



SUBJECT: Your Voice, Our Mission: Student Senate’s Commitment to Support Students

TO: The GVSU Student Body

FROM: The GVSU Student Senate

DATE: September 3rd, 2024

CC: President Philomena Mantella; Vice President for Student Affairs Jenny Hall-Jones

Welcome back, Lakers! As the fall semester begins, we hope you’re settling in and gearing up for an exciting new academic year. Whether you’re a first-year student eager to create new memories or a returning student advancing your career, this semester is a fresh start. Your student government is committed to supporting you and enhancing your experience at GVSU. We look forward to sharing our goals for the year and demonstrating our dedication to valuing your voices and experiences. At the recent convocation ceremony, President Proctor, President Mantella, and other leaders of our Grand Valley community came together to celebrate the official start of the 2024-2025 academic year and celebrate a future of student success that is to come.

Student Senate is committed to ensuring that every student has equal access to the opportunities and resources they need to succeed. We aim to achieve this by making sure all students are aware of the resources present on their campuses. Some resources that may be particularly helpful include but are not limited to the Knowledge Market, Libraries, Tutoring Center, Advising, Counseling Center, Student Accessibility Resources, Health Center, Career Center, Office of Multicultural Affairs, LGBT Resource Center, the Center for Women and Gender Equity, Military and Veterans Resource Center, Replenish Basic Needs Center, and Padnos International Center. To learn more about the resources available, you can find these centers both around campus and on the [GVSU website](#). They’re valuable resources designed to support your success. Our goal is to continually enhance these resources to better meet students’ needs and ensure an adequate education for everyone.

In 2022, we passed pieces of legislation that added the National Suicide Prevention Hotline on to the back of all [student identification cards](#) and called for a safety barrier on the [“Little Mac” bridge](#). This year, we aim to accomplish similar goals in continuing to support

students' mental health needs by working with the university counseling center and providing more mental health resources to students. Furthermore, we recognize the importance of our student workers and our goals to continue to advocate for stronger wage policies that reflect the value of your hard work and dedication, ensuring that jobs are viable and a rewarding option. We are thrilled to have seen two increases in the student wage chart since we passed [legislation](#) encouraging GVSU administration to restructure and helped form a student taskforce to facilitate changes, including an increase that will be in effect in the '24-'25 school year.

Following the recent Town Hall, we are dedicated to further building active communication and relationships between students and senior leadership in an effort to create an equitable experience at Grand Valley. Our role as a liaison will continue as we address and convey the evolving needs of the student body. Recognizing the vital role of student life in shaping our campus experience at GVSU, we also want to expand our relationships with student organizations and promote a diverse opportunity of engagement. We will advocate for you all, and hopefully raise our retention rate for students of all backgrounds and differences.

As your elected student government, Student Senate is a resource for YOU. Our organization finds our strength in the students that we represent, which makes it critical that we hear and account for the experiences of all students throughout our campuses. As the upcoming school year progresses, please consider becoming engaged in Student Senate and pass your thoughts and opinions along to us. This could be attending one of our public General Assembly meetings or something as simple as reaching out via email, senates@gvsu.edu. We truly value student perspectives and seek a future where all students find their home at Grand Valley. Additional information on how to become involved with Student Senate is available on our website, at gvsu.edu/studentssenate. Thank you for your commitment to GVSU, we look forward to what this year will bring,

Respectfully,
The GVSU Student Senate