Graduate & Professional Student Association

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

<u>MINUTES</u>

SPONSORSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING 46-03

Thursday, July 30th, 2026

7:00 PM

HYBRID PUBLIC MEETING:

INPERSON: Graduate Student Commons LLB 2141

VIRTUAL: Zoom link

Meeting ID: 702 895 5674
Passcode: GPSAUNLV

SPONSORSHIP COMMITTEE MEMBERS

☐ **Nehemiah Afam Chukwuere (*Chair), Lee Business School***

☐ **Jaimi Garlington, *William F. Harrah College of Hospitality, Hotel Administration***

☐ **Maegan Nation*, College of Liberal Arts, Psychology***

☐ **Ayodele Aborishade, *College of Education, Special Education***

☒ **Claudia Chang-Frost, *College of Education, Teaching and Learning***

☒ **Julia Chan, *William F. Harrah College of Hospitality, Hotel Administration***

☒ **Ayana Giardina, *College of Fine Arts, Theatre Arts***

☐ **Ohis Egbaidomeh, Interdisciplinary *Health Sciences, Kinesiology***

☒ **Tofunmi Babalola, *College of Education, Special Education***

☒ **Aderemi Gbadamosi, *College of Engineering, Civil and Environmental Engineering***

☒ **Ayoola Peter Olayinka, *School of Public Health***

☐ **Janeth Vences, School of Public Policy and Leadership, Public Administration**

☒ **Karin Tidgewell, *William S. Boyd School of Law, Juris Doctor***

☐ **Amy Noack, *College of Sciences, Geology***

1. Meeting Opening and Quorum Establishment

Chair Nehemiah called the GPSA Sponsorship Committee Meeting 46-03 to order after a brief delay while the committee waited for sufficient members to establish quorum. Roll call was conducted. The committee has 14 voting members, and quorum requires 8 members.

Quorum was established at 7:20 PM after additional members joined the meeting. The committee then proceeded with the official business of the meeting.

2. YouTube Livestream Technical Issue

Prior to the meeting, the Chair attempted to initiate the public YouTube livestream. An access error prevented the livestream from being started. Trey "T" Curtis-Brown assisted by joining from another computer/account and attempting to resolve the issue, but the livestream could not be initiated. The meeting therefore proceeded without a YouTube livestream and was recorded instead.

3. Roll Call

The Chair conducted roll call of the 14 voting members.

Present at the time quorum was established: Nehemiah Afam Chukwuere, Ayoola Olayinka, Claudia Chiang-Frost, Julia Chan, Ayana Giardina, Tofunmi Babalola, Tobi, and Karin Tidgewell.

Jaimi Garlington was noted as excused. Ayodele Aborishade, Aderemi Gbadamosi, Janeth Vences, and Amy Noack were absent at the time quorum was established; additional members joined later as noted during the meeting.

Conclusion: Eight voting members were present and quorum was established.

4. Public Comment — First Period

The first public comment period was opened. The Chair provided the opportunity for members of the public to address the committee. No public comments or email submissions were received.

Conclusion: The public comment period was closed with no comments.

5. Consent Agenda — Approval of Minutes from Meeting 46-02

The Consent Agenda included approval of the minutes from GPSA Sponsorship Committee Meeting 46-02.

Ayoola Peter Olayinka moved to approve the minutes. Tofunmi Babalola seconded the motion.

Conclusion: The motion carried, and the minutes from Meeting 46-02 were approved.

6. Reports and Recommendations

Committee members were given an opportunity to provide reports and recommendations.

Tofunmi recommended that the committee give additional consideration to applicants who have not previously received GPSA funding, not as an exclusion of repeat recipients, but as a way to create opportunities for first-time recipients.

Tobi requested an update regarding the supplemental funding proposal discussed at the previous meeting. The Chair stated that the matter would be addressed under Unfinished Business.

Conclusion: The Chair acknowledged Tofunmi's recommendation and committed to placing it on a future agenda. The supplemental funding matter was deferred to Unfinished Business.

7. <u>Unfinished Business — Supplemental Funding Allocation</u>

The Chair presented historical funding analysis in response to the committee's request from the previous meeting regarding a proposed transfer of $25,000 from the Fiscal Year 2027 Sponsorship Budget to supplement eligible but unfunded applicants from Cycles 46-01 and 46-02.

The Chair explained that, based on the historical data reviewed, transferring $25,000 from FY2027 could create a future funding shortfall and risk repeating the same budget limitation that prompted the proposal.

Tobi supported the data-based review and reiterated the importance of revisiting the applicant-selection criteria. Tofunmi's recommendation regarding first-time recipients was also discussed. The Chair identified a potential future ranking framework of: (1) priority, (2) first-time recipients before repeat recipients within the same degree level, (3) total score, and (4) activity start date. The Chair noted that this revised framework could not be formally considered at this meeting because it was not included as an action item on the current agenda.

Ayoola Olayinka moved to decline the $25,000 supplemental funding proposal. Tofunmi Babalola seconded the motion.

Conclusion: The motion carried, and the proposal to allocate $25,000 from FY2027 funds was formally declined. Revised ranking criteria will be placed on a future agenda for formal discussion and possible approval.

8. <u>NEW BUSINESS</u>

A. Sponsorship Committee Membership and RSO Funding Subcommittee Update

The Chair provided an informational update regarding the expanded Sponsorship Committee structure.

The committee now consists of 14 voting members. Karin Tidgewell, Amy Noack, and Janeth Vences serve primarily on the RSO Funding Subcommittee while also serving as voting members of the full Sponsorship Committee. The RSO Subcommittee will primarily review Graduate Research Student Organization (GRSO) funding applications, with recommendations presented to the full Sponsorship Committee for consideration and vote.

RSO funding application reviews are expected to begin in Fall 2026.

Conclusion: The expanded committee structure was confirmed, with 14 voting members and a quorum requirement of 8 members. RSO Subcommittee members hold voting rights within the full Sponsorship Committee.

B. Standing Monthly Sponsorship Committee Meeting Schedule

The Chair proposed replacing the existing ad hoc scheduling process with a standing monthly meeting schedule for the Fall 2026 semester.

The Chair explained that a recurring meeting date would reduce the administrative burden of repeatedly conducting availability polls. Karin expressed support for the proposal. Trey “T” Curtis-Brown advised that GPSA Council meetings were expected to occur on Tuesday or Wednesday at 5:30 PM, subject to confirmation, and recommended excluding those days from consideration. The committee discussed the need for a formal motion because the item was listed for possible action.

Ayoola Olayinka moved to establish a standing monthly Sponsorship Committee meeting schedule. Ayana Giardina seconded the motion.

A roll-call vote was conducted. The motion carried with 8 votes in favor and 0 opposed.

Conclusion: A standing monthly meeting schedule was approved. The Chair will collect committee members’ Fall 2026 availability for August through December and use the responses to establish the recurring schedule.

C. FY2027 Sponsorship Program Budget Presentation and Approval

The Chair presented the proposed Fiscal Year 2027 Sponsorship Program budget of $190,000 and explained the proposed monthly and quarterly distribution based on historical application and funding data.

Trey “T” Curtis-Brown informed the committee that, pending GPSA Council approval, the sponsorship allocation may increase to $200,000 due to rollover funds. RSO funding may also increase from $5,000 to $7,500. He recommended approving $190,000 as the confirmed minimum while noting the potential future increase, so that the committee would not need to return for an amendment solely because of the additional allocation.

Ayana Giardina moved to approve the FY2027 Sponsorship Program budget at $190,000, with a notation that the allocation may increase pending Council approval. Tofunmi Babalola seconded the motion.

Conclusion: The motion carried, and the FY2027 Sponsorship Program budget was approved at $190,000, subject to any future Council-approved increase.

D. Sponsorship Applications, Cycle 46-03

The Chair presented the reviewed sponsorship applications for Cycle 46-03 and explained the ranking and filtering process.

A total of 40 applications were submitted. Two applications were automatically denied because required faculty endorsement was missing. Applications scoring below 80% were also denied, leaving 30 eligible applications.

The committee applied the established ranking methodology using status, priority level, average reviewer score, and activity start date. The cycle budget was $24,000. Applications ranked in Rows 2 through 14 totaled $23,910.41, leaving approximately $90 in remaining funds. The total requested amount from the eligible applications was reported as $44,463.10.

Ayana Giardina moved to approve the sponsorship applications ranked in Rows 2 through 14. Ayoola Peter Olayinka seconded the motion.

Conclusion: The motion carried. Thirteen applications were approved for a total of $23,910.41.

9. CALL FOR NEW BUSINESS ITEMS

The Chair invited committee members to suggest matters for a future agenda.

The Chair confirmed that Tofunmi's recommendation concerning first-time GPSA funding recipients and Tobi's comments concerning revised applicant criteria would be placed on a future agenda. The proposed revised ranking framework will also be included for formal discussion and possible approval.

Conclusion: No additional new business items were raised

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Sponsorship Award Processing Update

The Chair reported that all previously outstanding sponsorship award backlogs, including awards from earlier cycles, had been cleared. Students approved during Meeting 46-02 received their funding within approximately three weeks of approval. The Chair credited the GPSA Manager, President, Executive Board, Director of Financial Aid, and Financial Aid staff for improvements to the processing timeline.

B. Committee Stipend Update

The Chair reported that committee stipends for Summer 2025, Fall 2025, and Spring 2026 service had been processed and paid. Members experiencing delays were encouraged to contact the Chair.

C. Committee Leadership Update

The Chair announced the appointment of Ayoola Peter Olayinka as Vice Chair of the Sponsorship Committee for the 46th session. The appointment followed Ayoola's confirmation as Deputy Director of the Division of Sponsored Funding. The Vice Chair will assist with roll call, preparation of meeting minutes, committee operations, and administrative responsibilities.

The Chair also discussed plans for a large-scale sponsorship workshop for UNLV graduate students, which will be further discussed with the GPSA President.

11. PUBLIC COMMENT — Second Period

The second public comment period was opened.

President Trey "T" Curtis-Brown offered comments congratulating Ayoola Peter Olayinka on the Deputy Director appointment, commending the Chair's leadership, and thanking committee members for their work reviewing applications and supporting GPSA's funding priorities.

No additional public comments were received.

Conclusion: The public comment period was closed.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Nehemiah adjourned the meeting at 8:13 PM.

Action Items

1. Nehemiah will send a request to committee members for Fall 2026 availability (August–December), excluding Tuesday and Wednesday if those remain the Council meeting days, to establish a fixed monthly meeting schedule.

2. Nehemiah will add Tofunmi's recommendation concerning prioritization of first-time GPSA funding recipients to a future agenda.

3. Nehemiah will add Tobi's recommendation concerning revised applicant criteria and supporting evidence to a future agenda.

4. Nehemiah will place the proposed revised ranking framework (priority → first-time recipients → total score → activity start date) on a future agenda for formal discussion and possible approval.

5. Nehemiah will issue approval and denial decision letters for Cycle 46-03 applications and coordinate award processing.

6. Nehemiah will continue coordinating with President Trey "T" Curtis-Brown regarding the proposed large-scale sponsorship workshop.

7. Ayoola Peter Olayinka will assume Vice Chair responsibilities, including roll call, preparation/distribution of minutes beginning with Meeting 46-03, and support for committee operations.

8. All committee members will submit Fall 2026 availability to Nehemiah for establishment of the standing monthly meeting schedule.

9. Karin Tidgewell, Amy Noack, and Janeth Vences will prepare to review GRSO funding applications beginning in Fall 2026.

10. Trey "T" Curtis-Brown will confirm the GPSA Council meeting day and communicate it to Nehemiah, and will present the FY2027 budget allocation to Council for legislative approval.