1. **Call to Order :** By Alaa Selim at 3.07 PM.
2. **Atandee:** Alaa Selim, Maham Liaquat, Gaurav Gupta, Leo Gold and Karen Bresciano
3. **Status Reports from Executive Committee**
4. President-Vacant
5. Vice President-Alaa Selim
   * Brian has resigned as President, creating a vacancy.
   * Alaa will temporarily handle the role until new elections in February.
   * Selim and Ken participated in an ad hoc committee discussing EUCON policing and university policies.
   * Key discussion points, including questions for university administration and the foundation, will be addressed on the 29th.
   * Updates will be shared in the next Graduate Student Senate (GSS) meeting.
   * Selim met with Krista to check for pending issues from Brian’s work.
   * No immediate concerns were identified, but further updates will be provided as needed.
   * Selim will act as interim leader until elections.
   * Committee discussions on the 29th will be summarized in the next GSS meeting.
   * Monitoring any pending matters from Brian’s transition.
   * The meeting concluded with a commitment to keep everyone informed.
6. Treasurer- Maham Laqiat
   * A budget presentation will take place in February during the Saas-Fac committee meeting.
   * A $2.00 increase has been approved by the Senate, but signatures are still needed.
   * If signatures are not obtained, the SASFAC Committee will decide on the increase.
   * The 2025-2026 budget deadline for organizations has been extended to January 31st.
   * The deadline extension will be announced in the upcoming Senate meeting.
   * Two Finance Committee meetings are planned for February to allocate budgets for organizations.
   * Noah has the list of Finance Committee members who will oversee budget allocation.
   * Discussions will cover how much funding each Tier 2 organization receives.
   * The Finance Committee will finalize budget allocations based on available funds and requests.
   * Meeting schedules will be shared once finalized, and Gaurav will handle announcements.
   * Meetings will be recorded, and Finance Committee members will document meeting minutes.
   * Liaqat will present the budget sheet during the Finance Committee discussions.
7. Activities Director-Leo Gold
   * Three events are planned for the semester, with sufficient funds available.
   * There is concern about fully utilizing the budget, but a spending limit (upper ceiling) was set to allow flexibility for unexpected expenses.
   * Yukon catering restrictions due to the ballroom location were discussed, with alternative options being considered.
   * A separate meeting will be held to finalize decisions on catering and event budgeting.
   * Selim suggested alternate venue options, including the Engineering Science room and other event spaces with suitable seating arrangements.
   * If the Polar Room reservation does not work out, Selim is available to assist in securing another venue.
8. Communications Director-Gaurav Gupta
   * Gaurav prepared and uploaded the meeting minutes for the December 11th Senate meeting.
   * A discussion took place on improving the clarity and structure of meeting minutes, as most members rely on them instead of watching recorded meetings.
   * It was suggested to hold follow-up meetings—one a week after the Senate meeting and another in between—to refine and finalize minutes.
   * Gaurav acknowledged the need for better planning and agreed to establish a clearer timeline for preparing minutes.
   * A minor email communication issue was clarified, ensuring better coordination moving forward.
   * Brian’s information will be removed from the website by the weekend, as he is no longer the President.
   * Committee names need updating on the website, and members were asked to send their committee details for listing.
9. Parliamentarian-Noah Kravette
   * Absent
10. **Old Business-**
    1. **Follow up on kick-off big event for this semester.** 
       1. Leo talked about the first big event for spring semester hosted by GSS.
       2. Gaurav requested Leo to send him the flyer for the event few weeks in advance so that he can circulate it to the community and hopefully will be able to increase the engagement of student in GSS events.
    2. **Follow up on constitution updates and bylaws.**
    3. **Discussing any issues pended from last semester.**
       1. Alaa acknowledged that the previous Senate meeting faced miscommunication and last-minute updates, which impacted efficiency.
       2. To avoid this in the future, he committed to scheduling E-board meetings two weeks in advance and sending reminders to ensure proper planning.
       3. He emphasized the importance of maintaining professionalism as board members representing GSS and avoiding last-minute changes. He stated that from now last minute changes to agenda will not be entertained.
    4. **Follow up on SHaW Service to Graduate Students.**
       1. A meeting is confirmed for January 29th, where university representatives will address various services available to students.
       2. Selim will follow up with them via email to confirm participation and finalize the agenda.
       3. Karen confirmed that Suzanne Onorato, along with directors from Counseling, Mental Health, and Nursing Services, will attend the meeting.
       4. Members were encouraged to submit questions in advance to allow speakers to prepare effectively.
       5. Karen advised that discussions should focus on policies and available services rather than individual experiences, as officials cannot address personal cases.
       6. Providing advance notice for any topics requiring research would help maximize the effectiveness of the meeting.
       7. The discussion concluded with an agreement to prepare relevant materials and updates before the next meeting.
11. **New Business-**
    * **Motions to present to entire GSS Body**

* **Motion to have stipend e-board member voted independently.**
  + **Discussion:** A discussion took place regarding the e-board stipend for the Fall 2024 semester. It was proposed that the remaining e-board stipend motion should be presented separately from those of the Treasurer and the President. Additionally, there was further discussion about the meeting minutes, emphasizing that it is the Senate's responsibility to review them before the Senate meeting in which they are up for approval..
  + A discussion about the GSS community service award was also held. The discussion was focused on number of awards, the amount of awards etc.
* **Needs to have another signer for purchases from E-board members.**
* **Checking purchases order for next GSS meeting caterings** 
  + Selim, Alaa highlights that the current balance available for the next event (Big Y) is $160, raising concerns about whether it will be sufficient.
  + Leo Gold confirms that the amount is enough for a Senate meeting.
  + Liaqat, M suggests increasing the allocated budget for events, especially to cover food costs for Senate meetings and additional gatherings like coffee hours and pizza events.
  + There is a proposal to increase the "Big Y" allocation to ensure coverage for events.
  + A suggestion is made to set an upper spending limit to ensure responsible budget management.
  + There is a debate over whether a formal Senate vote is required or if the executive board (eboard) can decide.
  + Leo Gold emphasizes that approving more money poses no harm, as unused funds won’t affect the budget.
  + Liaqat, M raises concerns about last-minute approvals and suggests handling financial allocations in a more structured manner.
* **Opening Elections for President position on February** 
  + **Discussion:** A discussion was held regarding the timing of the presidential election, specifically whether it should take place in February or be postponed. Since the election for the new executive board (e-board) is scheduled for March, the timing needed careful consideration. Alaa expressed concerns about his academic workload in the upcoming month, stating that he might not be able to fulfill the responsibilities of the presidency. In response, the e-board proposed sharing the duties to lighten his burden. It was agreed that this matter should be presented to the Senate for further discussion and a final decision.

**V. Final Thoughts/Adjournment:** Meeting adjourn at 4.45PM.