

GPSS Senate Meeting Minutes:

September 18, 2025

Meeting:

9-18-25 from 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm hybrid in the GLC MPR and over Zoom

Open forum runs from 5:00 pm to 5:30pm.

In attendance:

Attendees: 56

Senators: 45

Quorum reached: **Yes**/No

Agenda:

1. Opening Remarks and Senator sign-in
2. General Notes
3. Session on Career and Professional Development
 - a. Discover how Career and Professional Development can guide your growth and help you achieve your career goals.
 - b. You will get to know more about:
 - i. How should I tailor my résumé for industry vs academia?
 - ii. What campus resources can boost my internship search this semester?
 - iii. How can I use LinkedIn effectively to connect with recruiters?
 - iv. What skills should I build now for jobs in my field after graduation?
 - c. What do you know about CPD?
 - i. They collaborate with student organizations
 - ii. They have pathway lead advisors, and you can work with them by reaching out
 - d. Smith Career Center
 - i. Corner of Washington Street and W. Campus
 - e. CPD

- i. Serve people all year long except university closed dates; serve alumni 2 years post graduation for free
- f. Resources
 - i. Career Advising
 - 1. In person, Zoom, and phone
 - ii. Grad appointments 30- 60 min
 - iii. Career.vt.edu
 - iv. Job search platforms
 - v. Handshake
 - 1. Make appointments
 - 2. Workshops
- g. Career advising
 - i. Job/ internship search
 - ii. Career exploration
 - iii. Career fair prep
 - iv. Resume/CV/Cover letter
 - v. LinkedIn + networking
 - vi. Interview prep
 - vii. Practice interview
 - viii. Negotiating an offer
- h. There's a picture of the website on the landing page. Can click on some virtual tools
- i. Career pathways
 - i. Industry-based model based on post-graduation plans
 - ii. Book an appointment via a pathway; you can have multiple, so pick the one you like
 - iii. You can book with a specific advisor
 - iv. Each pathway has its own page on the website, so it has curated information directly related to that area
 - v. Blogs, videos, and information where you see yourself going
 - vi. Self-assessment
 - 1. Clifton Strengths
 - 2. Grad school-specific resources: My IDP and Imagine PhD Academic Job Search
 - vii. Teaching statements
 - viii. Research statements
- j. Make appointments via handshake or by calling the office 5402316241
- k. A professional photo booth can do personal editing
 - i. Digital photo to send directly to yourself
 - ii. Self-service booth
- l. Career outfitters
 - i. Professional attire, new and gently used donations
 - ii. Free of charge for VT students
 - iii. By appointment; schedule via handshake

- iv. One-on-one assistance for color, fit, size, and style
- v. Check for their pop-up shops too
- m. Workshops for Grad students
 - i. She conducts each semester in courses such as a seminar course
 - ii. Topics like AI, resumes, job search, and negotiation
 - iii. During that lunch time period, 12 – 1
- n. Career Research Exploration – Stepping blocks
 - i. Career insight
 - ii. Can see where VT alumni have been hired, their salary, and other information to see where they have gone and leverage this network
 - iii. You can see all the data on search360 about the industry outside of VT alumni
 - iv. Vault Guides
 - 1. Job guides to see anything career-related such as the top 25 banking companies
- o. Job and Internship search platforms
 - i. Handshake
 - ii. Career Shift
 - iii. GoinGlobal
 - 1. H1B/ OPT database; interested in international professionals, work authorization, and other information (platform only for a few months)
- p. Higher Ed+ modules
 - i. Select higher ed+
 - ii. Will soon be accessible from the graduate student page on the website
 - 1. Publication modules available
- q. AI/ML Powered Platform - VMock
 - i. Used to review your resume and get AI feedback with practice interview questions and an elevator pitch.
- r. Questions
 - i. Sometimes resumes are tailored by field. Are you able to look at a resume/CV by department?
 - 1. Have you looked at CVs in your field? She also performs a lot of narrative airbrakes as it relates to applicant tracking, particularly when AI is being used. And compares it to the job description.
 - ii. Do you have any resources for companies that have hired alums by affinity?
 - 1. I am not sure about the
 - iii. If we are trying to explore careers in early career, what kind of jobs are available, and what should be the best place to go?

1. On the website, starting with self-exploration and others about labor statistic status, she can teach you to use generative AI, LinkedIn, and mock interviews through an appointment
 - iv. Can you talk about liaisons you have
 1. Career pathway leads; lead advisors with each pathway with more concentrated knowledge of the designated area. This information is on the website.
 - v. At what year in someone's PhD program is one supposed to start contacting you for CV preparation?
 1. Start early with this; it helps you save time and build it.
Teaching resource in service: what you can do to add service, research, teaching, etc.
 - vi. Preparing to meet with an advisor; tips to prepare for the time
 1. Depends on the meeting type; i.e., resume or CV, have those; job tailoring, search for someone to talk about. Think about what employees want
 2. Send them in advance if they are longer reading pieces, like a teaching statement, so she can read and give you feedback
 3. Mock interview; send the job descriptions so they are tailored to this job, she will search for information on Glassdoor, and see if the keywords are on your resume
 - vii. Connections with Alumni
 1. No direct relationships like a survey, but through the platform, you see alum information.
 - viii. How is the connectivity for students in the DC and Roanoke area
 1. Workshops are Zoom or hybrid
 2. In DC Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, she will be doing workshops
 3. In Roanoke, she's doing a workshop in person in October
 - ix. Faculty and Staff resources are where you can request her for a class
4. Approval of minutes from the Sept 4th meeting.
 - a. Motion and seconded
 - b. Yes, votes
 - c. Motion passed
 5. Reports
 - a. Exec Board Reports
 - i. Vice President
 1. Committee & Commissions Assignment:
 - a. Compare the meeting time of the committee or commission you are assigned to in the Governance calendar
 - b. Want to increase representation

- c. Please let us know of any time conflict **before 1:00 p.m. on Friday, 19th, 2025.**
 - d. Otherwise, we will assume that you are fine with the meeting time.
 - e. email: gpss@vt.edu
 - f. We need interest in
 - g. Commission on Administrative and Professional Faculty Affairs, Commission on Undergraduate Student Affairs, University Curriculum Committee for Gen Ed, Parking Appeals Committee
 - 2. Committee & Commissions Signups:
 - a. Every Senator is **expected to sit on at least one** committee or commission
 - b. Committee interest form, QR Code:
<https://forms.office.com/r/x3CE5NjX9J?origin=lprLink>
 - 3. Senator Prizes: Special recognitions & Certificates (80% attendance)
 - 4. Contact me: **gpss@vt.edu**
- ii. Director of Advocacy
- 1. Departmental RSO/GSOs
 - a. We want More department organizations
 - b. Registration window opens first week of October
 - c. The interest form is on the website, and it will show the instructions on how to fill it out
 - 2. Advocacy Event Series
 - a. “Empowering Graduate Student Voices” coming up
 - b. Please sign up by October 1st
 - c. They have been posted on Instagram
 - d. You can learn how to speak to people in leadership
 - e. The second event will be learning about gender protection and how to fight against gender based violence
- iii. Director of Finance
- 1. We will begin hearing requests on **Tuesday, Sept 23rd!**
 - a. After this, we will meet every other week and hear requests as they come in.
 - 2. Overall GPSS budget
 - a. We want to use all these funds, and if you have any ideas, please get in touch with the GPSS Executive Board at the email address
- iv. Director of Programs

1. **Travel Fund Program (TFP):** Winter cycle opens October 13 – November 10 for conference travel between January 1 and March 31.
 2. **Graduate Research Development Program (GRDP):** Awards will be announced in early October. Spring cycle opens November 17.
 3. **Volunteer opportunities:** Will be looking for volunteers for TFP reviewers during the Winter cycle.
- v. Director of Events
1. **GPSS Senator Volunteers** needed for the grad school fair on October 6!
 - a. Free lunch included! Plus one free drink at the Senator Social. Sign up here: [Graduate and Professional School Fair Volunteer Sign-Up](#)
- vi. BOV Representative
1. **Updates:**
 - a. Graduate Resource Fair was a success with 100+ attendees
 - b. **Additional BOV meeting** at the end of September (likely 9/30)
 2. Topic: Increasing Athletics Funding
 3. **Requests:**
 - a. Complete this short survey about your athletics engagement:
 - b. <https://forms.office.com/r/8d0LkUSQFE>
 - c. Please send out to your constituents
 - d. Meeting attendee shared about the BOV meeting: a new law was passed ruling that athletes have to be paid, and since the school wants to be competitive, they have to pass a considerable budget.
 - e. Another attendee stated: There is a question in the survey that says what you want the administration to know, and you could say, “This causes a financial burden to me to increase the athletic fee by 46%.”
- vii. President
1. **Climate Survey Working Group:**
 2. **Only 25% of the students completed the survey**
 3. **Climate Survey Results - Grad School Level (Primary Concern Areas):**
 - a. Department Climate and Inclusive Environments
 - b. Incidents of Harassment or Mistreatment
 - c. Support – Academic, Grad School, and **Accessibility**
 - d. Wellbeing

4. If you are interested in joining the work group, email me [at poojabhagawat@vt.edu](mailto:poojabhagawat@vt.edu)
 - a. Preference given to those experienced in survey data analysis and report writing, or with a strong interest!
 5. Do we have to be a senator to be in this group?
 - a. No, anyone can
- b. Commission/Committee Reports
- i. Ainul Huda: Instructor Salary Taskforce group
 1. Collecting comprehensive data encompassing things like instructor workload, compensation, and overall rating of being at VT
 - ii. Philip, university athletics meeting
 1. The football coach was relieved of his position
 2. There is an ongoing
 3. Over the summer
 - a. NIL changes occurred
 4. Revenue sharing – in addition to scholarships, they can provide \$20.5 million over that amount to stay competitive with other schools
 - a. Comes from student athletic fees and other avenues
- c. Ad hoc reports
- i. No reports at this time.
- d. CGPSA Chair
- i. CGPSP Working Group to Formulate University Policy to Combat Unprofessional Behaviors Towards Graduate and Professional Students
 - ii. Q1: What kind of cases does this group cover?
 1. Anything that is non-Title IX related
 - iii. Q2: How is the caseload?
 1. Cases are underreported, so the graduate school looks at 435 + cases, and around 400 of them are against faculty members
 - iv. Q3: When did the process begin?
 1. This started 3 years ago, a study on the mistreatment of students. The president of GPSS initiated the climate survey, which achieved a 60% response rate. They discovered that a) cases are underreported, b) they knew where to go, and c) they do not trust the leadership
 2. There is no defined threshold for misconduct.
 - v. Go up the chain of command for concerns
 - vi. We're aiming to place repercussions for people who do bad things
 - vii. Rachel Meis and Ronnie were on the original council
 - viii. [Flowchart](#) (was explained in the Zoom meeting around 1:50:00)
 - ix. Goals:
 1. Cultural changes as a council and what administrative

2. There will be a form to fill out for the official grievance process
 3. Student participation; those who take part in the panels must go through training to be a part of the panel. Kind of like the work with the honor system
 4. We now have a representative in the room who can share more information
 - x. Last q
 1. We can show more data in the faculty survey and tell people that the GPSS is doing something to implement change
 2. Education and outreach are key; trying to do word of mouth, pass them out in orientation, etc.
 - xi. Speak with Ronnie if you want to be more involved in the process.
6. Old Business
 - a. No reports at this time.
7. New Business
 - a. No reports at this time.
8. Closing Remarks
 - e. Events, reminders, communication
 - i. All Senators are expected to communicate with their constituents
 - ii. Next GPSS Meeting – **October 2**
 - iii. Next UC Meeting – **October 6, 2420 North End Center & Zoom**