\*\*\*Hybrid Meeting link:

https://uconn-cmr.webex.com/meet/aes21009

1. **Call to Order:** Alaa Selim (VP) at 6.06 PM.
2. **Recognition of Senators**
3. **Approval of consent agenda:**
   1. GSS E-Board Meeting Minutes (3rd December 2024)
      * Motion to approve the meeting minutes made by Amit seconded by Quinn
        1. Aye: 9
        2. Nye: 0
        3. Abstain: 2
        4. Minutes approved.
   2. GSS Senate Meeting Minutes (11th December 2024)
      * Motion to approve the meeting minutes made by Amit seconded by Quinn
        1. Aye: 9
        2. Nye: 0
        3. Abstain: 2
        4. Minutes approved.

**Guest Speaker:** Dean Shor and Suzanne Onorato – Discussion with Grad students & SHaW services

**Mission & Values**

* SHAW focuses on cultivating health and well-being for every UCONN student.
* Core values: **Health, Equity, Inclusion, and Patient Rights** (confidentiality, dignity, respect).
* Accredited by four international organizations, recently reaccredited with top scores.
* Committed to a **student-centered approach**, ensuring services meet graduate students’ needs.

**SHAW Services**

1. **Medical Care (Storrs)**
   * Provides welcoming, student-focused care.
   * Offers **nutrition coaching, Know-U-Well nurse services, extended care, and overnight support**.
   * **Sexual Assault Response Team (SART)** and **public health partnerships** ensure students receive proper care, including forensic exams if needed.
2. **Pharmacy**
   * Offers affordable medication, open as long as the Student Union.
   * Stocks essentials in vending machines (cold medicine, emergency contraception, period products, etc.).
3. **Mental Health Services**
   * **"Circle of Care" model**: Personalized mental health strategies including yoga and other wellness techniques.
   * **SHAW Talk**: No registration required, immediate access to mental health support.
   * **Traditional clinical services**: Billable therapy, including a long-standing **graduate student support group**.
   * **Consultation & crisis support** available for those navigating mental health challenges.
   * Resources available **both online and across regional campuses**.
4. **Health Promotion**
   * Part of a national movement to improve student wellness.
   * **Graduate student well-being seminars** and **Recovery Support Services** (1/3 of participants are grad students).
   * **Mental Health Mobile Van** attends Graduate Student Orientations.

**24-Hour Support Services (All Campuses)**

* **Advice Line (860-486-4700)**: Nurses available for medical guidance.
* **Crisis Support (833-308-3040)**: 24/7 peer and professional mental health assistance.

**Additional Highlights**

* **"Red Folder" resource** to guide students in seeking mental health support.
* Increased demand: **14% rise in mental health services, 21% in medical services**—yet no long wait times.
* **97%+ patient satisfaction**, with SHAW eager to collaborate with the Graduate Student Senate (GSS) to enhance services.

**Dean Lasely Shor:** Dean Shor talked about the chaos among the student due to various budget cut in the current time. She reassured students that support is available during challenging times. She emphasized that health, academic, and financial resources are accessible and encouraged students to share this information with peers. She clarified that services are currently for students only but connections to other resources may be available for family members. He invited students to communicate any challenges they face and thanked them for their time.

**Joy Hamer:** Joy Hamer, a 3L student at UConn Law and the graduate student trustee on the Board of Trustees, introduced herself at her first GSS meeting of the year. She emphasized her role in representing graduate students' concerns to the board and encouraged students to reach out with any issues. She highlighted her commitment to fostering a stronger graduate community, mentioning plans for a Graduate Student Symposium this spring. This event will provide opportunities to showcase research, network with students from different campuses, and access research funding. She expressed enthusiasm for collaborating with students and invited them to contact her with questions or concerns.

1. **Issues Forum:** No issues this meeting.
2. **Executive Board Reports:**
   1. President –Vacant, VP Alaa reported that previous president Bryan Green resigned in the first week of classes and he will be acting as the president until the new president will be elected.
   2. Vice President – VP Alaa replaced Brian in PR to ensure timely processing of requests, including activity budgets. He also provided updates on his work with the ad hoc committee, which holds emergency meetings to address university policies, particularly regarding police presence on campus.
      * Key discussion points:
        1. Police and Campus Protests: The committee is working to establish clear procedures for law enforcement involvement to prevent unnecessary arrests of students.
        2. Incident Review: The university called for police action after six days of a protest, leading to student concerns about lack of dialogue before enforcement.
        3. Comparison to Other Events: Discrepancies in police responses to student protests versus large gatherings (e.g., basketball games) were questioned.
        4. Next Steps: The focus is now on dialogue between students and university administration to prevent extreme actions and ensure official communication channels exist before police intervention.
   3. Treasurer- Maham Liaqat
      * Presented the amount spend by GSS in the fall semester 2024. She talked about the breakdown of the money.
      * She mentioned that now tier-ii funds will be used as well, previously an announcement was sent about the PR access form to all the active senators.
      * She updated that some of the tier-ii are asking an increase in the allocated budget. That will be looked at in the next meeting.
      * A question was raised about the timeline for getting the funds for the events, treasurer replied that the funds are already approved tier-ii needs to file the PR to get the funds for the event.
      * She about that financial committee Review they are investigating past financial challenges and will present recommendations in the next Senate meeting to ensure sustainable budgeting.
   4. Communications Director – Gaurav Gupta
      * Communication & Email Issues:
        1. Some senators raised their concern regarding the communication and mentioned that they did not receive the communication emails from the GSS.
        2. Gaurav advised them to check if their senator is listed as a senator on GSS website to confirm senator listings If not he asked them to send him an email tagging Noah, once they confirm their senator status they will be listed as the senators on GSS website and will start receiving all the communication from GSS.
      * **Community Service Awards:** Gaurav talked about the GSS community service awards.
        1. The nomination form will be sent out to whole for graduate students who have contributed to the community.
        2. A nomination form for the participation in award committee will also be sent out and an election will be held if more than five people apply.
        3. He also mentioned that the Committee members cannot be award nominees.
   5. Activities Director-Leo Gold
      * Feb-19 in SU will be a big event to kick start the event. Advertisement will be sent out soon.
      * He is exploring other options (ex. Local business like Aladin or ganset wraps etc) for food for regular senate meeting.
      * He is also working on planning events in April.
   6. Parliamentarian – Noah Kravette
3. Constitutional Update (Required Every 4 Years)
   * Last update was in 2018, making this revision due.
   * No voting in this meeting—members can review and provide feedback before the next meeting.
   * Bylaw amendments are also under consideration but not part of this update.
4. Proposed Changes to the Constitution:
   * Membership Clause (Article 3):
     + Officers of Tier 2 organizations must be fee-paying graduate students to ensure representation aligns with GSS interests.
     + Clarification that GSS cannot allocate funds for undergraduate activities, even if undergraduates are part of organizations.
   * Executive Board Responsibilities (Article 4):
     + If the President resigns or is recalled, the Vice President automatically assumes the role (for consistency).
   * Parliamentarian Responsibilities:
     + Previously, the parliamentarian had to take on communication director duties when needed.
     + New proposal assigns activities director this responsibility instead to prevent excessive workload.
   * Quorum Requirements (Article 6):
     + Current rule: Half the average attendance of the last two meetings + 1.
     + Proposed change: Align with University Senate rules—25% of all GSS senators, rounded up.
     + Justification: Ensures a clear, consistent calculation and prevents issues when transitioning between academic years.
   * Submission Deadline for GSS Documents:
     + All meeting documents must be submitted electronically 72 hours in advance to ensure senators have time to review.
   * Recall Process Clarification:
     + A recall vote requires two-thirds of all approved GSS senators to proceed.

Additional Discussion Points

* Concerns about Quorum Change:
  + Some felt 25% attendance might be too low for proper representation.
  + Others supported the change for consistency with University Senate rules and to prevent procedural delays.
* Senate vs. Procedures Committee Authority:
  + Some members suggested that the Senate should have the final say in decisions, rather than the Procedures Committee.
  + This would ensure broader representation in critical decisions.
* Motion to Send the Constitution Back to the Procedures Committee:
  + A motion was proposed to conditionally approve the changes and send them back for updates before a final vote.
  + Debate over whether a vote was needed for this step.
  + Ultimately, it was clarified that no vote was necessary to return the document for further review.
    - Motion to conditionally approve the presented constitutional changes and send back to the procedures comittee for further consideration and to be finalize at the febuary senate meeting made by Sandip and seconded by Matt.
    - Motion is widrawn by Sandip.

1. **Old Business** –
   1. Motion to approve the payment stipends to Executive Board members for the previous fall semester, excluding the President and Treasurer, with the following amounts:
      * Vice President $750
      * Parliamentarian: $750
      * Communication Director: $1500
      * Activities Director: $1500
      * Motion made by Sandip and seconded by Matt.
      * Josh asked why Treasurer is not in the motion Matt elaborated about past situation.
      * 19 Aye
      * 0 Nye
      * 1 Abstain
      * Motion passes.
   2. Motion to approve the release of Executive Board stipends on May 1st, following the final E-Board meeting of the semester, for the spring semester, with the following amount:
      * Vice President $750
      * Parliamentarian: $750
      * Communication Director: $1500
      * Activities Director: $1500
      * Senator Sandip explained that the motion can not be made as the e-board does not have required attendance (75% for senate meeting and 75% for e-board meetings), hence the motion got tabled.
      * Motion to table the current motion made by Snadip seconded by Anietie. Motion passes anonymously.
   3. Motion to approve the stipend payment of $1042.02 to Treasurer for the previous fall semester made by
      * Matt talked about what happen with last treasurer and explained the extra payment and suggested that Maham should be paid full stipend.
      * A question was raised to why we can’t get extra money back from the previous treasurer. In response it was iterated that we do not have a procedure to recollect the money.
      * Motion to have the stipend of treasurer paid for $2500 for last fall semester made by Matt and seconded by Chiamaka.
        1. A question was raised why the treasurer is being paid in full, In response Emma explained that the previous treasurer resigned in Aug and Maham started working from September and has been working as the treasurer for the full semester. The past treasurer was paid more and it’s not clear if it’s in error or a fault at our part. Just to be fair with the current treasurer this motion is made.
        2. 13 ayes
        3. 0 nays
        4. 3 abstain.
        5. Motion passes
   4. Motion to approve the release of Treasurer stipends of $2500 on May 1st, following the final E-Board meeting of the semester.
      * The motion got tabled as the Treasurer have not completed the attendance requirement for the spring semester.
   5. Motion to extend the meeting by 15 minutes. Made by Sandip and seconded by Matt. Motion passes anonymously.
2. **New Business**
   1. Catering updates for next GSS meetings voted by the e-board.
      * Alaa talked about in e-board meeting we decided go for various catering options for regular senate meeting.
   2. Motion to have media equipment purchased (camera/tripod) for our upcoming events.
      * There is already approved money of $2500 for the equipment’s. A record will be kept if any organization is borrowing the camera or iPad. Gss has lost 2 camera and 2 iPad in the past and there will be a report about it.
   3. Opening Elections for President position on February/March.
   4. Anonymous consent to have the president position vacant and be filled in March. Made by Sandip and seconded by Matt.
      * 13 aye
      * 1 nye
      * 3 abstain
   5. Constitutional Update Review : Stated by Noah in his report.
3. **Good News**
4. **Adjournment:** Made by Sandip seconded by Mattmotion passes anonymously. Meeting is adjourned at 8.10PM.