

UC **SANTA BARBARA**

Graduate Student Association

General Assembly Meeting Minutes

Date: October 7, 2025

Time: 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Location: GSA Lounge and Zoom

Attendance:

I. Call to Order and Introductions

6:10pm The meeting was called to order by Gustavo Prado Sampaio.
Rapid introductions of officers, representatives, and guests in attendance.

Community Agreements

The following community agreements were reiterated for the assembly:

- No recording of proceedings
- One speaker at a time
- Equitable participation
- Maintenance of decorum

Procedural Framework

The assembly operates under modified Robert's Rules of Order, including procedures for motions, seconds, restatement, debate upon objection, and voting.

II. Approval of Minutes and Agenda

MOTION: To approve prior meeting minutes and current agenda.

ACTION: Motion carried.

III. Administrative and Campus Reports

A. Graduate Advisor, Carlos Nash

Graduate Division Leadership Restructure: Dr. Janine Jones began her role as Graduate Dean effective July 1, 2025. Her role has recently been Officially retitled Associate Vice Chancellor for Graduate Affairs and Anne and Michael Towbes Graduate Dean. The new parallel structure includes:

- This repositions her amongst other individuals, such as Michael Miller, that are directly associated with AVC.
- AVC is now retitled to Executive Vice Chancellor

Purpose: To elevate graduate education advocacy and leverage increased campus support. It also appropriately captures the extent of the duties that the person in that position is responsible for.

New Student Cohort: 905 new graduate students enrolled

- compared to 961 prior year
- historical average approximately 880

B. Graduate Division, Professional Development, Grace Kimball

Communications:

- Weekly Monday newsletter featuring events and resources
- Monthly funding newsletter
- New career exploration newsletter
- Active social media presence: Instagram (@ucsbgraduatedivision), Shoreline, LinkedIn, YouTube, and TikTok

Facilities:

- GSRC Lounge (SRB 1215) open Tuesday–Friday, 9:00 AM–4:00 PM
- Quiet study space available
- Peer drop-in support for careers and funding

Programs and Workshops:

- Leadership and Facilitator Certificate Series (over-subscribed; future sessions planned)
- Budgeting Basics workshop (late October/early November)
- IRB workshop (November, in collaboration with Office of Research)

Grad Writing Network Launch:

- Job market materials workshop: November 4 in GSA Lounge
- Weekly concentrated writing sessions (2 hours in-person, 1 hour via Zoom), beginning Week 4
- Contact: gracetimble@ucsb.edu

C. Vice Chair of the Academic Senate Graduate Council, Mike Potoski

Scope of Graduate Council:

- Curricular oversight: new programs, revisions, course naming changes
- Program reviews
- Response to climate and graduate education issues
- Fellowship and award review for graduate students

GSA Engagement: Laura serves as the GSA representative and provides standing reports. The Council welcomes graduate input routed through members.

Structure: One GSA representative on the committee; subcommittees formed as needed.

D. Student Engagement and Leadership, Carlos Navarro

- Establishing intentional bridge between GSA and Student Affairs, feel free to go to Carlos for any student affairs related questions
- PDF directory of Student Affairs departments and director contacts forthcoming
- RCO (Registered Campus Organization) registration currently open; support available for registration processes and benefits
- Graduate Student Clubs is supported through and collaborated with SEAL

IV. Co-Sponsorships (Requires Assembly Vote)

Background

The prior assembly increased co-sponsorship caps (regular events from \$300 to \$600; conferences from \$600 to \$1,200), but records and bylaws were not updated accordingly when the assembly voted on this in AY24-25. Need to vote for this rewrite once more.

Current Issues Requiring Clarification

- Conflicting figures for conference cap (\$1,200 vs. \$1,400)
- Ambiguity regarding annual organizational caps
- Uncertainty whether conference support is separate from annual cap for other events
- Need for consistency and transparency to avoid inequitable one-off decisions

Emerging Consensus

- Maintain clear, consistent maximum per event and per year
- Consider setting conference/symposium cap distinctly (e.g., \$1,200 or \$1,400)
- Allow additional non-conference events up to an annual cap
- Clarify whether caps reset by academic year
- Confirm applicability to co-sponsorship category only

Action Taken

Language edits began with friendly amendments accepted, but contradictions were identified.

MOTION: To table co-sponsorship bylaw language revision to next meeting.

ACTION: Motion carried.

MOTION: To table broader bylaw revisions section to prioritize budget approval and allow additional input.

ACTION: Motion carried.

Interim Practice: Co-sponsorships will proceed under existing documented \$300 per event cap until bylaw revision is finalized.

V. Co-Sponsorship Requests

A. Open Science Journal Club (Two Events)

Scope: Events on open citations and bias; sharing experiences of open science obstacles; materials and website development

Audience: Open to all graduate students (previously psychology-focused, now broader)

Amount Requested: \$600 total (two events at \$300 each)

MOTION: To approve \$600 co-sponsorship for Open Science Journal Club.

ACTION: Motion carried unanimously.

B. Engineering Graduate Student Field Day (October 23)

Scope: Cross-department engineering community building event; supplies and food for approximately 100–160 attendees

Audience: Targeted to engineering graduate students; open to all

Amount Requested: \$600

- Pointed out large turn out of event amongst graduate students and the need for more funding to continue making the event successful

MOTION: To approve \$300 co-sponsorship for Engineering Graduate Student Field Day.

ACTION: Motion carried unanimously.

C. Researchers Against War (October 20)

Scope: Speaker event on US military environmental impact; tie-in with film screening "Earth's Greatest Enemy" happening the night before

Audience: Graduate and undergraduate students welcome

Amount Requested: \$200

MOTION: To approve \$200 co-sponsorship for Researchers Against War.

ACTION: Motion carried unanimously.

VI. Budget and Finance Report, Laura Snell (filling in for VPFA)

A. Context and Constraints

New UC Overhead Assessment:

- 4% on General Fund
- 7% on fee-locked funds (e.g., travel, childcare)

Financial System Challenges: UC financial system overhaul which happened just this summer impedes precise real-time figures; budget set using estimates in collaboration with Finance office.

- UCSB has always had the power to tax our money, but has not until now. This year brings intense budget cuts in every direction, and they are taking that as a moment to take the overhead from students.
- Acts as an inability to give everyone finite budget numbers because we are estimating what the tax hit is going to be

B. Fund Balances (Estimates)

- General Fund carryforward: approximately \$162,000
- Estimated 2025–2026 General Fund revenue after overhead: approximately \$326,000

Other Restricted Fee Balances (Estimates):

- Grad Club: ~\$37,000
- Childcare: ~\$48,000

- Internship Fellowship: ~\$9,700
- Travel: ~\$99,500
- Summer Bus Pass: ~\$17,600

C. FY 2025–2026 Proposed Operating Budget: \$286,920

Personnel and Lounge Operations:

- Governance and lounge staff salaries: \$67,960
- Benefits: \$3,000
- Lounge supplies: \$30,000
- Bagel Hour: \$9,000

Events and Assembly Operations:

- Events: \$8,000 per quarter
- Assembly food: \$8,800
- Representative stipends: \$23,760 (maximum projection; actuals depend on filled seats)

Advocacy, Committees, and Awards:

- Officer stipends: per constitution (unchanged)
- Travel (advocacy/lobbying): \$20,000
- Executive retreats: \$1,000
- Co-sponsorships: \$20,000
- Committee stipends: as needed based on campus committee service
- Teaching and service awards: per bylaws

Programmatic Partnerships and Student Support:

- GSRC collaborations (Grad Slam, Writing, Lunch & Learn, Graduate Scholars Program)

Subscriptions and Infrastructure:

- Slack (coordination and document distribution)
- Adobe Creative Cloud (design, professional communications, PDF tooling)
- Liability insurance: ~\$3,000
- Laptop loaner program maintenance: \$3,000 annually (10 units active)

MOTION: To approve FY 2025–2026 operating budget of \$286,920 with amendment to denote carryforward at bottom of budget document.

ACTION: Motion carried unanimously.

D. Emergency Grants Update

Prior fiscal year action moved \$75,000 from General Fund carryforward to Emergency Grants. Disbursed approximately \$63,400 to students over summer; remainder (~\$26,350) returned to the General Fund at the start of the academic year.

E. Travel Grant Restructuring (Input Requested)

Issue: Prior "split among all applicants" model yielded awards too small to be useful.

Proposed Solution: Tiered, first-come-first-served system within each term.

Example Tiers:

- Local: \$200 OR \$300
- Domestic: \$300 OR \$400
- International: \$500

Current Status: 55 applications received for fall to date.

Action Required: Assembly members to provide feedback on tier amounts via provided form/QR code before next Executive Board meeting. Please find QR code on slides.

VII. Organizational Structure, Hiring, and Operations

New Stipend/Hourly Roles

Positions to be Filled:

- Legislative Director
- Social Media Coordinator
- Finance Assistant
- Chief of Staff (likely hourly)
- Grad Clubs Coordinator
- Events Coordinator

Purpose: Reach parity with peer campuses; increase capacity for advocacy, programming, communications, finance, and club support.

Compensation Framework:

- Stipended roles: \$6,600 per academic year (paid across quarters; monthly proration for tax efficiency)
- Chief of Staff: hourly (\$16.50/hour per campus scale)
- All stipends pro-rated based on start dates

Hiring Timeline: Imminent.

VIII. Campus Issues

ICE Presence Incident and Bike Citations

Executive Board has met with stakeholders regarding reported ICE presence incidents. Information available upon request. Due to time constraints, in-meeting discussion was not held; follow-up offered post-adjournment.

IX. Action Items

1. **Executive Board:** Circulate corrected co-sponsorship bylaw draft with reconciled amounts and explicit annual cap rules before next General Assembly.
 2. **Assembly Members:** Submit input on Travel Grant tier amounts via provided form/QR before next Executive Board meeting.
 3. **VP Finance (Taylor) and Finance Office (Jenna):** Distribute full budget packet including carryforward line; begin monthly budget reporting to assembly.
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X. Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting.

ACTION: Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at [8:01pm].

Minutes prepared by: Viviana Valle Gome

Minutes approved: [Date]