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Here's the agenda:

- 05:30 | Call to Order
 - ☞ Approval of Last Meeting's Minutes
 - <https://forms.office.com/r/MMqSQcqmi0>
 - **Nazua Idris:** I motion to approve the GPSA meeting minutes from 11/4/2024.
 - **Amir Ali Shahmansouri:** Second
 - Approval of the 11/4/2024 senate meeting minutes.
 - Yes: 46
 - No: 0
 - Abstain: 0
 - **Marwa Aly:** We have reached a majority, and the motion has passed.
 - ☞ Approval of the Agenda
 - <https://forms.office.com/r/cbDYx7GV5e>
 - **Nazua Idris:** I motion to approve the GPSA Agenda for 11/18/2024.
 - **Amir Ali Shahmansouri:** Second
 - Approval of the 11/18/2024 Senate Agenda.
 - Yes: 48
 - No: 0
 - Abstain: 1
 - **Marwa Aly:** We have reached a majority, and the motion has passed.
- 05:35 | New Business
 - VPLA Candidate's Speech (5 mins each) and voting
 - **Nazua Idris:** Each candidate will speak for 5 minutes to present their case and argument on why they should be VPLA. Then, we will move on to allow

senators to ask questions to each candidate.

➤ Ali Maleki, Senator of EECS

- **Ali Maleki:** I'm Ali Maliki, and I'm a candidate for vice president of legislative efforts. I'm a 4th year PhD. Student in electrical engineer engineering. And hopefully, I have another year to finish my PhD. And also I was in GPSA. I had the opportunity to be in GPSA since last year. Last year, I had the opportunity to work with Amir on an Event and a Scholarship committee, and also I was nominated for best Senator of the year. I am working with Rose on a student and university affairs committee this year. I'm a research assistant and teacher assistant in EECS, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science Department. In each position that I was in, I tried my best to help students help the graduate students help the people around me, and last year, I won the best teacher assistant award from the department. Also, in the past 3 years, I was Ipp. I was one of the members of Ipp's mentors. It's a voluntary job in the university to help international students fit in and feel more welcome when they come to the Wsu, so I had the opportunity to work with the international office 3 years ago. I know that PAL is working on a lot of things. And I know we have some issues. That's why I'm trying to cover the problems that we already have, like campus accessibility and transportation services. I know PAL is working on making the bus more accessible for all the students. Also, I want to advocate for affordable graduate housing. I don't have the. I didn't have the opportunity to live in graduate housing because the line was very long for us to get that. But I know many of my friends live there. And they have some issues. Also, I would like to improve access to health care. It's very important. Healthcare and mental health issues are very important for graduate students, and also childcare services are very important for many graduate students. Many of my friends have children to care for, and I know there is an issue for them. Also, I know it's a big goal. But I can talk to you at the Federal level to get more support for graduate research. I'm trying to do that also. Another thing that I know is that many a student don't have funding during summer, and also the dependent of them cannot work. So I know PAL was working on that last year to help dependents of the students have the ability have the opportunity to work. I'm also trying to work on that I went through the bylaws and look at the responsibility. I know there are many responsibilities for VPLA, like representing graduate student concerns at the local, state, and federal levels also, advocating for student-friendly policies and resources, and organizing and leading advocacy. Events are one of the important responsibilities, and building relationships with the university leaders to support GPSA is another important thing that Vpls should do so, based on all the things that I mentioned. I think I can be a good candidate for this position, and I hope we can collaborate definitely. I will ask PAL for guidance. He will help me, but I think I can be a good fit, and with your help, I can help

graduate a student to have a better student life. Thank you.

➤ Desmond Nanayaw Aboagye, Senator-at-Large of the College of Veterinary Medicine (Neuroscience)

- **Desmond Nanayaw Aboagye:** Thank everyone. I don't know if there was a meeting slated for today. However, I'm still grateful that everyone could show up today to support us, and special thanks to James for believing in me and sending in this nomination on my behalf. I appreciate that. So my name is Desmond, and I come from Ghana. and as many of you may already know, Ghana is in the west of Africa, and one of the key distinctions between those of us who come from that part of the world and, for instance, the US. Is our consistency an inevitability to living under very limited resources? So choosing me as a VPLA not only showed a clear representation of diversity on the executive board, but it also brought in somebody who has the training and the cultural background to deal with strict management and ensure prudent use of resources. And so, for me, one of the key things that I wanted to talk about today is probably going to be. The last thing I'll mention is how together as GPSA. Senators, we can work, for instance, with housing, as it was clear when we invited the housing officials to come here in the previous meeting. Most of us are not happy with the situation with the house, and I have experience with them, I think that as far as graduate students are paying for this, we should have the best service. Now I have. I have also served in a lot of positions back home throughout my college education and also here, and for me, one of the key things is ensuring that we can advance, right? So, my most recent position was the Vice President of the Biology Graduate Student Association, and one of my key responsibilities was leading the organization of the research Symposium it was clear, even from the leaders of the Department and the faculty themselves, that that scientific expo or research expo was one of the new ways of doing things that they have they had seen, and this also awarded me an exceptional service award from the from the department Throughout my leadership roles. I am interested in moving forward advancement, key

advancement. But one thing that I am also very interested in is clear communication and commitment. So, for me, when I am in a position, I am looking to help give back to the community or society. But it is also important for me that I can give back. And so, for instance, with this position, I realized at some point that my inputs or ideas were not being implemented or were not being helpful towards the development of the association. And so I should point out that at some point, I had to resign and let someone else take the position so that they could move forward. This is very important as a leader, knowing when to push your ideas forward and when to realize that some of your ideas are not going to help society. And so you need to back down. Now, the two ideas that I think would be very helpful for the greater populace of graduate and professional students, especially those of us who do not come from the US. And even those of us who come from different parts of us who move long distances to come and stay here, how we can get housing to be one of the smoothest ways that you can simply get into Washington or Pullman and feel comfortable. Now, when I got here as an international student, it was about 28 hours of flight. I got into my apartment, and there was no mattress. There was no table, no couch; I had to sleep on the floor. That was one of the worst situations I had put myself in, but also when it was at the end of the semester. I saw a lot of the students also just disposing of their mattresses because they could not take it along. And so one of the initiatives that, together with my partner, we have already started. But I think that together with the House Community Affairs chair, one of the things we could do is to create a system where GPSA can come together with, say, an international office to offer a way to recycle some of these and the mattresses that I live on right now. I bought it from another student who had graduated, and it was brand new. She purchased it. Brand new. So something like that can be recycled. We can have a system that cleans and disinfect it so that we can pass it on to the next graduate student who is coming

probably for free of charge, and that would be an easy way, for so I'm not going to. I know that. How is there to help us? And we are not sure, even as of now. We are not sure how the workload is because we are both Ali and myself. We want to go through this process. and then we come out. Who is going to be the next VPLA? We speak with power, and then we see the workload. But I think that for me. Targeting housing will be one of the focus points that I will be working towards as VPLA. So, I would like to stop here and follow up with your questions. Thank you for your time.

➤ Questions for the VPLA Candidates:

- **'Niyi Ogunkoya:** Thank you. I actually was gonna ask before the 1st speaker spoke. I wanted to ask what we are going to have, except otherwise did it, though, that we're gonna have two vacancies and I'm concerned why we need to vote. There are two vacancies. There are two applications I should want to submit that voting is needless, except where we have excess applicants for the offices. I mean. That's my worry. So I just need clarification on that, if there's any. Thank you.
- **Nazua Idris:** Thank you. Niyi, so we are not going to have like two positions open because one of these people will be the VPLA. So we'll have one position open, and then we will reach out to everyone for, you know, nominations. But I didn't get the second part of your question about having access.
- **Marwa Aly:** Yes, thank you. Thank you, for your question. That's a great question. However, I would like to emphasize that both applicants applied for VPLA positions, and that's why we need to elect one of them for this position. And then I am sure that the plan is that we will ask the other person if he likes to go for the VP position. But I also want to clarify that the VP position, the nomination for the VPLA position, should come from the GPSA President. It's not an application that someone would apply to it. So that's why we need to have this election today. And then, hopefully, the next. The second person who wants to be elected today is willing to serve as a VP.

We have two great applicants. We would love to keep them in. GPSA. Thank you.

- **Tathagata Pal:** Ali, you showed us a list of things you want to work on but didn't explain how you plan to approach these issues. Can you clarify?
- **Ali Maleki:** Yeah. There are many committees for, for example. If you specifically asked about child care? Yes, so I can add I know that there are many places that we can go for child support, but they cost money. So usually we have a limited budget for that. If I can advocate for that budget from the Senate, Senators that we talk to, or from the Federal level that we can. We have. I can get more budget for the childcare, for example. And if we have more budget, we can advocate more budget for childcare, and it can support more families. I know that in the previous year, we had a budget problem to support many families, for example, for childcare during the summer. But if we have more budget, the problem will be solved. I know that the list is lying. I will have priority for each of them. I will work with other senators and other graduate student to know their priorities, and then I will go from the 1st priority to the least important one, and I'm trying my best to do that.
- **Redwan Ahmad Khan:** Ali and Desmond, both for your interest in this position, and I just have a follow-up question for Paul to Ali, like in one of your enlisted slides. I saw that you have multiple things you want to do. My question is, like you mentioned, federal-level advocacy for graduate research. I didn't get the point. Can you please explain a little bit more on this?
- **Ali Maleki:** Yes, actually, if you remember, I'm not sure if you were in GPSA last year. But PAL was advocating Wsu in Washington, DC. He traveled there to talk with senators and other people, other governors, and other people in the DC. To get more funding, he was also working on the other thing; he was working on the dependence on the people that are on F2 visas. They are not allowed to work. So there are the things that you can touch with the people, with the Senators, with the Congress people,

congressmen, congresswomen, and talk about that issue. To get, for example, more funding for WSU. It is a very big goal, but it is possible.

- **Malachi Chukwu:** Did you say that people on F2 don't vote, they are not allowed to vote. Is that what you mentioned?
- **Ali Maleki:** No, I told you that people on F2 are not allowed to work, so Yes. For example, if you have a family with a husband or wife that are not a student. They are not allowed to work, and it's hard to live with just one stipend.
- **Haden Kingrey:** Last year, our Union won a considerable contract that raised our incomes, improved our working conditions, and provided a contract for overall better conditions for graduate students here at Wsu and for student employees. My question is for both candidates about how you would use your positions to either support the Union work with the Union or if you would not consider that as one of your priorities because neither of you mentioned that in your speech, but I feel like that they've made considerable gains as far as student employee benefits. So, what would your priorities be for working with our Union?
- **Desmond Aboagye:** Sure, I mean, I was. I was one of the students who had demonstrated, I mean, at least we began the demonstration in the snow before it was called off. But yeah, so it was important to me, and I know Ali is also an international student. But it was important to me personally, because of where I come from, that the stipends be raised to where they are now, and so it is going to be one of the key areas that, for sure, GPSA as a union and also the Executive Board, is going to back the Union throughout, at least throughout. Now that we have a clear contract, everyone is now at peace. We are going to make sure that this remains the situation, and as a VPLA, whatever service needs to come from, especially legal services, needs to come from the GPSA. I'm going to make sure I provide that to support the Union and to support the contract.
- **Ali Maleki:** Yes, actually, I was part of the Union since

the 1st year I came here, and we were working closely with the union actually in GPSA, me and my girlfriend. She was in the protest at the time that we reached the agreement, so it is actually very important stipend-wise. It didn't make any difference to me, but I was part of the Union. I tried my best to support that as a VPLA. I'm trying everything to make graduate students' lives better now with changes in the political system, we will need more advocacy than before, so if I will be a vpla. I try to change them with this changing political system. I'm trying to have more advocacy and try to even gain more benefits for the students. So, I'm trying my best to make a student's life better.

- **Shah Alam:** I'm working on the Legislative Affairs Committee. So, my question for both of the candidates. Is that so? Whenever you start, I mean whichever you elected in January, I hope, and on January 26, we have a cooking day at the capital, which is the biggest program of the Legislative Affairs Committee, and given the time crunch we will, I mean, you will have 3 weeks to represent GPSA at the capital. How do each of you plan to do that job within 3 weeks? Given that, it's our biggest agenda.
- **Desmond Aboagye:** I mean, I don't think it begins from when you start. I think it begins now because power is here and probably will not be before we start in January. So I have it for me. I've already sent Power an email looking to meet with him. We were talking about some time that he'll be free, and that is going to be top of the agenda for that meeting discussion, and I know by now he has all the tricks and the secrets to be able to address that before we even get to January. So that is going to be my approach. Speak with PA. See what needs to be done now before we get there, and then maybe we can. We can go ahead and solve it.
- **Ali Maleki:** Yeah, as this one mentioned. I don't have experience with that. But I know that we have time until PAL. We leave WSU, so we have time to talk about it. I was in GPSA last year, so I was familiar with the process. What did PAL do last year? I'm trying to

continue. What did he do? He did a great job over there. So, we will try to find a way to advocate for WSU in the best way.

- **Tathagata Pal:** So this question is for both the candidates. So, as you might know. So this year, like the next year, 2025. It's going to be a long session, and one of the main tasks of the GPSA VPLA is to act as a legislative liaison between the GPSA and the State legislature. So you, whoever gets elected, would need to go and stay in Olympia for 3 months during the summer during the spring and work as a legislative liaison. So I was just wondering, like, how familiar are you guys in terms of doing legislative work, and how comfortable are you to go and stay in Olympia for 3 months in spring 2025?
- **Ali Maleki:** So about the responsibility, I will definitely want to ask you about that because it's my 1st time to be VPLA. And but about the availability to travel. Yes, I don't have any coursework. I can work remotely. I don't have anything to do in Pullman, so I can travel. And then I can work from there. Whenever wherever I have my laptop, I can work, so I don't have any issues traveling.
- **Desmond Aboagye:** Yes, so I was. That's also another thing I wanted to discuss with you. I wanted to see the schedule because what that means is that all the work that needs to be done in the lab. I would have to do that and then know if I have the data. And it's all about data processing. Then, wherever I am, I can process my data on the laptop or something like that because all of this also goes together with being a graduate student, and you don't want to leave that part out. But yeah, so I have served on committees that deal with law, even at my former college. The Student Association for the whole continent of Africa. I was working on a committee that dealt with the legal affairs of that union. So, that is not new to me. It's not alien to me. But of course, the management of all of this, and especially how to handle it. It would be one of the things to discuss with you, PAL.
- **Tathagata Pal:** I motion to extend the meeting for another 10 minutes.

- **Nazia Idris:** Second.
- **Voted by hand-raised, and the majority has passed.**
- **James Asare:** My question is before we take a vote. I just want to follow up with what I asked, would it be appropriate to ask both candidates if either of them is more interested in the VP position now that it's been presented, even though it's going to be more of an election, or nomination by the President? Will it be more appropriate to know that information before we take a vote? Or do we want to just vote, and then whoever is not elected gets nominated? I just I just want to open it up and and hear your thoughts. Thank you.
- **Ajay Barman:** Yeah. James, thank you for the question. So, before the meeting, I was in conversation with Nazwa. And we have been talking about it with Marwa as well. So, to clarify the two different positions. One is the Vice President position, and one is the VPLA position. We decided that the President will be nominated for the Vice President position, but that person has to be elect elected through the Senate and for the VPLA. Position. It was an open position. Anyone can apply for the position, and that's why we had two candidates. But throughout the whole time, when I was like talking with many of many of you to be the VP. Position. We didn't find a suitable candidate. So, right now, the plan is after today's voting. I will open up the VP position for nomination and the person. If the person who will not get elected today, if that person is interested in serving in a VP position, they can reach out to me as well as anyone from you. Maybe you are not interested in the VPLA position, but if you are interested in the VP position, you would have the chance to reach out to me. To be the VP to be the next VP. In our last meeting, we will vote, and the Senate will decide who will be the next VP position. But if any one of you is interested in being the next VP. Please reach out to me.
- **'Niyi Ogunkoya:** Well, thank you. I want to just for clarification. I want to ask the second speaker, the 4th speaker, what he meant when he was talking about

being an F. 2 and stepping and all of those. Are you saying that because I quite do not understand? Are you saying that you want to increase the stipend? Are you saying you want to get F. 2 to vote, or do you want F. 2 to get? I mean, what exactly? What point are you making? Exactly that touch on? F. 2, knowing that they are not students. And what are you talking about? Stipend, knowing that it took us an eternity to get to where we are. I'm just curious, you know.

- **Ali Maleki:** Thank you for your question. Yeah, PAL was working on this issue. I meant that if, for example, someone is working and they part. Someone is a student in Wsu, and their partner is not a student. They are not allowed to work, so it is hard for them to live with one stipend, and, as I mentioned, PAL was working on this last year when he went to DC. He talked to many people about that to find the opportunity that allows people who are dependent on the student and are not students to be able to work.
- **'Niyi Ogunkoya:** Oh, thank you for the clarification. However, let us put things in perspective: the issue of F2 being, I mean, not being able to vote is a national issue. It is not a state issue; it is not a university issue. And I should want to think that such discussions are outside the purview of your office, and then, if you want to speak with us, that's my thought, though, if you want to speak with colleagues here, you should, in my opinion, tell us things that are attainable, obtainable, achievable, such things as wanting to change the laws would take an eternity. I mean, if it's going to change. It may likely not change in our time. A student here. So, I want us to cut down to things that are achievable within the time frame that is at our disposal. I mean, I just want to keep it at that. Thank you.
- **Ali Maleki:** Yes, please. Thank you. So I know that it's a big goal. I mentioned it at first, but we have different levels of advocating. If you have advocated, we have, we advocate in universities, in a State, and the Federal. So this is why we are. We are advocating for students at the Federal level. We tell the

problems. We tell the issues at the Federal level. So they have it in mind about the and maybe they can change the laws. It's it. It can be changed. And I know that PAL was working, as I mentioned. He was working on that. So, I know it's a big goal, but it's achievable, and it is a part of the VPLA's responsibilities. Thank you.

- **Amir Hossein Moadab:** Hello! This is just a personal comment that both candidates, if they claim something, some proposal, or let's say, if they have a goal for sure they will work on that, and they are not in the position of VPLA right now, and I don't judge them based on their goals, and I believe it's better to have something in hand and work for it, even if it's it's big, I mean, PAL showed that he can do great things. So, other ones, the further VPLA can do it, too. So I'm not gonna I, personally, will not gonna be too strict on their proposals at least. Thank you.
- **Tathagata Pal:** I motion to vote on the VPLA candidate.
- **Andrew Sutherland:** Second
- **Vote for VPLA:**
 - **Ali Maleki:** 27
 - **Desmond Aboagye:** 24
 - **Abstain:** 4
- **Marwa Ali:** Congratulations to Ali Maleki for being voted as the new VPLA.

The link to vote: <https://forms.office.com/r/uDy8msctvt>

- Food drive updates.
 - **Madison Hönig:** Hello, everyone. Just wanted to submit a quick update. We collected 1,267 pounds of food for our community food drive, which was, I guess, 2 weeks ago. Now, I sent an email to all of our volunteers, but I wanted to shout out all of the grad students who showed up and helped us collect this food. I think this goes to show that we stepped up for a community, and they also supported us. So I think this was a big win. I just wanted to share all the results with everyone and thank you for your support in helping this event be a success, and, like it says on the screen, we did it.
- Special session.
 - **Redwan Ahmad Khan:** Hello, everyone I just wanna give you an announcement about the event like, I think you have all received an email, and, like, you got an informant mentioned from the social media. So we're hosting the Friendsgiving events on November 28, and we need an Rsvp. If

you are interested in presenting, so please go ahead and join us at the Friendsgiving dinner. Thank you.

- **Nazua Idris:** Two quick things. One is I would also like to give a shout-out to the people who volunteered to be on the special Elimination committee, such as Anna Wayne Raihan and Amir Ali. So, thank you so much for volunteering to be on the committee. And the second thing is like. Ajay also agreed that we can send an email tomorrow regarding the nomination of the VP position. So you can expect an email from me.

- 06:20 | Adjournment