1. **Call to Order:** Meeting started at 6:10 pm
2. **Recognition of Senators:** Quorum was met with senators
3. **Issues Forum: Khaled “Axel” Djebbari**
   1. Introduction of himself, reasons for joining GSS, conversation on “false allegations” and “false accusations” made about him and E-Board
   2. Cindy Barreto asked reasons for him sharing this, acknowledges the statement made in Issues Forum, stated members of Senate and members of E-board being “aggressive” towards each other
   3. Axel-want people to see his “side of the story”
   4. Mentions of Special Committee in terms of what happened with summer funding for former GSS President-never met because of
   5. “false allegations” against E-Board members so giving context to why 2 former members resigned

*Motion by Sen. Cindy Barreto to discuss issues of the Special Committee to discuss summer funding issues, status report of the Special Committee 2nd by ( yay, 0 nay, 0 abstain) motion passes*

*Motion to give 15mins to Grace Easterly, GEU President to talk about Budget Issues Sen. Martina 2nd by Sen. Alev, motion passes unanimously ( yay, 0 nay, 0 abstain), motion passes*

1. **Invited Guest Speaker:** Grace Easterly- UCONN GEU, UAW Local 6950
2. Budget Cuts-What the Union knows thus Far; 5-year Financial Plans
3. UCONN Town Halls-15% Across the Board Cuts, incremental cuts
4. English and History accounts “cleared” essentially wiped out
5. Budget shortfalls from the State of CT-funding request from UCONN to mitigate budget cuts
6. Impact on GAships-GAships at risk, admissions (no incoming classes for departments like History), conference funding, TAships at risk, Entire GAships for departments cut out, increase in class sizes, Intl. GAships at risks, faculty retention issues-extra teaching on their end
7. Sign Open Letter-get involved with various committee on Union
8. Advocacy on multiple levels
9. *Sen. Barnum-question if state doesn’t change the budget as proposed, what could univ. do to not cut everything across the board? What are we asking univ. to do?*
10. *Grace Easterly-asking about “transparency” during town hall, cuts to athletics were asked about and the univ. stated there would be no cuts to that; academic departments taking most of the hit; univ. not transparent, declines in morale and fear amongst employees, questions on Admin. Salaries*
11. *Sen. Barnum-question about across the board cuts, does it include admin and athletics cuts from what univ. said*
12. *Grace Easterly-academic cuts and can provide breakdown from the Town Hall*
13. *Sen. Hayes-clarification question, talked about different impact amongst departments*
14. *Grace Easterly-good question, differences in resourcing for STEM but TAships across the board are affected too, not just humanities but there are cuts coming to each department from discretionary funds*
15. *GSS Pres. Greene-inconsistency on who’s affected, hearing different stories*
16. *Easterly-different deans are having different responses to budget cuts, Union still gathering information too, will hurt us all in the end*
17. *Dean Holsinger-Grace summarized situation well, cuts are falling on “2 Ledger funds” cuts happening to all “2 Ledger funds” so it involves parking, transportation facilities, etc.*
18. *GSS Parl. Djebbari-current TAs overloaded, the volume of work exceeding, any plans on how to defend those TAs*
19. *Easterly-we’re working on this as well, sending out survey to see what teaching responsibilities have right now, what counts as 20hr TAship right now and then a year from now, workload concerns, will hit grad student workers the hardest regardless of the cut structures, group grievances on the table if current students are being exploited*
20. **Approval of Agenda:**
    1. GSS Senate Meeting Minutes – 12/6/2023 meeting
    2. GSS E-Board Meeting Minutes-1/2/2024 meeting

*Motion to approve by Sen. Barreto, 2nd by Sen. Holt ( yay, 0 no, 0 abstain): Motion passes*

1. **Executive Board Reports:**
   1. President (Bryan Greene)– Call for election and nominations for VP and Comms Director, election will be 2/21 (email Parliamentarian for nominations) then next meeting will be for next year’s election; Office Admin Asst. hiring, org chart has only one supervisor but bylaws and constitution has the person having 6 supervisors; inventory of committees, and Univ. Senate vacancy; SASFAC fee increase, will need increase increase; Feb. 20-Budget meeting for CT General Assembly, coordinating with USG and other orgs to testify, slated to testify; Coordinating time for UCONN President Maric to come to GSS; Special meeting, made some headway, set a different tone, thank you for coming for that did, responsible our constituencies, to state of CT Tier III, Sen. Cooke sending out minutes from Special Meeting, will be posted on website along with GSS regular meeting minutes
   2. Vice President – N/A
   3. Treasurer (Gopi Yalavarthi)-SASFAC meeting, GSS needs to increase fees, 2 to 3 years budget deficit, breakdown on what would happen if we don’t have fee increase, w/out increase 105k, with fee increase 183k, 2 events per year for cultural groups, with increase you can have more events, bigger events; TSOS-can’t pay them but in most years pay 18k-19k, increase contractual services from 3k to 5k ,increases for equipment in GSS office, E Board and Grad Asst salaries will be the same; with current budget, only left with $531 without paying contractual services; fee increase ask is $12 per semester, $24 for the year; need 200 signatures on petition to get fee increase on a ballot, email to GSS treasurer; *Sen. Barnum asked about logistics, print out GoogleSheet, Sen. Corso asked about GoogleDoc for gathering signatures deadline; Sen. Lassy-How would this get this sent to entire grad school. GSS Treasurer stated Need fee paying students to sign pet. Sen. Hayes-written synopsis asked for explaining what the fee increase is about; GSS Parliamentarian*

*Motion to approve SASFAC Fee Increase Petition ( yay, 0 nay, 0 abstain) motion passes*

WRTA Invoice for Spring Formal 2023 bus-Sen. Corso stated ddidn’t use it and couldn’t cancel it in time. Sen. Lassy asked for

*Motion to approve $292 by Sen. Lassy, Sen. Hayes 2nd ( yay, 0 nay, abstain) motion passes*

Special Allocation Request- EEB GSA, Annual Symposium, been going on for 34 years. Paying for open for all students on Feb. 24th, grad students presenting their research, everyone’s welcome to come, invite other department students to present. *Sen. Barnum-asking how much dept. is contribution, Sen. Barreto-dept. doesn’t pay, prospective students lunch*

*Motion to Amend Special Allocation from Sen. Barnum to exclude gift for speaker*

*Sen. Barreto-can’t give gift but money to “compensate” them somehow, gift card, something that is legally appropriate, Sen. Holt-can see where Sen. Barnum coming from, PIs and faculty benefit from this so can dept. contribute to GSS Pres. Greene-what is the guideline for gifts, GSS Activities Dir.-do PIs get a benefit Sen. Barreto-faculty attend but they Sen. Corso-how many people coming not fee paying students, Sen. Barreto-140 people, 80 grad students and prospective students, debate on who is “prospective student,”GSS Treasurer-says it’s up to Senate to decide to give to speaker Sen. Lassy-have you raised money or found other sources, Sen. Barreto-pay through funds through EEB GSA and pay the extra through the allocation. GSS Treasurer-Financial Policy does not forbid travel but forbid gift card. Sen Barnum-would speaker drop out? GSS Parliament-Would it affect event Sen. Barreto-bring alumni from dept. to speak about how to navigate the job market. The person will not come if we don’t have*

*Motion to extend meeting by 20 mins Sen. Alaa, 2nd by Sen. Barnum ( yay, 0 nay, 0 abstain) motion passes*

*Sen. -grad students getting knowledge from Speaker, why we won’t pay the amount, Sen. Barreto-only event we do, already been cut*

*Motion to remove the $100 in speaker compensation to the allocation ( yay, 4 nay, 0 abstain) motion passes*

*Motion to approve amended Special Allocation by Sen. Barreto, 2nd by ( yay, 0 nay, 0 abstain) motion*

*Passes*

Need Tier II budget proposals by next weds (Jan. 31st); need to have a vote on the past president and new president’s compensation and new VP and Comms Dir. *Sen. Corso-were they paid, GSS Treasurer-need to figure out garage pass Sen. Barnum-to be given parking, need to serve full term? GSS Parliamentarian-need to pay E-board members but need to calculate amount of parking, 50% of parking and pay* GSS Treasurer will need to present pay for E-board to E-Board and then

* 1. Activities Director (Essam Boraey) –University Senate-need 3rd member, *Sen. I thougth that was reserved for regional campus representatives*, flexibility given from Univ. Senate, can join meeting online, discuss budget, President gives report, need a volunteer; Planned Events for Spring, diverse events, different types of activities, yoga, skill building financial education, Welcome Back and End of Year events, these are estimates, *Sen. Lassy-2 questions, Fall event attendance very, do you have full accounting for attendance and cost breakdown, prior to welcome back and end of year formal could we have very exact event breakdown GSS Activities Dir.- hopefully taking votes on estimate numbers, Fall formal, we took vote 3 days before formal, under planning since Sept. spent less than $6K*

*Motion to extend meeting by 10 mins ( yay, 0 nay, 0 abstain) motion passes*

*Motion to vote on Purchase Request for 5 Yoga Events from Sen. Barreto Welcome Back Event ($10000) 2nd by Sen Lassy ( yay, 0 nay, abstain) motion passes*

*Motion to buy food for Spring Meetings (Feb., March and April) for 3000 from Sen. Lassy, 2nd by Sen. Barreto ( yay, 0 nay, 0 abstain). Motion Passes*

Head count for future meetings so we don’t have too much food. Will ask for head count.

* 1. Communications Director – N/A

* 1. Parliamentarian (Khaled “Axel” Djebbari)- Tabled to discuss in E-Board about a Special Meeting to go over Constitution and By-Laws

1. **Old Business:**
2. **New Business:**
3. **Committee Reports**
4. **Good News**
5. **Adjournment**

*(Lassy/Barreto) Motion to adjourn the meeting. in favor/0 opposed/0 abstention. Motion Carries.*

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.

**Attendees:**

Kosuri, Veera Venkata Praveen Raja

Luis Ortiz

Makduma

Laura Holt

Griffith, Michael

Greene, Bryan

Cooke, Hannah

Bresciano, Karen

Labe, Kyle

Holsinger, Kent

Pena, Riley

Lindsay Barnum

Sanchez Sanchez, Aaron

Saki, Shah

Prakash Ranjan

Bouzan, Ruba

Nurudeen Musa

Maduako, Adaeze

Williams, Anietie W

Wu, Hangyu

Alev Ecevitoglu

Corso, Gabrielle