



**University of Rhode Island  
Graduate Student Association  
Executive Board Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** January 15, 2025

**Time:** 6:07-8:07 pm

**Location:** Zoom

**Members in Attendance:** (Executive Council)

Karolina Wojcik	President
Quinn Tucker	Vice President
Mariam Oladepo	Treasurer
Evelyn Mensah	Secretary
Asta Habtimachael	Past President
Behtom Adeli	Webmaster
Evans Boateng-Boakye	Social Media Manager/Event Coordinator Assistant
Marianne Otoo	GAU Liaison

**Member in Absence**

Waqar Alam	Event Coordinator
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**I. Call to order**

The first GSA E-Board meeting of the Spring semester 2025 was called to order by the president, Karolina Wojcik, at 6:07 PM.

**II. Approval of Minutes Meeting (11/15/2024)**

The meeting minutes from November 15th, 2024, were approved unanimously without amendments after a motion by Quinn Tucker and seconded by Mariam Oladepo.

**III. Reports:**

- President:
  - **Growth and Statistics:** Significant growth in the association's membership was highlighted, with a notable increase in the number of senators from 10 in 2017 to 41 in 2024. The team was encouraged to celebrate their progress and look forward to the future.
  - **University Regulations:** Discussion on the University of Rhode Island's Board of Trustees regulations on using university property. Updates on the administrative policy 1.101.2 and the involvement of various stakeholders, including the GSA executive board, in revising these regulations.

- **Committee Appointments:** Current GSA representatives on various university-wide committees were listed. The need for approximately 13 additional GSA representatives on various committees was identified.
  - **Graduate Student in Sports:** Efforts to ensure graduate students have access to free tickets for university sporting events were discussed.
  - She mentioned an opportunity for a graduate student to become the **Student Assistant to the Ombuds**, which comes with a \$1,000 stipend per semester.
  - Updates on the **1023EZ non-profit status** form and the associated \$275 fee.
- Vice President:
    - Challenges in recruiting senators from specific programs, particularly from underrepresented departments, were discussed.
    - The need to update the elections section of the constitution and bylaws to make the process clearer and more inclusive was highlighted.
    - Quinn shared plans for the upcoming Senate meeting: to send out permission to speak forms.
- Treasurer:
    - Updates on the regalia reimbursements, senators' make-up checks, and the Christmas party expenses led to a discussion about the budgeting and planning of the party.
    - Marianne and Evans questioned the use of GSA funds for the party, suggesting it should have been planned and included in the budget. Asta clarified that if the event was not part of the budget, the e-board could vote and receive funds for it.
    - Discussion on the organization and funding of the holiday party, including the use of the meeting budget for refreshments.
    - Karolina and Quinn apologized and agreed to discuss any future spending with the rest of the board.
    - Clarification on the approval process for expenditures and the need for better communication within the executive board.
- Secretary:
    - Updates on the amendment of the Constitution and the conference, including sending out emails to graduate students and program directors.
    - Karolina, Evelyn, and Asta discussed the management of Gmail accounts and Google storage for the Graduate Student Association (GSA) at the University of Rhode Island (URI). They discussed the challenges of obtaining electronic storage for the GSA, with Karolina suggesting the use of the URI Graduate Conference email account for this purpose. Asta raised concerns about the security implications of sharing passwords for this account. The team agreed to further discuss this issue and report back at the next executive meeting.

- Past President:
  - Asta updated the team on his role in advising on governance matters and assisting with the recruitment of senators with Quinn.
  - He also represents GSA and speaks about GSA where the need is and encourages the e-board to reach out to him with any questions or concerns.
- Webmaster:
  - Behtom, the new webmaster, reported on his work on the GSA website and his plans to add funding resources for graduate students.
- Social Media Manager:
  - Updates on the camera and accessories to help publicize the upcoming graduate conference. Executive members using GSA-branded shirts and Evans wished this would be extended to the senators for publicity.
  - Evans outlined his objectives for improving the GSA's brand and acquiring assets for publicity, including a proposed "Graduate Student Spotlight" initiative.
  - Issues with accessing and posting on the GSA Facebook page were discussed. Evans discussed his challenges with Facebook, specifically his inability to post on the GSA Facebook page despite being a manager.
  - The possibility of creating a new Facebook page and using the Graduate Village page as a temporary measure was considered. The e-board agreed that a new Facebook page should be created, with the Graduate Village page serving as a backup. They also discussed the need for a more professional social media presence, with LinkedIn being a potential platform.
- GAU Liaison:
  - Updates on the GAU's negotiation process for the next three academic years, focusing on improvements in stipends, health insurance, and overall graduate student benefits.

#### IV. Open Forum

- **Unpaid Remuneration:** The e-board discussed Asta's claim for unpaid remuneration for his role as GSA Secretary in the fall of 2019. Asta asserts he was not compensated, and Karolina brings this to the current GSA executive board's attention. The board recognizes the need for documentation, as Treasurer Mariam lacks 2019 records to confirm non-payment. Mariam will check the 2019 bank statements and records before the next meeting. If no evidence of payment is found, the board will vote on retroactively compensating Asta for his service.
- The need for proper documentation and verification before making the payment was emphasized. The importance of maintaining proper records and documentation for future reference was discussed.

#### V. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 PM after a motion by Quinn Tucker and a second by Behtom Adeli.