



General Assembly Meeting

April 18, 2025

11:00am – 12:30 pm

Zoom meeting

GAPSA Executive Officers

Carolyn Faith Hoffman (President)

Xiaorong (Sherry) Shan (Executive Vice President)

Dhiman Goswami (Vice President of Fairfax)

Bree Buker (Vice President of Mason Square)

Selina Martin (Vice President of Science and Technology)

Naessiamba Eab-Aggrey (Director of Communications)

GAPSA Advisors

Dr. Julie Choe Kim (GAPSA Advisor and Director, Graduate Student Life)

Muna Hashem Al Taweel (GAPSA Advisor and GPA, Graduate Student Life)

Program Representatives

Anthropology, MA	Livia Santos
Athletic Training, MS	Lila Abu-Saleh
Bioengineering, MS	Alessandra Coogan
Biosciences, PhD	Madeleine Becker
Business Analytics, MS	Bansi Jignesh Mehta
Climate Dynamics, PhD	Austin Reed
Computational Sciences and Informatics, PhD	Md Mahfuzur Rhaman
Counseling, MEd	Amanda Williams
Criminology, Law, and Society, MA	Mackenzi Moran
Cultural Studies, PhD	Collin Hawley (proxy for Stephen Toby Hickson)
Education, PhD	Sahar Wahidi
English, MA	Jonathan Nichols
Finance, MS	Eray Onur Tulun

Health Systems Administration, MHA	Shelby Lynn Morrow
Health Services Research, PhD	Dharmi Desai
Information Technology, PhD	Hadeel R. A. Elyazori
Interdisciplinary Studies, MA	Kristin Metzger
Law, JM	Dhrav Bhavin Parikh
Law, JD	Jaclyn Patricia Jones
Linguistics, PhD	Nilima Hakim Mow
Mathematics, PhD	Joseph Franks
Nutrition, MS	Solomon Aboagye
Physics, PhD	Paula Fudolig
Political Science, PhD	Sanggyu Suh
Social Work, MSW	Wida Saber
Sociology, PhD	Irma Julissa Zelaya Barrera
Software Engineering, MS	Ashima Sharma
Sports and Recreation Studies, MS	Debora Carminia Rivero
Statistical Science, MS	Tiffany Lin
Statistical Science, PhD	Tengyu Song
Writing and Rhetoric, PhD	Kelby Gibson

Guest

Kimberly Jackson Davidson (University Ombudsmen)

Agenda

<u>Time</u>	<u>Activity</u>
11:00am - 11:30am	Guest Speaker: Kimberly Jackson Davidson
11:30am - 12:00am	GAPSA Updates
12:00am - 12:30am	Q&A

[\(Slide here\)](#)

Guest Speaker: Kimberly Jackson Davidson

University Ombudsperson | ombuds.gmu.edu | kjacks39@gmu.edu

- Serving at George Mason University since Spring 2022, tasked with building the Ombuds Office to support students.
- Described by students as a neutral mediator.

Four Core Principles of the Ombuds Office:

- 1. Independence**
 - Operates independently of the Provost's Office and central data systems.
 - Maintains its own internal documentation for pattern tracking but does not produce official university records.
- 2. Informality**
 - Provides informal support and guidance; not a decision-making body.
 - Helps students understand their circumstances and available resources.
- 3. Impartiality**
 - Does not advocate for individuals; facilitates neutral and respectful discussions.
 - Provides a space for dialogue and mutual understanding.
- 4. Confidentiality**
 - No official records created for the university.
 - Documentation is only shared externally upon agreement from all parties, typically in cases involving harm or threat.

Appointments:

- Can be booked via Calendly on the Ombuds Office website.
- Appointments are typically 90 minutes.
- Services are available year-round, including during summer.
- Students are guided to explore their options before taking formal steps.

GAPSA Recent Events and Updates

- **March GA Meeting Guest Speakers:**
 - Prof. Tim Gibson, VP, GMU AAUP
 - BaoTRAN Beatson, Office of International Programs and Services (OIPS)
- **GAPSA/Graduate Student Life Event:**
 - Mason Square Dialogue | April 10, 2025
- **Board of Visitors (BOV) Committee Meetings:**
 - Finance and Administration Committee | April 10

- Academic Standards Committee | April 17
- Full BOV Meeting | May 1, 2025 @ Merten 1201 (All day)

GAPSA Elections – Spring 2025

Timeline:

- Meet the Candidates: April 18, 2025 @ 12:30 PM
- Voting Opens: April 22, 2025 @ 12:00 AM
- Voting Closes: April 24, 2025 @ 11:55 PM
- Results Announced: April 28, 2025
- Transition Meeting: May 9, 2025 (Time TBD)

Details about Elections, including candidate information, available at [GAPSA Elections webpage](#).

Special and Run-off Election Protocol:

- Candidates must receive a majority vote (50% + 1) to win. If a candidate does not receive a majority vote, a run-off election will be held.
- If the sole candidate for any position receives fewer than 50% + 1 affirmative votes (with abstentions excluded), a special election will be held.
- Special and run-off elections are conducted either at a special meeting or via online ballot and will be voted on by GA representatives.
- See Article IV of the [GAPSA Bylaws](#).

Candidates:

- **President:** Nilima Mow
- **Executive Vice President:** Kunj Malhotra, Xiaorong (Sherry) Shan
- **VP of Fairfax Campus:** Aijaz Ahmed Mohammed, Aishwarya Bhondge, Harshal Yeole, Md Ridwan Hossain Talukder
- **VP of Mason Square (Arlington) Campus:** Zayd Hamid
- **VP of Science and Technology Campus:** Asritha Lakshmi Bontu
- **Director of Communications:** Adam Rizzoli, Aparna Shastri

Graduate Life & Student Support Updates

- **Spring Picnic & Appreciation Gift Pickup:**
 - April 25, 2025 @ 12–2 PM | Merten Lawn
 - Graduating students will receive GAPSA cords.

- Students unable to attend may email GAPSA for alternative pickup options.
- **GMU Climate Survey:**
 - Open through April 25, 2025

Student Concerns

- **Visa Revocations for F-1 Students:**
 - 15 students reportedly had visas revoked.
 - Deans and academic departments are working to accommodate remote participation from students' home countries.
 - Affected students should contact:
 - Academic Advisor
 - OIPS
 - Additional resources
 - Dr. Laurance Bray
 - GAPSA
- **Green Card Holders Denied Stipends:**
 - Some students ineligible for federal internships were not informed in advance.
 - Funding alternatives are being reviewed.
- **Stay Mason Emergency Fund:**
 - Only available for tuition-related emergencies; limited by eligibility criteria.
 - Contact Carolyn for support documentation.
 - Additional help: email smfund@gmu.edu to speak with the Financial Well-Being Team.
- **International Students (JM Program):**
 - Students asked whether visa status can be monitored.
 - The university is not notified of visa decisions; staff manually check systems daily.
- **Federal Policy Questions:**
 - Students may contact Kerry Bolognese, Director of Federal Government Relations (kbologne@gmu.edu).
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Updates**
 - The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion was revamped and renamed the **Office of Access, Compliance, and Community** – oacc.gmu.edu
 - A high number of students attended the BOV committee meeting to show support and concern for DEI programming.