

GPSS Senate Meeting Minutes

October 16, 2025

Meeting:

10-16-2025 from 5:30pm - 7:00pm hybrid in the GLC MPR and over zoom
Open forum runs from 5:00pm - 5:30pm.

[Zoom Link](#) | [Sign-In Link](#)

Senators: 32

Proxy: 2

Guest: 4

Quorum? Yes/ **No**

Agenda:

1. Opening Remarks and Senator sign-in
2. Presentation by Carries Cox (Mailing & Transport Services)
 - a. Carrie has worked at Virginia Tech for almost eighteen years and is an alumna of Virginia Tech
 - b. The mission of this department is to serve the VT community by providing products and essential services so that others can achieve success
 - c. Oversee delivery of all individual and departmental mail on campus (last year, this was over 153,000 packages). Same day delivery.
 - d. 426 mail stops in the Blacksburg area
 - e. Create hokie passports for students, faculty, and staff
 - f. Handle transportation services, including parking services, fleet services, sustainable transportation, and air transportation services
 - g. Over 14,000 parking spaces on campus (but not all are near the core of campus, based on the master plan of campus to build more in the core of campus and move parking to external areas of campus).
 - h. Parking garages and lots are funded through auxiliary administration (it does not come from student fees). All auxiliary departments must pay part of their income to campus services.
 - i. Park Mobile is going to replace parking meters.
 - j. Carpool permits are allowed, so you can buy one pass for two cars as long as two people will ride in it (reduced in cost from an individual permit).

- k. Bike, Bus, Walk permit give you 32 free daily parking passes to use throughout the year
 - l. Remote Parking permits are 10% of the annual permit price
 - m. Evening Only Permits allow you to move to faculty spots in the evening and cost \$75
 - n. Park Mobile is available for paid hourly parking
 - o. Transportation office looking to reduce single-person vehicles coming to campus
 - p. Alexandria & DC is more expensive due to limited spaces
 - q. Hokie Bike Hub gives free self-service bike repair and has workers who will help teach you how to do bike repair. Secure bike storage available in the Perry Garage--\$30 per semester or \$50 per year, access to the bike garage through Hokie Passport
 - r. EV Charging stations available in squares and fleet lots
 - s. App for carpooling to campus (Age Mile)
 - t. Blacksburg Transit—new transit loops opened last year, three cross campus. Added new buses, “Beamer Way” and the Campus Shuttle and Hokie Express, to help transport students around the Blacksburg area.
 - u. Fleet Services—one of the few universities in VA that has a dedicated vehicle rental fleet. They offer vehicle rentals, maintenance, and fuel services. Have 12-person passenger vans as well. One rental rate! Working on key boxes so vehicles can be picked up or returned any time.
 - v. Mobility Framework Update—the framework is a guide for how different transportation systems connect and layer together across campus to make safe and effective transportation. Primarily focused on Blacksburg campus and connecting external campuses. Please give feedback at: <https://www.facilities.vt.edu/planning-documents/campus-master-plan/mobility-framework-update.html>
 - w. Blacksburg manages our bus system because they have access to Municipal funds from the federal government so VT can save money and have a robust transportation system.
 - x. Blacksburg Transit App— working on updating the app due to faulty features, but the update will take some time. Also looking into other options for a better app server. The app, for now, should serve as a guide.
 - y. Evening parking pass has increased in price; enforcement has increased post-COVID and now goes until 10 pm—gains more money for the university because enforcers work on a wage.
 - z. Carrie will look up how much of the total revenue evening parking passes makes up (email her after the event)
 - aa. The goal of transit routes is to try to reduce wait time between buses to 15 minutes.
 - bb. There is a QR code on your permit that will show you where your permit can park.
3. Presentation by Yugasha Bakshi and Morgan Ralph (Climate Action Survey)

- a. We're at the halfway mark for the climate survey action plan (10-year plan from 2020). Looking for feedback on how the goals are going and what goals we should consider for the next ten years
 - b. Climate Action is a shared governance body within the university that works towards implementing the fifteen climate action goals with subcommittees for each goal to work on actionable plans and steps each academic year
 - c. Office of Sustainability was made on campus in 2009 and the climate survey was designed in 2019; the plan was approved in 2021 by the BOV
 - d. 15 Goals available on the climate survey website
 - e. Three Key Assessments being used to evaluate each goal: what is working well? What needs improvement and why? What are the specific needs and recommendations for future progress?
 - f. How to Get Involved:
 - i. Attend CASE Committee meetings (upcoming on 27th Oct.)
 - ii. Join a Subcommittee (focus on specific areas like waste, energy reduction, etc. Students can bring fresh perspectives and help shape strategies)
 - iii. Engage in sustainability projects (volunteer with sustainability office)
 - iv. Education and awareness (share survey and opportunities with constituents)
 - g. Questions can be sent to sustainability@vt.edu and you can join subcommittees by emailing kristinac@vt.edu
4. General Notes
5. Reports
- a. Exec Board Reports
 - i. President
 - 1. Omnibus Forum Event on Wednesday, October 22. Opportunity to confidentially share ideas, strategies, and challenges about advisor, peer, and academic dynamics.
 - 2. A three-part workshop where you will learn to handle advisor relationships (setting expectations, keeping on track, and handling conflict)
 - 3. Advocacy events from the previous week were successful. Feedback told us there is a desire to increase SVPE events— send ideas to the SVPE office for new events.
 - ii. ~~Vice President~~
 - iii. ~~Director of Advocacy~~
 - iv. Director of Finance
 - 1. SAFAB budget is being slowly spent down
 - 2. We made money by receiving money back from reallocation fees
 - 3. Keep an eye out for responses from GSBB, they are being spent out over the next few weeks. Check if they asked you for more information about the request via email.

4. Students who want to start new student organizations should ask Kesley at kjennings@vt.edu
- v. Director of Programs
 1. Travel Fund Program—applications are open and are due Nov. 10. Need Volunteers for TFP Application reviewers
 2. Next open program is cap and gown program which will open October 27th, applications are first come first serve so submit early
- vi. Director of Events
 1. Little Hokie Hand Me Down
 - a. Donations collected from Oct 13-Nov 10. Drop off at women's shelter or GLC front desk. Tell Professors who may have kids as well!
 - b. Grad Students can receive items Nov 11, 12-6 PM and Nov 12, 8AM-12PM
 - c. Everyone can collect Nov 11, 4-6 PM and Nov 12, 8AM-12PM
 2. Scary Movie Night
 - a. November 1 at 7PM
 - b. Free food and sweet treats
- b. Director of Communications
 - i. Follow us on Instagram to keep up with events
 - ii. Contact Taylor with ideas about GPSS website
- c. BOV Representative
- d. Commission/Committee Reports
 - i. GPSS Constitution is being updated; let us know if you have ideas about new bylaws or policies
 - ii. Resolution to change the day grad students can withdraw from classes has passed to move it to last day of classes
 - iii. President Sands has submitted Exigent Circumstances to answer DEI cuts from the federal government—resolutions being read to affirm beliefs in acts of civil rights, diversity, and inclusion.
 - iv. Leave policy is being worked on to create more specific language regarding time away for GA's, GRA's, and TA's. Ideas have included a supplemental personal contracts between advisor and student.
- e. Ad hoc reports
 - i. No reports
6. Old Business
7. New Business
 - a. Election for Director of Advocacy—Mohammad El Kihal
 - i. Third-year Ph.D. student in the engineering department
 - ii. Wants a position to give back to the VT community and to continue growing as a leader

- iii. Wants to focus on the results from last year's climate survey and work on fixing issues with misconduct and mistreatment
 - iv. Know Your Rights Series continued and Empowering Student Voices Series
 - v. Wants to engage with senators from all departments to have a greater view of what is happening in all of our communities
 - vi. Wants to increase access of students to the GPSS Board and assign tasks to senators to keep up with students needs
 - b. New Provost Final Candidate—Julia Prost (former dean of engineering). Forum to tell the new provost about needs is on Tuesday, October 21.
8. Closing Remarks
- f. Next meeting is October 30