

Minutes of the Graduate Student Association Board of Directors Meeting  
Thursday, April 2, 2026

Attendance:

Officers & Staff:

President:	S. MacDougall	Programming:	B. Rice
Vice President:	S.A. Mirkoochi	Dir. of Operations:	S. George/ D. Staly
Treasurer:	I. Kolding	Editorial Assistance:	
		MDRF:	

Board Members:

Departmental:

Africana & Americana:	E. McDaniel	ISE:	inactive
Anthropology:	H. Murphy	Indigenous Studies:	inactive
Architecture:	absent	Information Science:	absent
Art:	absent	LAI:	M. Elliott
Audiology:	H. Kerins	Linguistics:	J. Pokorski
Biochemistry:	E. Murray	Materials Design & Info:	A. Neelur
Biological Sciences:	S. Gubbi	Mathematics:	inactive
Biomedical Engineering:	R. Bing	MAE:	absent
Biostatistics:	S. Chen	Media Study:	H. Treadway
Cancer Sciences- RPCCC:	J. Wright/ M. Roberts	Microbiology:	J. Hoyser
Chem. & Bio. Eng:	K. Leatt	Music:	inactive
Chemistry:	A. Abanikanda/ W.K.P. Arachchige	Neuroscience:	absent
CSEE:	N.T. Hesaramir/ S. Marmarchinia	Nursing:	inactive
Classics:	M. Barcarolo	Occupational Therapy:	M. Borgese
Communication:	D. Kulesza	Oral Biology:	C. Matrishin
Comm. Health & H.B.	absent	Pharmaceutical Science:	K. Lu/ T. Adeniyi-Aogo
Comparative Lit:	inactive	Pharm. & Tox:	inactive
CSE:	Y. Verma	Philosophy:	inactive
CSEP:	B. Krause	Physical Therapy:	M. Hogan/ G. VanLangevelde
Earth Science:	absent	Physics:	A. Islam
ELP:	J. Holmes	Physiology & Biophysics:	M. de las Alas
Electrical Engineering:	S. Basu/ O. Savkina	Political Science:	S. Krzemien
English:	B. Rice	Psychology:	E. Lee
Environment & Sus:	L. Bargnesi	RLL:	D. Fleetwood
EEH:	absent	Social Work:	B. Furer
ENS:	M. Schwartz	Sociology:	M. Ngwu
Geography:	D. Dzakuma	Speech:	H. Getsler (absent 1/2)
Global Gender Studies:	S. King-Shaw	Theatre & Dance:	V. Fish
History:	absent	Urban Planning:	absent

International Clubs:

Bangladeshi:	M. Hossain	Iranian:	H. Naeimi
Ghanian:	L. Pakmoni	Latin American:	absent
Indian:	V. Maheshkar	Nigerian:	C. Lawrence

Special Interest Clubs:

CSP&C Reading Group:	K. Persaud	GSPHA:	E. Morton
Graduate Poetics Group:	A.R. Wagner		

Guests:

J. Lippes	Legal
S. Caliste	Psychology
D. Kalita	Election Committee Chair

1. President Sarah MacDougall calls the meeting to order at 6:32pm.

2. Approval of Minutes

- Motion to approve the minutes of the March 4, 2026 Board Meeting
  - Motion: Chemical & Biological Engineering (CBE)
  - Second: English
  - In Favor: 44; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 0
  - Motion passes

3. Announcements

- Programming
  - April 3<sup>rd</sup> - North Campus Java Junction 11:00am – 1:00pm in the Career Design Center (259 Capen Hall)
    - Free Tim Horton's coffee, tea, and donuts for graduate students
  - April 6<sup>th</sup> - More Discount AMC Movie Tickets Now Available
    - \$5 each. 1 per UB ID. Limited quantity available.
    - Be sure to pick up physical tickets from the UB Ticket Office in 221 Student Union
  - April 6<sup>th</sup> - Mindfulness Monday ~ Yoga
    - Free tickets available now at the UB Ticket Office
  - April 9<sup>th</sup> - NSF Funding Workshop, 1:30-3:30pm in 330 Student Union
    - Dr. Jorge Valdes Kroff
  - April 10<sup>th</sup> - South Campus Java Junction, 11:00am – 1:00pm in 105 Harriman Hall
    - Free Tim Horton's coffee and donuts for graduate students
  - April 11<sup>th</sup> – Buffalo Bandits Lacrosse Game vs. Rochester Knighthawks
    - \$10 each. 2 per UB ID. Limited quantity available.
  - April 13<sup>th</sup> - Discount Buffalo Bisons Flex Passes Available
    - \$10 each. 2 per UB ID. Limited quantity available.
    - Be sure to pick up physical tickets from the UB Ticket Office in 221 Student Union
  - April 17<sup>th</sup> – Know Your Rights Workshop, 2:00pm on Zoom
    - Anna Porter, Senior Manager of Community Engagement for Western New York from the New York Immigration Coalition
  - April 24<sup>th</sup> – Know Your Rights Workshop, 2:00pm on Zoom
    - Amanda Opperman, Staff Attorney for Journey's End Refugee Services
  - May 1<sup>st</sup> - Final North Campus Java Junction, 11:00am – 1:00pm in 145 C&D Student Union
  - May 4<sup>th</sup> - Last batch of Discount AMC Movie Tickets Available for this year
  - May 4<sup>th</sup> - Discount Buffalo Zoo Tickets Available
    - \$10 each. 2 per UB ID.
  - May 8<sup>th</sup> - Final South Campus Java Junction 11:00am – 1:00pm in 105 Harriman Hall
  - May 15<sup>th</sup> – Hairspray at Shea's 710 Theatre
    - \$25 each. 2 per UB ID.
  - Coming Soon!!
    - Shakespeare in Delaware Park - July 11<sup>th</sup> and August 15<sup>th</sup>
    - Moondance Cruise – July 17<sup>th</sup>
    - Discount Six Flags Darien Lake Tickets
    - And much more!
- GSA Summer Hours will begin on Monday, May 11<sup>th</sup>
  - Monday – Thursday, 8:30am to 4:00pm, closed on Fridays
  - Regular hours will resume with the start of the Fall semester on August 24<sup>th</sup>

4. Report of the President

- GSA President, Sarah MacDougall, again reminds all students that the proper method for contacting her is by email at [gsa-president@buffalo.edu](mailto:gsa-president@buffalo.edu). Please do not search for her personal phone number or her mother's phone number online and try to make contact that way.
- Spam Warning! If you receive an email that appears to be coming from the GSA President, or any other GSA representative, asking for money or gift cards, it is a scam. Please disregard the message and/or report it to UBIT or the proper authorities.
- GSA Referendum Vote Reminder
  - Every two years SUNY requires that we put the mandatory student activity fee up for a referendum vote on whether the fee should remain mandatory or become voluntary.
  - A mandatory vote ensures funding for GSA clubs, programs, and services.
  - There is no mechanism available to collect voluntary fees, so if the referendum fails, GSA will cease to exist.
  - We will not be able to ask for a re-vote until Spring, 2027.

- Please remind your constituents of the importance of this vote and ask them to make an informed decision during the online vote next week April 6<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>.

#### 5. Report of the Vice President

- Nothing to report

#### 6. Report of the Treasurer

- GSA Funding Account Balances
  - There are six funding requests up for approval this month, so balances are as follows:
    - Special Activity: \$10,000 to start; \$1,200 recommended this month; \$1,690 remaining
    - Interdepartmental Activity: \$3,000 to start; \$1,000 recommended this month; \$1,500 remaining
    - Symposium: \$10,000 to start; \$1,600 recommended this month; \$1,968 remaining
    - Scholarly Publication: \$6,000 to start; \$0 recommended this month; \$0 remaining
    - Community Outreach: \$3,000 to start; \$250 recommended this month; \$2,750 remaining
- Conference Funding
  - 38 requests were received in April for \$20,425.10; 38 were approved for \$20,425.10
  - Beginning balance: \$225,000.00; Remaining balance: \$60,560.47
- Club Budgets
  - Clubs will have until June 1<sup>st</sup> to requisition any remaining funds and until July 15<sup>th</sup> to spend them.
    - All requisitions must be accompanied by club minutes pre-approving the expenses (at a club meeting that meets quorum) by the June 1<sup>st</sup> deadline, all in-person events must be approved on UBLinked, and food permits must be secured, if necessary.
  - The new fiscal year begins on August 1<sup>st</sup>.
    - This year's budget cannot be used to pay for next year's expenses.

#### 7. Old Business

- No Old Business

#### 8. New Business

- Early Club Recognition
  - Sevda explains that Special Interest and International clubs must be recognized by the Board of Directors each year. Clubs who are in good standing are eligible to apply for early recognition so that their budgets will begin automatically at the start of the new fiscal year on August 1<sup>st</sup>. All clubs listed submitted the proper documentation and are recommended for the maximum funding available. International clubs are eligible for \$850 and Special Interest clubs will receive \$400 to start the year and up to an additional \$400 after the December 2026 Board meeting, once all clubs have been funded.
  - Representatives from Bangladeshi, Ghanaian, Indian (GISA), Iranian, Nigerian, Center for the Study of Psychoanalysis and Culture Reading Group, Graduate Poetics Group, and Graduate Student Pre-Health Association all give a brief description of their clubs and their missions.
  - Motion to approve all clubs as a block at the recommended amounts
    - Motion: Geography
    - Second: Africana & Americana Studies (AAS)
    - In Favor: 42; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 1
    - Motion passes
- Funding Requests
  - Isaac mentions that the Finance Committee has reviewed all the proposals and is recommending full funding for each.
  - Representatives from Electrical Engineering, Civil, Structural & Environmental Engineering (CSEE), Microbiology, Global Gender & Sexuality Studies (GGSS), Romance Languages & Literatures (RLL), and Psychology all give a brief description of their Special Activity, Interdepartmental Activity, Symposium and Community Outreach events.
  - Motion to approve all funding requests as a block at the recommended amounts
    - Motion: Geography
    - Second: Cancer Sciences- RPCCC
    - In Favor: 40; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 1
    - Motion passes
- Approval of 2026-2027 Budgets
  - Isaac explains that we must pass two budgets, one if the referendum passes and one if the referendum fails. He states that enrollment is trending down, so our anticipated revenues are being reduced accordingly. The Finance Committee is proposing a minor change to reduce the amount of funding allocated to Community Outreach by \$1,500, which has been traditionally underutilized, and moving that additional funding to the Special Activity line to be able to fund more programs next year. Most other changes are due to contractual obligations and/or projected cost increases due to inflation. He also mentions that while the budget shows a deficit of nearly \$140,000, we do not anticipate spending all

of this year's funds, so cash carryover balances and reserve account savings will be used to make up the difference needed to continue funding most allocations at their current levels.

- Isaac presents the proposed budgets and reviews the allocations line by line, then calls for questions. He explains that the second budget, which will be used if the referendum fails, will only fund those expenses which we are contractually obligated to pay using reserve funds. No club funding, programming, special funding, conference funding, or new MDRF grants will be offered.
- Motion to approve the proposed budgets
  - Motion: Chemical & Biological Engineering (CBE)
  - Second: Africana & Americana Studies (AAS)
  - In Favor: 45; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 0
  - Motion passes
- Isaac reminds everyone that the tentatively scheduled Board meeting to be held on April 22<sup>nd</sup> will now be cancelled since the budgets have passed.
- Election Committee Update
  - Devaleena Kalita, Election Committee Chair, presents the candidate ballot and the referendum ballot to the Board of Directors for their review and approval
    - Motion to approve the ballots
      - ❖ Motion: Geography
      - ❖ Second: Social Work
      - ❖ In Favor: 41; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 0
      - ❖ Motion passes
  - Devaleena explains the format for the Candidate Q&A
    - Two minutes for each candidate to introduce themselves
    - Candidates will answer 1 question from the Election Committee. Each candidate has two minutes to answer
    - Board members will be allowed to ask Candidates questions in an open forum for up to 15 minutes.
    - Each candidate will be given 60 seconds to respond or choose not to answer.
    - 60 seconds for closing remarks for candidates
  - Each candidate gives their introduction and is asked a question by the EC.
    - Sarah wants to work on advocacy challenges by getting student to bring more issues directly to the E-board so that they can take them to the proper university officials.
    - Sherika does not plan to reinvent the wheel, but will work with students, Board members and committees to instate the programs and services they want and need.
    - Dan will have an open-door policy to find out what it is students want and will work with the Finance Committee to find better ways to serve clubs and identify issues in need of addressing.
  - Officer Elections will take place online via a link on the GSA website.
    - Polls open Monday, April 6<sup>th</sup> at 12:00am until Thursday, April 9<sup>th</sup> at 11:59pm.
    - Results will be announced on Friday, April 10<sup>th</sup> on the GSA website and via the listserv.

#### 9. Roll Call and Adjournment

- Motion to Adjourn at 7:34pm
  - Motion: Geography
  - Second: Global Gender & Sexuality Studies (GGSS)
  - In favor: 44; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 0
  - Motion passes
- Reminder that the April 22<sup>nd</sup> Board meeting is now cancelled, so have a great end to the semester!