

Attendance: Maham Liaqat (Treasurer), Sandip Roy, Matt Silverman, Kari Comstock (alternate for Joshua Lee), Noah Kravette (Parliamentarian)

The meeting began at 4:01 pm.

Maham: we have received 14 budgets from Tier IIs. The Parliamentarian has deemed six budgets to be ineligible due to the following reasons:

- For Tier IIs seeking funding for next year, they needed to attend all senate meetings in Fall 2024 (allowed to miss one meeting/semester)
- For cultural Tier IIs, they must send their senator to at least one GSS internal/external committee.
- Graduate Student Association of Bangladesh: did not send a senator to any GSS committees.
- Nepalese Graduate Student Association: The September, November, and December meetings were missed, and the senator was not sent to any of the GSS committees.
- Graduate Society of Women Engineers: Does not have a senator.
- Green Chemistry Initiative: Does not have a senator.
- Nigerian Student Association: The association missed the September and December 2024 Senate meetings and did not send a senator to any GSS committees.
- Geoscience Graduate Group: Missed September, October, November and December senate meetings.

Kari (alternate for Joshua Lee): How are organizations supposed to meet attendance requirements if they are frozen/do not have a senator?

Maham: Organizations that were frozen or did not have a senator did not meet attendance requirements by default. However, the committee can make an exception for organizations that continued to send their senators and were later approved as senators (e.g., Tarang).

Kari: Follow-up: Does Spring attendance for this year or last year count?

Maham: No, the attendance requirement is from Fall 2024. However, organizations that meet Spring attendance this semester will be eligible for special allocation next Fall.

Treasurer Maham Liaqat presents the budget:

General operations are roughly \$40,000, the executive committee allowance is \$19,000, wages for office assistants are \$9,000, the activities budget is \$49,000, the special allocation budget is \$5000, and Tier II org budget is \$35,072. The general operations include a TSOS fee of \$20,000. Total \$157,672.16. 25.4% of the budget is going to Tier IIs. 31% are going to GSS activities. GSS plans to spend 55% of its budget on events and programming for FY 2026. About 26% is in general operations (13% goes for TSOS fees included here). 12% is allocated to the executive committee allowance, and 6% to office assistant salaries. We have raised the Tier II funding by 75% from last year.

Discussion of standard rates.

Matt made the motion to approve the standard rates for FY 2025-26 as below, which Kari seconded. There were no nays or abstains, and they were all in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

[see next page]

Category	Maximum Price/person
Coffee	\$4
Special/Cultural Beverages	\$7
Snacks	\$7
Breakfast/light meal	\$9
Lunch	\$16
Dinner	\$20
Cultural themed dinners	\$22-24
Utensils	\$0.10
Napkins	\$0.20
Dining set	\$0.40
BBQ rentals/grills	\$60
Ice cream	\$3
Movie Night Snacks	\$3
Rental Chair/Table	\$6
Facility Rental	\$250

The Finance committee discusses the best way to evaluate budgets. Since all PR requests go through GSS and are reviewed for policy compliance, GSS doesn't need to evaluate every event for every Tier II. Maham has

spoken with Krista where Krista can update the PR form to reflect this. The committee will approve the highest amount Tier IIs receive, not per-event funding.

Motion made by Matt to adopt the above rule, seconded by Noah, no nays or abstains, all in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

Maham and Noah: all events by Tier IIs need to be open to all graduate students and should appeal to all students, not just specific departments.

Noah: All department-specific events are against GSS financial policies. This includes brown bags, qualifying exam celebrations, department-specific posters, and research events. However, programmings, such as mastering presentation skills, harnessing data science skills, or CV building, is allowed. Events should focus on appealing to all graduate students. The GSS office assistant and Treasurer/officer need to evaluate each PR to ensure that events appeal to all graduate students and reject PRs that don't comply.

Discussion regarding the low number of organizations whose budgets we can approve.

Sandip: This leaves the need for a larger special allocation for next FY so Tier IIs can get funding via special allocation next FY if their budget is rejected this time.

Sandip makes motion: adjust the Tier II and special allocation budgets by moving \$15,000 out of the Tier II budget and putting it in the Special Allocation category. So, the special allocation will be \$20,000 for FY 2025-26 (\$10,000 for Fall and \$10,000 for Spring), and the Tier II budget amount would be \$20,000. Motion seconded by Kari. No, nays, no abstentions, all in favor. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Noah to allocate 50% of the available Tier II money to cultural Tier IIs and 50% to academic Tier IIs (\$10,000 for each type of Tier II), no nays, no abstentions, all ayes. The motion passed unanimously.

Noah made a motion to divide the budget categories for each Tier II as 80% for refreshments, 5% for supplies, and 15% for the combined category of contractual services + rentals, seconded by Matt. No Nays, no abstentions, all ayes. The motion passed unanimously.

Only two cultural Tier IIs, have made eligible budget requests.

Motion by Matt to divide up the \$10,000 allocated between the two Tier IIs, with Grad Social Club and Tarang each getting \$5000 for FY 2025-26, seconded by Noah, no nays, no abstentions, all ayes. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion about being fair and equitable in funding academic Tier IIs. The Finance committee starts with NEAG's (lowest) budget request.

MOTION made by Noah to approve the entire NEAG GSO budget request of \$275, seconded by Sandip. No nays, no abstentions, all ayes. The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION by Sandip to divide up the remaining money after NEAG GSO is funded, equally (\$1,945 each) to all remaining Tier II's, broken up in the identical percentage amounts as each other, seconded by Kari. No nays, no abstentions, all ayes. The motion passed unanimously.

Contractual Services: 15% cap.

Refreshments: 80% cap.

Supplies: 5% cap.

MOTION by Kari that Tier IIs for whom the Finance Committee has approved a budget for FY 2025-26 will NOT be eligible for a special allocation budget for FY 2025-26. Special allocations will remain for Tier II's who did not receive a budget for FY 2025-26, seconded by Sandip. No nays, no abstentions, all ayes. The motion passed unanimously.

Sandip motioned that the cap be \$2000 per Tier II per semester for those who have not received a Budget for FY 2025-26, seconded by Matt. No nays, no abstentions, all ayes. The motion passed unanimously.



GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE
University of Connecticut
Finance Committee Minutes
April 5, 2025
4:00 PM – 6:00PM
MS Teams - Virtual

The motion by Sandip to end the meeting at 6:04 PM, followed by Matt. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:04 pm.