INTRODUCTION TO GRADUATE STUDENT SENATE

Welcome to the Graduate Student Senate. Before you vote your first “Aye” or “Nay,” please read the following and use as a reference as you get used to being a Senator.

- Marc Canellas, President, Graduate Student Government

When and where are we meeting? And what should I wear?

When: Tuesdays from 11am – 1pm (click here for calendar)
Location: Room 117 in the Smithgall Student Services Building (Flag Building)
Dress: Casual to business casual dress is appropriate.

What are the tasks of the Senate?

1. Allocate the Student Activity Fee in a way that is equitable to all students at Georgia Tech through concise evaluation and discussion of the merits of the financial allocation of money.
2. Serve as the representation of the Graduate Student Body on Georgia Tech issues.

Why is it important that I attend meetings and stay as long as I can?

One word, quorum. Quorum is the minimum number of Senators that must be present to make our meetings and votes valid. If we do not have quorum, we cannot start the Senate meeting. This means we need Senators to be at the meeting on-time (11am) and stay as long as necessary to keep quorum.

Please treat Senate as you would an important class: schedule around Senate meetings and only miss it for important events.

What if I cannot attend a meeting?

Fill out the Absence Reporting form. If you forget to fill it out, that’s ok. We’d just like to know ahead of the Senate session how many people may be missing.

If a Senator has five absences then they will be eligible for firing by the President so that we keep a representative quorum.
What should I bring to Senate meetings?

- Computer, tablet, or phone that can access the internet (there are outlets in each row of the meeting room)
- Buzzcard

How do I prepare for Senate meetings?

Prior to the meeting review the following:

- **Jacketpages**: Contains information about all bills
- **Agenda**: Contains the list of bills that will be voted on during the current and next Senate session. The agenda should be sent out via email every Tuesday morning.
- **Joint Finance Committee Report**: Contains a list of financial recommendations for the bills that will be seen during the Senate session. The JFC Report should be sent out via email every Tuesday morning.

What should I do when I arrive at a Senate meeting?

1. Check-in with Vice President, Matthew Miller, by scanning your Buzzcard at the podium
2. Sit down in the middle set of rows - front seats first.
3. Open up the voting form.

Who is talking during the bill process?

1. Joint Finance Committee (JFC)
   - A group of Graduate Student Senate and Undergraduate House members who review all bills and recommends changes to bills to make them adhere to SGA’s finance policy ([JFC Policy](#))
2. Student Organization Finance Office
   - The Georgia Tech office which oversees and guides the finances of SGA.
3. Graduate Executive Cabinet (referred to as Grad Exec)
   - The leadership of the Graduate Student Government.

How do I sign up to participate in or suggest initiatives?

A list of current initiatives is available [here](#) and all students (Senators and non-Senators) can [sign up](#) to join, support, or suggest new initiatives.

What if the bills process is not for me?
Some people enjoy the bills process but it’s not for everyone. If you do not feel that Senate is the best use of your time and energy, and would like to resign as a Senator please email the Grad SGA Secretary, James Hite, jhite6@gatech.edu, and myself, marc.c.canellas@gatech.edu.

We would still like to leverage your support, skills, and ideas toward making graduate student life better through our committees and initiatives.