attendance at the meeting will not count
- G. Grace Wetzel - most of our GSO allocation funds go towards honorariums so we definitely need pre approval for \$\$ retroactively before the events? We didn't promise any \$\$ without going through the process first. Retroactive honorariums may not be allowed.
  - 1. Send us an email and we will chat further
- H. Recurring event - when getting approval only needs it once. If reimbursements then need to attach the department approval receipts so we can have it all stored in one place.
  - 1. PER portal vs pre-approval portal
    - a) Pre-approval portal only need to submit once
    - b) But still need to attach the information to each PER everytime you submit

## IX. Adjournment

Meeting end time: 8:01pm

### Post-meeting minutes

- P: So many emails and messages
- Sec/Sen: Whoever is in charge of admitting people, take names and time of people attending after 7:15pm
- EVP: Durable goods
  - We have a separate durable goods funds - what if we apply the same restrictions with the exceptions of the request limits if people want to take money from their own GSO funds
  - P: We would need to talk to Dean Bender about it
  - Jess: I'm not sure what the process was before so whatever makes sense!
  - P: I thought there was an application that the GSA opened when Nate was there - then the app was open and then everyone could apply and first come first serve.
  - Events: I wasn't involved in this so I'm not too sure - I just know that there was an application that would open
  - EVP: I think we should give people time to think about applying if withdrawing from the durable goods
  - P: If withdrawing from their allocations - then only apply that for GSOs who bought from durable goods in the last 2 years.
  - Sen: I know when I was helping amend some of the guidelines - maybe we could amend it to be a certain amount within the 3 years that way if you don't use then you lose it
  - EVP: May be a can of worms since it's limited funds (exclude other GSOs who can draw) also people scrambling at the end to spend whatever they have left.
  - P: Can it be on a rolling basis? Give GSOs an option. If we say that the durable goods application will be open end Oct/Early Nov
  - EVP: They still need to get pre-approval BEFORE purchasing the event.

- P: Once you talk to them and have that meeting, then we can reach out to the GSO.
- EVP: Still subject to council review/dean's approval - should be a sufficient check and balance. Should not put a limit because we may run into issues down the road.
- P: What if we create a shared list with all of the durable goods that all of the GSOs have
  - EVP: I mean technically all durable goods are owned by the GSA
  - P: We can reach out to the GSOs and share the durable goods
  - EVP: T should be reaching out to all of them to hear status on durable goods.