

**GSA General Assembly Meeting Minutes**  
**October 4, 2023**  
**11:30 am - 1:30 pm**  
**Hybrid**

This meeting was moderated by GSA President Destina Bermejo. Minutes of the meeting have been prepared by GSA Internal Communications Officer Morgan Lavenstein Bendall.

**Members of the Executive Council in Attendance**

- Destina Bermejo (President)
- Koton Babaguchi (External Vice President)
- Sarah Malone (Internal Vice President)
- Adam Binswanger (Treasurer)
- Claudia Johnson Madrigal (Academic Affairs Officer)
- Morgan Lavenstein Bendall (Internal Communications Officer)
- Mykael Pineda (Candidate for Public Relations/Community Outreach Officer)
- Genevieve Egbunno (International Affairs Officer)
- Jullanar Williams (Climate, Diversity, and Equity Officer)
- Arabi Seshappan (Solidarity Officer) **ABSENT**
- Mohit Saraswat (Candidate for Legislative Affairs Officer) **ABSENT**
- Elsie A. Cortes (Social Media and Graphic Design Officer)
- Jai Mica Vaca (Undocumented Affairs Officer) **ABSENT**

**Members of the Delegate Assembly in Attendance**

- Jordan Collignon (Applied Mathematics)
- Kunle Adewole (Chemistry and Chemical Biology) **ABSENT**
- Rachel Casper (Cognitive and Information Science) Zoom **ABSENT**
- Zachary Malone (Environmental Systems)
- Emily Cobbs (Interdisciplinary Humanities)
- Ariell Smith (Materials and Biomaterials Science and Engineering) **ABSENT**
- Sameen Yunus (Physics) **ABSENT**
- Armin Hojjaty (Psychological Sciences) **ABSENT**

**Members of the General Assembly**

- Hunter Prout
- Yulissu Torres

**Guest Speaker**

- Cassie Gunter (Grad Division)
- Jen Quiralte (Grad Division)

## **Purpose of the Meeting**

The purpose of this meeting is to have our monthly general assembly meeting. We will discuss the bylaws.

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## **Meeting began at 11:30 am**

### **Welcome by the GSA President**

- Future updates and agenda items to be posted earlier than 24hrs prior to meeting

### **President Update - Destina Bermejo**

- Meeting with Dean Hrant & Cassie
  - Due to the UWA contract, we must mind the usage of the word 'stipend' (students with work visas, etc.).
  - Hrant requests to review bylaw amendments.
  - GSR position within the GSA (refer to UC Irvine)
- UC Council of Presidents Meeting
  - UC Santa Barbara GSA president shared revised bylaws as of this year
- Graduate Luncheon with the Chancellor
  - Date/time: Friday, October 13, 2023 from 11:30AM-1:00PM
  - Location: Ruiz Administration Building, Room 306
- Suggestion: GSA Letter in Response to Mandatory ReGROW on Saturday, November 4, 2023
  - Form Google document for GSA members to sign off on
  - Destina, Claudia, Jullanar will write preliminary draft

### **External Vice President - Koto Babaguchi**

- Grad Summit on November 4th, 2023
  - Conflict with ReGROW
  - Will be in contact with council of UCGPC
  - Contact Academic Senate about the mandate

### **Internal Vice President - Sarah Malone**

- Jordan elected DA chair
- Meeting with Brian Obruba about the Student Fee Referendum process on 10/17 at 11:00 am
- DA meeting minutes for 10/4 @ 4:15pm: DA\_Meeting\_2023\_10\_05
- Not actively working on, but items I'd like to start figuring out:
  - Elections Committee— needs at least 1 EC and 1 DA member; needs to be approved by DA


- How stipends will be distributed— creating clear criteria for DA members and letting them know sooner than later so they can meet expectations
- Elections
  - Hayley is no longer at the UCM and Enrique has not been responding to set up elections
  - How to be independent from others on the election process
    - Google forms?
    - Catlife? (requires help from the university)
  - Currently in the bylaws, we have that it has to be run by a third party.
  - Election committee: Sarah Malone for EC
    - Need to figure out who from the DA will be on this committee.
- Stipends
  - How to get your stipends
    - It will be in the bylaws
  - We should have transition expectations for current DAs.

#### **International Affairs Officer - Genevieve Edgbunno**

- There was a meeting that was canceled.
- Multicultural potluck could get shut down if on-campus because of food safety.
  - Suggested to have an informal event at the lake.

#### **Solidarity Officer - Arabi Seshappan**

- UAW General Membership Meeting Oct. 3 updates:
  - Check your November paychecks! (UC Path) Some people have it updated and some don't – make sure you get the raise! Go to “employment verification” and check that your yearly rate also went up—will be more updated than paycheck



### Know your Rights - Monthly Paychecks

TA 50%	No Exp	2 Sem	4 Sem
Aug	1389	1389	1389
Sep	2778	2778	2778
Oct	3236	3333	3430
Nov	3236	3333	3430
Dec	3236	3333	3430
<b>Total</b>	<b>13875</b>	<b>14166</b>	<b>14458</b>

\* August Rates may also include summer funding  
\* Split appointments and Fellowships are different

GSR 50%	Step 1 (No Exp)	Step 2 (2 Sem)	Step 3 (4 Sem)
Aug	1273	1371	1478
Sep	2545	2742	2955
Oct	2708	2918	3144
Nov	2708	2918	3144
Dec	2708	2918	3144
<b>Total</b>	<b>11941</b>	<b>12867</b>	<b>13864</b>

**October Raises**  
\* some GSRs are appointed at higher steps than the minimum (e.g., Step 2)



### Got violations? - Your Department Stewards

Department	Steward	Contact
Physics	Albert DiBenedetto	bshepseneca@gmail.com
ES	Maeve McCormick	mavee.ec.mccormick@gmail.com
COGS	Leo NC	LeoNiehorsterCook@gmail.com
Paygh	Cerena Lee	lsj.cerena@gmail.com
Applied Math	Jordan Collignon	jcollignon149@gmail.com
GSB	Gloria Denise Ligunas	gdligunas@gmail.com
EEEECS	Carlos Diaz Alvarenga	carlosediaz.cd@gmail.com
Public Health	Rudiel Fabian Sanchez	rfabian2@ucmerced.edu
IH	Carlo Acevedo	cacevedomalc@ucmerced.edu
Sociology	Eliana Fonsah	efonsah@ucmerced.edu

Our Department Steward Network is your ideal first point of contact within your department. If you have any issues or concerns, please send them an email!

Is your department not listed? Want to be your department steward? Sign up by emailing [merced@uaw2865.org](mailto:merced@uaw2865.org)

Want to be more involved in our union? Scan the QR code and fill out the google form to access calendar invites to meetings and other events! We look forward to hearing from you!



- With any paycheck discrepancies, make sure you contact your union rep!
- Tabling on Thursday October 5th from 12-1pm
- UAW elections – Head Steward and Unit Chair positions are open, as well as statewide leadership! Check your email to nominate yourself or others.
- Amalgamation vote (all members get to vote on) between Oct. 10-20, this is to join UAW 2865 and UAW 5810
  - Joining the postdocs with TA/GSR
- Possible strike-adversary party around Nov 14!

### Public Relations/Community Outreach Officer Updates - Mykael Pineda

- Events for October and November 2023
  - Solidify known events and spur new ideas
  - October 31st - Movie Night
    - Need to find a room to host this event
      - Currently the speakers are broken in the Grad Pad.
    - Need to start advertising for this event.
    - We should have a survey sent to figure out what movie to watch.
    - Talk to the Morgan about emails and Elsie about social media posts.
  - Grad Div is planning on have Trivia Nights at the Partisan in October and November
    - Grad Div is asking us to help fund this event (Requesting \$1,600)
    - Possible days are October 12th and November 16th
    - Suggested that we help with tabling for food so that people are not rushed.
    - Suggested that we can start advertising for them soon.

- Grad Div is planning on doing a pumpkin patch event on October 22nd at Vista Ranch and asked us to put money towards students being able to get pumpkins.
  - Questions: How much money are the pumpkins? Is there going to be a carpool list for this event?
  - Decision: We don't want to put money towards getting pumpkins at the Vista. We would prefer putting money towards Raleigh's pumpkin pickup (~\$500 to \$800) since it's more accessible.
- Cassie Gunter and Jen Quiralte are coming to talk about trivia night/budget for events at 1 pm

### **Social Media Coordinator Updates - Elsie A. Cortes**

- Talked with Cassie about the merch and what the cost would be (max \$300).

### **Treasurer Updates- Adam Binswanger**

- Applications for GSO funds, sponsored funds, and travel awards
  - Making sure the emails look good and the dates
  - Cassie approved the current email to go out.
  - Sponsored funds and GSO can have more variability of when they can open.
- SFAC recruiting graduate students
  - An email was sent out about this.
  - Looking for two more graduate students.
- We are set to open the fall travel awards.

### **Bylaws**

- The update of the by-laws focuses on the operation of the GSA.
  - We have combined the DA and EC into the Executive Assembly (EA).
  - We have outlined:
    - how closed sessions work.
    - what the requirements are to meet quorum
    - how proxies work to fill in the responsibilities of missing positions
  - We have made EA voting to be able to be done online, outside of an in-person meeting.
  - We have fixed the Travel award so that GSA EA members are able to receive these awards.
  - We have made two regular committees for the GSA EA to make (Bylaws committee and elections committee).
  - We have added the responsibility of the DA to be on at least one committee.
  - The duties of the GSA have not been changed.
- Note that we can have our general assembly meeting during Grow.
- Changes in Article IV
  - The EA has the ability to remove people who are not able to perform their position.
  - We have added how this recall process works.

- To recall a EA member, it requires a  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote from the EA to remove them.
    - We have added that GSA members are able to submit complaints about officers.
  - Changes to Article V
    - We have made it clear that the GSA gets to choose students for DA positions, not departments. We are no longer allowing faculty in departments to submit nominated delegates.
    - We have added a measure to support the GSA growing by allowing departments to have additional DA members per 50 graduate students.
      - We still are working out how alternatives work (Primary and secondary delegates)
    - Table the GSA special election voting happens
    - The appointments of DA members starts during the fall semester until the end of the academic year. If a DA member is voted during a special election, they will serve from when they were elected to the end of the academic year.
  - How to ratify these bylaws?
    - We need to send the general member the bylaw updates to get feedback.
    - Two weeks after the comment period, we can vote on them.
    - Claudia is going to make two documents: new bylaws and a comparison with the current bylaws.

### **Cassie Gunter and Jen Quiralte (Grad Division/ GSA collab events)**

- Cultural show
  - We need to have a certificate for handing food on campus so the potluck would need to be done through vendors.
- Trivia night
  - They are asking for \$1600 from the GSA to help fund.
  - We would like to have more time to eat before trivia so we have offered to table the event earlier at 5pm.
  - Trivia starts at 7pm.
  - October Trivia is iffy and probably won't happen. November Trivia is set.
- Pumpkin Patch Event at the Vista Ranch
  - We think that the money will be better spent on Rayleigh pumpkins for accessibility reasons.
  - Grad Div was able to get a good deal with Rayley's before but didn't seem to be able to do that this year.
- GSA Halloween Movie Night
  - We need to reserve a space.
  - Grad Div can help with reserving a space. We need to give them a specific room number.
- Carpooling
  - Should we have a reimbursement for carpooling?
    - Grad Div suggested that we shouldn't since it would use a lot of funds to get few people to an event.

- We should work on building an informal carpool to events.
- Comments from Jen
  - October trivia is iffy and probably won't happen
  - November trivia is set.
  - Harvest Fest Event didn't do great on thursday last year so they switched the Event at the Vista.
  - For Movie Nights, she suggested to have a kid and adult movie.
  - For other events, she suggested to have
    - an outdoors tournament (volleyball, pickleball, etc.) with ice cream at the end.
      - It would be a relatively inexpensive event.
    - yoga
    - animals to pet on-campus (during a stressful time)
    - hiking day
    - party for Grad Pad with pizza
    - game night in the Grad Pad
- Comments from Cassie
  - The new speakers for the TV in the Grad Pad is supposed to come early November.
  - She talked to Elsie about GSA merch.
  - She suggested that we buy GSA position name tags without our names on them so they can be used for multiple years.
- General Comments
  - October 12th doesn't work for trivia.
  - Grad Div digest is sent out every Monday.
  - Grad Div would appreciate us advertising their events.
  - We need to finish the paperwork for the airport pick-up funding very soon to make sure we are following the 45 day university policy.
  - We should look into creating a graduation robe rental system since everyone currently need to by them from the bookstore. We would need to purchase graduation robes or ask people to donate their used robes.
    - Hrant would possible want to help with this.
  - There was discussion on having professional dinner to learn how to be professional over dinner, providing a graduating photoshoot, friends-giving, and end-of-the-year GSA BBQ.

**Meeting adjourned at 1:30 pm**