



Graduate Representative Organization
GC Meeting Minutes
Date/Time: 18:00 PM ET Sept 6th, 2022
Hybrid: Gilman 132, [Zoom](#)

I. Call to Order and Agenda Review

- a. The meeting is called to order at 6:06 PM.

II. EBoard Reports (Vinay & Michael):

- a. Welcome to the GRO 2022-2023
 - i. General Info: <https://studentaffairs.jhu.edu/gro/>
 - ii. [GRO Bylaws](#)
- b. *Michael:* All the general info about the GRO is on the Student Affairs website. In terms of where our bylaws are, who the reps are, various contact information, etc. The bylaws here is basically our various rules and regulations we will have to follow. It is quite a long document, so we don't expect you to read it in full. It's more just when we reference specific things, it's nice to refer to it to know what to keep in mind. Our secretary will go through some logistics of the voting process and how that works. We vote on a bunch of different things here in the GRO, so it's good to know how this works. A couple of things to keep in mind: For all GC meetings, a valid quorum requires the present of more than half of the GC members in attendance. If we don't have a valid quorum, we can't vote on stuff basically. So nothing can be passed and we can't have elections. It's also important for students from your department, as if students from your department want to apply for conference travel grants, you as the department rep need to attend at least half of the meetings. If you attend less than that, students from your department will be ineligible for that. Just to keep that in mind that your attendance is super important. If you have multiple reps in the department, you don't need both reps to be in attendance to be counted as be in quorum; you just need one rep from your department. Here are all the GC and E-board meeting dates. Other than today, which is on Tuesday, it will be Monday basically every other week. These schedules are all posted to the GRO website. All the slides today will also be made available to all of you if you would like to refer back to these information.
 - i. The planned dates for both the E-Board and GC meetings for the fall semester are as follows (worked around holidays; the 5th of September is Labor Day)
 1. GC meetings dates
 - a. 6th Sept - Tuesday

- b. 19th Sept - Monday
 - c. 3rd Oct - Monday
 - d. 17th Oct- Monday
 - e. 31st Oct- Monday
 - f. 14th Nov- Monday
 - g. 28th Nov- Monday (Last GC meeting)
2. GRO E-board meeting dates (All Mondays)
- a. 29th Aug
 - b. 12th Sept
 - c. 26th Sept
 - d. 10th Oct
 - e. 24th Oct
 - f. 7th Nov
 - g. 21st Nov
 - h. 5th Dec

III. Secretary Update (Karen): Voting Rules and Logistics

a. Regular Voting

- i. *Karen:* When you are voting, there are two case scenarios, since we are planning on having hybrid meetings this semester, so you can attend either in-person or virtually. When you are attending in-person, the actual vote count will be the hand raises. At the same time, you will have to document your vote through the GRO voting form, which Michael have shared through email. If you are attending virtually, you will cast your vote into the zoom chat. And again at the same time, you will have to document your vote through the voting form. So regardless of whether you are attending the meeting in-person or virtually, you still will have to fill out the voting form to document your vote, so it's clear which department is voting for what. Some important notes: you can vote for yay, nay, or abstain. If you are voting for abstain, you can also verbally declare that in the meeting that you are abstaining. The rule is that the motion will pass if the majority of those who didn't abstain voted yes. The last point here is important: This year, the attendance of both the GC and Eboard members will be taken through the voting form, so please make sure you are documenting your vote through the voting form. One thing to note is that, on the voting form, the first thing is the polling motion ID. Whenever we are doing a vote, we will announce what the motion ID would be, so just make sure to put in the right motion ID so that you are voting for the right motion. And the position is a drop-down menu, which you can click on it and just make sure to select the right position you are voting for.
- ii. *Michael:* Just to clarify one thing: for abstention, it's not that you can verbally declare you are abstaining, you have to verbally declare your abstention. Or if you are online, you have to verbally declare or type it in the chat if you are abstaining. Not saying anything or not voting does not count as an abstention; it counts as you not voting.
- iii. *Karen:* After you fill out the google form, the form will automatically document your vote and the results of everyone's vote can be visualized like this screenshot. This can be accessed by anyone in the GC or Eboard. It can very clearly be seen what department voted for what and this is automatically documented, so if anyone wants to look at the results, this is the place where you can access it.

- iv. *Michael*: The google sheet auto-updates. The only thing that you all have to do is to fill out the form and click submit. There is nothing else you have to do. Karen did a fantastic job of putting this together.
- v. Links:
 1. Vote Recording Form: <https://forms.gle/xXN5ss9sTRUWdaTJ7>
 2. View voting result (view only)s: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1JVkpYkx9QOLHoidmnMzOAtgow_-nfa1EYFwZt7Yewjk/edit?usp=sharing

b. Secret Ballot Voting

- i. *Michael*: The only time that you are not going to record your vote in the voting form is when we are doing elections or when requested as laid out in the bylaws. If you are in-person, what you are going to do is basically write your vote down on a piece of paper and hand it off to the election official at the time, if it is for an election, or the secretary if it is for the president secret vote. If you guys don't have paper today, I have some that you can write on and hand it to me, since I will be the election officer for the meeting today. If you are online, what you are going to do is private message the election official, or whoever is running it, who you are voting for, in other types of secret vote, you would vote yay, nay, or abstain, or whatever the case is.
- ii. *Conor (Classic)*: Do you have to identify yourself on the secret ballot?
- iii. *Michael*: On the secret ballot, I don't believe there is anything in the bylaw stating that you have to actually identify who you are on the secret bylaw. I will double check for future voting but you don't need to write down who you are for today's election.

IV. GC Orientation: Heramb Gupta

- a. *Heramb*: As the graduate involvement chair, my duty is to cater to the department reps. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me through email. I am pretty responsive, I should respond to you within a day or two, unless I am traveling. Last year, we had a lot of confusion in the GC of what is voting, who represents what... so this is just a brief overview of the bylaw subpoints which I think should be highlighted, so you know what they are about. I know this is being recorded, so if any rep is not present during this meeting or you want to go over it again, we can share this part of the recording with everyone so that you know you can refer to it a little bit easier for you in the future as well. So basically we the General Council right now consists of 2 types of people. One is the department reps, which are people representing various departments and the Executive Board members. These are the basic terms which I think you should know before every meeting.
 - i. **Quorum**: First, the quorum is the minimum number of people we need in the GC meeting for us to actually conduct the meeting. For example, the last time we did not have quorum was the last GC meeting, which was like an extra meeting which we did for the election of the social chair. But since that was during the summer, and a lot of people were traveling, including me, so that was one of the times we didn't have quorum, and we had to postpone the meeting, so the quorum is very important.
 - ii. **Agenda**: Second thing is agenda: as you see that in the beginning of the meeting, Michael showed an agenda. So that is what the agenda is. We list out all the points we want to discuss. Everyone please know that we set a framework of the agenda, but if a rep wants to add something to the agenda and they want to discuss something specifically that they see that is not present in the agenda, you can email us and we'll add that to the agenda, so that it can be very specifically

discussed. If it is not in the agenda, then we will have to push it to the open discussion section in the end, and sometimes things might get lost.

1. *Michael*: A small point of clarification. The agenda is finalized by the co-chairs; there might be times where it's like we have like a lot to discuss on the agenda, we might not be able to get to your item in that meeting and will have to push it to the next meeting. So just because you email us an agenda item, sometimes unfortunately we might not get to it if there's just like a lot to cover in that day. So just to be mindful of that. But we try to prioritize the items you send us, unless there's like other major things going on that we have to get to first.
 2. *Heramb*: There's one thing which personally I didn't know until I went to the bylaws like in details in the last few weeks: Normal students can also have things added to the agenda, because these meetings are open for all graduate students. They can either do it through the Department Rep or they can directly email any Executive Board members. That is one thing which is really necessary to know, that you can add things to the agenda. It is not just detailing what we want to discuss, because there has been this confusion a number of times and I wanted to focus on that.
- iii. **Motion**: The motion has to be raised and then seconded, and then passed. If it's an open voting, you just put it in the chat; if it's a secret ballot, then you specify to the particular member or the officer. Please note that if you have multiple department reps in your GC, basically you have 2 representatives representing one department, you can only use single vote. So you have to mutually decide whether to vote yay, nay, or abstain, and then forward to us.
- iv. **Group Funding**: The final thing is group funding. A lot of times, there are a lot of student organizations other than the GRO who want funding from the GRO and the GRO is authorized to grant them funding. But if the funding is not more than \$250, the Executive Board has the power to directly approve the funding without going to the department reps. Whereas, if the funding exceeds \$250, then we put that out to the Department Rep saying that this is a particular event, and a person who is basically conducting that event has to be present for the GC meeting, give a presentation or talk about it, maybe answer questions, and then all the GC members including the Executive Board members, will vote to decide if they want to fund that particular event or not. There are a lot of restrictions here that there has to be a particular number of grad students, it can't be more than \$1,000, with the details very well mentioned in the bylaws. But I wanted to introduce this concept of group funding, so that when this actually comes into picture, it will be a smoother process, because this happens a lot, especially when we get deep into the semester.
1. *Michael*: Yeah, almost every group asked for more than \$250, so the bulk majority of our group funding requests are going to be put up to vote on GC. So you will probably see at least one per meeting, like every meeting going forward. So just keep that in mind.
 2. *Heramb*: Exactly why I wanted to put it. This goes so that everyone knows what group funding is.
- b. *Heramb*: These are the basic things. If you know this, and obviously you will need some time to get accustomed to all these terminology that are procedural, things we will have to go through during these meetings. But other than that, if you know these basic 4 things, I think you should be able to sail smoothly enough during the meeting. Other than this. I do have a focus group meeting. As the graduate involvement chair, my work is to work with the department reps. What I do in these focus group meetings is, I ask the reps

first, if they want something to be discussed, in specific, what these focus group meetings are is basically it's an informal conversation. I set an agenda where I list types of topics we want to talk about, which I decide by taking it from you in a Google form. So how it will happen is, maybe in 1 or 2 days, you will receive an email from me asking if there are any specific things you want to discuss. You can either have it in a group discussion during the GC meeting, or if you want it to be one-on-one or something personal, you can talk to me about it. I can address that particular situation to that particular executive Board member. This will happen once a week, generally, and I can increase the frequency to twice a week as well. That's depending on how much agendas I get and what kind of responses I get on Google form. But the last semester when I did this, meeting a week was enough. Now here the timing are not going to be constant; it is obviously not going to coincide with the meetings we have on Mondays and the office hours which our advocacy chairs will have. But other than that, it will be flexible. It can happen some day, like at 6 PM on a Thursday or 12 PM on a Tuesday, depending on how my availability is and I'd also be asking on the form that if you have any particular timings for that specific week, so that I can try and accommodate as many people as I can. Please know that the participation is voluntary.

c. Discussions

- i. *Question (unknown)*: What about funding of less than \$250?
- ii. *Heramb*: So if, for example, if there is an XYZ group who has requested for us to fund \$250, that funding requests comes to us (the Executive Board) without it going to the GC.
- iii. *Michael*: To kind of address something around the question... so there are various times where we'll come to the GC when it comes to like our budget decisions. One is like, if a rep or like an executive board member wants to spend more than 2,500 or 25% of their respective budget, that has to be voted on by the GC. Another thing to keep in mind is just in general keep an eye out for emails from us. There's going to be times, occasionally where we need to vote on things outside of regular GC meeting, and then we'll do kind of like an email vote, which we will go through that process when we get there. But just in general keep an eye out for emails from us, because we send a lot of updates to you all.

V. Social Chair Election

a. Description:

- i. Be responsible for the encouragement of the interdepartmental community through the coordination of all aspects of the GRO's social programming. This includes, but is not restricted to, an Orientation BBQ, Coffee Hours, and Happy Hours. VI.1.2.
- ii. Be responsible for and properly manage the GROs budget for these social events. VI.1.2.
- iii. Receive a fellowship for up to and no more than \$2800.00 per term (summer-fall, spring) per Social Chair.

b. Nominee:

- i. Ahan Dalia
- ii. Tram Nguyen
- iii. Soham Shah

c. Result: Tram Nguyen is elected.

VI. Treasurer Update (Esther): New Budget Breakdown

- a. *Esther*: Here is a quick general budget breakdown for this current fiscal year. Basically for our general budget, we have 3 main allocations: one is a general main account where

we have the general funding for happy hour, coffee hour, student programming and we don't have any support for meetings this year. For the payroll, which will be paid to all GRO Eboard members, some office supplies, and the fee for the registration of the National Association of Graduate Professional Society. Except for that, we also have fixed budget according to our advisor; one is for GSI, this will be the budget for our intercampus event. GSPA will be one of the biggest grad student appreciation week in the spring, and this guide will be the budget for the health and wellness use, plus the Summer Sports League and the orientation for the orientation events, which we basically have spent them. And the group fund basically comes from the unused fund plus the ticket sell for the spring formal. Those are some extra income we have. And then the conference travel will be used to cover the conference Grant applications, things like that. The total amount we have is around 171K and we have already spent 7,000 during the orientation through the food truck events. The student programming will be things like trivia, or maybe casino during this semester. And if we are going to have those international student tax fair things like that, that kind of money will also be drawn from this. This is a very broad overview of our funding condition and since this is also just the beginning of the new semester, there's not a lot of spending yet, but later in the semester, at least for the last fiscal year, sometimes we will request funding to be drawn from different categories to help us better plan the events. We will keep you updated.

- b. *Michael*: Just to clarify from points before: like I said, if someone is spending either more than \$2,500, or more than 25% of the respective budget, we bring that to the GC for a vote. Other things are like, for example, for transferring a bunch of money from one bucket to another bucket, we have to have approval from the GC to do that, just because you guys might have an input something like buckets we shouldn't be deleting. But for the most part, the spending, as long as it's like less than that 2,500 or less than that 25%, spending is typically up to that respective e-board member and their budget. I just wanted to... transparency I think is extremely important. I think it also helps kind of you as the GC understand some of the things that are have going on in the e-board. So just want to make sure that we share this budget with you to kind of understand where we're coming from.
- c. *Question (Unknown)*: So that that 5,000... it's already been spent... is that spent from the general, or is that spent...? I guess I didn't... she said that most of the orientation money was already spent, so I assume it's from the orientation...
- d. *Michael*: Over the summer we technically don't have a budget... but we do still get like conference travel request and group funding request and things like that. So some of it also comes from that as well of like covering expenditures over the summer. We try our best to kind of pay for everything by end of spring. But we'll always have at least a couple of things come through the summer that we will have to pay for.
- e. *Esther*: Yeah, and also for the 5,000 spend you're seeing here is currently spend out of the general category, because the GSI and the GSPA haven't really been happening yet. So... I think on this orientation thing, I kind of need to redo it because this orientation should be this first 1,000 here and this then is there. As you can see, this top form is more accurate.... Where we have already spent 1,000 for the upcoming coffee hour. And for the orientation, even though now, like we have total of 6,000, and we have spent like 4,000, but we still have around 2K from the bookstore that haven't been posted yet... so this part is basically done.

VII. Blue Jay Shuttle Update (Heramb)

- a. *Heramb*: I have mentioned something about this in one of the focus group meetings... If you can imagine the Bluejay shuttle to switch run before 6 PM, basically from 9 to 5, there are 2 routes which run the rest of the campus, which is the Remington shuttle and

the Hampden shuttle, and they run pretty close to the campus and they do not go further west. One of the concerns was that students who come from farther west of the campus, or sometimes carrying equipment, or coming early in the morning, especially during winters when there is snow, they need to walk when it's still dark, because they are coming in lab for a particular timepoint or something, that becomes a security concern. When we saw that this is an issue, what she proposed was an alternative route or an extra route, and the blue jay shuttle from...which works from 9 to 5, running which runs further west towards Hampden students, when the students have an opportunity to use that shuttle. We got in conversation with the authorities and advisors, and we talked to the people in charge of the bluejay shuttle services services. We met with them and they gave us a few options there. One of the options they gave us was to do a test run or a test drive to run through the entire route. They showed us that they can do it like for 4 hours from 6:30 AM to 10:30 AM or like an 8-hour route from 9 AM to 5 PM. They gave us a budget breakdown of that, where they told us that if we needed to run, it will cost us around... I remember it was \$1,000 a week for the 4-hour slot, or it will cost around \$1,800 a week if it's around... for the 8 hour shift. So... if we need that route to happen, we'll have to find funding for it or we have to request the dean of student life for that. So we are still in process of contacting them. What we have basically planned is to give them like a menu kind of options like this route, this shuttle from this time to this time, these are the details, these are the stops, these are the amount of funding needed. What they also told us is that you can maybe try to run this from the later half of fall, when winter actually starts to kick in, and the days actually start getting smaller, so that students will actually use this, and if this is successful, and if we are able to find funds from the Dean's office, or where we can, to sustain it for the later fall semester and the spring semester, they might be able to sustain themselves in the next years. We'll now be contacting the Dean's office. We are also thinking about routes to like different points, to include in that shuttle route. A few suggestions made by them.... The reason the Hampton and the Remington Shuttle routes are so close to each other.... that kind of overlapping, is the buildings on the way pay for a part of the shuttle services. So if we want to do not decrease the financial requirements of the Dean of student life, we can actually ask for particular Hopkins Buildings to, if they can... since we will be passing the shuttle in front of their campus... that will make sure that people who are coming in from that building on Hopkins or that particular center or lab have more access to it, they might be able to fund a part of it. If anyone wants to be part of the discussion, feel free to contact me.

b. Discussion:

- i. *Question (Unknown)*: What is the reason why they are charging so much money? They cut off one of these shuttle services over the summer... They recently cut the sizing of the area of shuttles.... They recently cut the Lyft for the School of Medicine, I don't know how much coordination there is but it seems to be now the same service and the Dean of the School of Medicine seems to have step down...
- ii. *Michael*: One, School of Medicine and Homewood are not nearly as integrated as you would think. Hopkins is like extremely de-centralized, which kind of makes so many things very frustrating. The main fees that they're charging is actually for the driver hours, so it's not that they're charging for like having the shuttle itself... is basically like that is the rate that they pay the drivers each week. So we're basically paying for a driver is like what that \$100 a week comes out.... like paying for the driver to actually make those routes, as we would need additional drivers going different routes.
- iii. *Heramb*: I'm sorry it's actually \$1,000 a week...

- iv. *Question (Unknown)*: I just don't really understand how that justifies. I mean, the fuel prices can keep going up, and everything else can keep going up... but does that justify cutting safety for students? The shuttle is also very unreliable as evidenced by many students.
- v. *Question (Unknown)*: Yeah, I I just had a quick question. So with the like price estimates that we're talking about, did they have an estimate of the frequency of the shuttle circulation?
- vi. *Heramb*: So if it's like a 4-hour route and the entire route run takes around 20 min, so on an average.... let's say it's 30 min. It will just be one driver going around. I think right now we are not trying to alter the current routes, but to create a new route altogether, because if you alter the current roads that might affect the buildings which are sponsoring the current roads. So from the discussion we had, personally I believe that they are looking for a new route altogether, rather than changing the current route.
- vii. *Michael*: Just to follow up on a point that Heramb mentioned. The GRO is basically advised by the Vice Dean of WSE and the Vice Dean of KSAS respectively. I meet with them on a bi-weekly basis. We discuss like funds and lots of things like this. So an idea is that we bring this to them and say, you know, is there any support you can give from Homewood and KSAS. Initially, I think the 10,000 semester number scared them a little bit. Not because that the school doesn't have it, but very similar to us, where we like very tightly allocate our budget start of the year, they already have their budget allocations for the start of the year, and 10K kind of out of nowhere will require a lot of shifting. Not to say that it can't be done, but they just gave like an initial pushback on that. But otherwise, like Heramb mentioned, we are looking at various buildings who might sponsor these routes because they have employees. We're looking into a bunch of different options. These are all continuous conversations.
- viii. *Question (Unknown)*: Who is the one who's making decisions about these routes? Is it Johns Hopkins transportation services?
- ix. *Michael*: The transportation office is the one who basically runs these routes. They get funding from various divisions. I think it's just a bunch of different sources funding the Transportation Office, and then the Transportation Office has their own budget for the year, which is why Heramb mentioned that if this works out, this could be something that potentially like allocate into their budget the next time around once the proof of concept goes through, then we don't have fund at all. But I think they are reticent to do that until we have like a proof of concept.

VIII. Open Discussion & Questions

- a. No additional open discussion or questions

IX. Adjournment

- a. *Michael*: Motion to end the meeting
 - i. *Alakarthika*: *IN TEXT* seconded
 - ii. Yea: 28, Nay: 0, Abstain: 1
 - iii. The motion is passed
- b. The meeting adjourns at 7:35 pm.

III. Voting Details

Voting Motion ID	
	1
Motion	Approve to end the 9/6 GC meeting
Biology	
Biomedical Engineering (BME)	
Biophysics	Yea
Chemical & Biomolecular Engineering	Yea
Chemistry	Yea
Civil Engineering	Yea
Classics	Yea
Cognitive Science	Yea
Computer Science	Yea
Economics	Yea
Electrical & Computer Engineering (ECE)	
Engineering Management	Yea
English	Yea
Environmental Health and Engineering (formerly DOGEE)	Yea
EPS (Earth and Planetary Sciences)	
Modern Languages and Literatures (Formerly GRLL)	
History	Yea
History of Science and Technology	
Comp Thought and Literature	Yea
Information Security Inst	
Materials Science & Engineering	Yea
Mathematics	
Mechanical Engineering	Yea
Near Eastern Studies (NES)	
Philosophy	Yea
Physics and Astronomy	Yea
Political Science	
Psychological and Brain Sciences	
Sociology	Abstain
Writing Seminars	
Robotics	
Co-Chair (Michael Wilkinson)	Yea
Co-Chair (Vinay Mahajan)	
Secretary (Karen Yang)	Yea
Treasurer (Esther Xu)	Yea
Admin & Funding (KeFan Zhuo)	Yea
Social (Alakarthika)	Yea
Social (Tram)	
Advocacy (Nicole Chen)	Yea
Advocacy (Caroline Maria John)	
Communications (Nick Zhang)	
Diversity (Soumya Behera)	Yea
Graduate Involvement Chair (Heramb Gupta)	Yea
Intercampus Chair (Louise Chen)	
E-sports coordinator (Emi Lou Mondragon)	
Health & Wellness (Ales Varabyou)	Yea
Security Concerns Chair (Caleb Andrew)	
Yea	28
Nay	0
Abstain	1