



THE THIRTY-THIRD CONGRESS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS

Calendar: December 1, 2025

Location:

Time: 6:00 PM

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Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Reading and Approval of the Minutes

- 34th COGS Organizational Session Meeting
- COGS Meeting 11-03-25
- COGS Meeting 11-17-25

Petitions into the Assembly

Special Introductions and Student Comments

Messages from Student Government

Report from the Office of Governmental Affairs

Report of Officers

- Report of the Speaker
- Report of the Deputy Speaker for Finance
 - Financial Report as of 12/01/25
- Report of the Deputy Speaker for Communications
- Report of the Deputy Speaker for Judicial Affairs
- Report of the Deputy Speaker for Advocacy

Advisor Announcements

Committee Report

- Internal Affairs
- Student Advocacy

- Outreach

Funding Requests

- Bill #2: Speaker Pay
- Bill #3: LSC Funding Allocation Bill

Unfinished Business

New Business

Round Table

Closing Announcements

Adjournment

THE THIRTY-FOURTH CONGRESS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS

MEETING MINUTES

Date: November 3, 2025 at 6:30 PM

Location: Senate Chambers

Call to Order

- The Organizational Session of the 34th Congress of Graduate Students was called to order at 6:38 PM by Chair Rowan.

Pledge of Allegiance

- Led by Representative Janai.

Certification of Elections

- Certificates of Election were read into the record for all newly elected members across colleges and advocacy seats.

Roll Call

- Representatives present were acknowledged; quorum was confirmed.

Special Introductions and Student Comments

- Samantha Randall, Press Secretary for the Executive Branch, spoke in favor of Representative Baez for Deputy Speaker of Communications.
- No additional public comments.

Election of Officers

Speaker Election

- Only one declaration received: Stephen Mederev.
- Nominated by Noah Baez; seconded by Seema Saba.
- Elected by acclamation.
- Mederev delivered brief remarks thanking members and expressing appreciation.

Deputy Speaker for Finance

- Nomination: Joey Cerrone by Nicolette; seconded by Deshawn.
- No additional nominations.
- Elected by acclamation.
- Cerrone delivered brief remarks expressing appreciation.

Deputy Speaker for Communications

- Nomination: Noah Baez by Deshawn; seconded by Islamyat.
- No additional nominations.
- Elected by acclamation.
- Baez delivered brief remarks expressing gratitude and commitment to communications work.

Deputy Speaker for Judicial Affairs

- Nominations:
 - Islamyat, nominated by Taylor; seconded by Shaheen.
 - Nicolette, nominated by Madison; seconded by Brian.
- Candidate speeches, Q&A, and pro-debate occurred for both candidates.
- Secret ballot voting:
 - First ballot: Tie.
 - Second ballot: Tie.
 - Third ballot held with agreement that a subsequent tie would result in a coin flip.
- Third ballot outcome: Nicolette elected Deputy Speaker for Judicial Affairs.
- Nicolette gave brief remarks appreciating the Assembly.

Deputy Speaker for Advocacy

- Nomination: Deshawn by Luis; seconded by Isaiah.
- No additional nominations.
- Elected by acclamation.

- Deshawn offered brief remarks on advocacy values and gratitude.

Closing Announcements

- Members were reminded of a second meeting to follow.
- Motion to adjourn the Organizational Session moved by Deshawn, seconded by Islamyat.
- No objections.

Adjournment

- The Organizational Session of the 34th Congress of Graduate Students adjourned at 7:35 PM.

THE THIRTY-THIRD CONGRESS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS
FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

MEETING MINUTES

Date: November 3, 2025 at 6:30 PM

Location: Senate Chambers

Call to Order

- Speaker Rowan called the final regular meeting of the Thirty-Third Congress of Graduate Students to order.
- Quorum was confirmed; only one representative was absent, noted as the Congress's strongest attendance of the year.

Roll Call

- Representatives present included: Diego, Fahad, Nachika, Shazine, Rosaline, Brian, Logan, Nicolette, Isaiah, Steven, Luis, Janai, Islamiat, Devin, Seema, Joey, Madison, Deshawn, Taylor, William, Francis, and others as called on the record.
- Quorum was established.

Reading and Approval of the Minutes

- The minutes from the October 20, 2025 COGS meeting were presented for approval.
- Luis moved to approve the minutes; motion seconded by Joey.
- Hearing no objections, the minutes from October 20, 2025 were approved as presented.

Petitions into the Assembly

- None.

Special Introductions and Student Comments

- Senator Layla Jackson, sophomore majoring in Political Science and member of the Student Senate, provided public comment.
 - She modeled the new COGS shirt, congratulated members on their work, and expressed excitement to be present for the Congress' final meeting.
- No additional members of the public came forward for comment.

Messages from Student Government

- Press Secretary for the Executive Branch, Samantha “Sam” Randall, addressed the Assembly.
 - Explained that she was present to take photos in recognition of the Speaker’s last meeting and the final meeting of the 33rd Congress.
 - Invited members interested in working with the Office of Public Relations and the Executive Branch to contact her; noted that her email is available on the SGA website.
- No further messages from Student Government.

Report from the Office of Governmental Affairs

- None.

Report of Officers

- Report of the Speaker (Rowan)
 - Reported that it had been “a week” in both positive and challenging ways.
 - Shared that he had a productive conversation with Vice President for Student Affairs, Dr. Amy Hecht.
 - Announced ongoing planning for a presentation to the Board of Trustees’ Student Affairs Committee at the January Board of Trustees meeting on the state of graduate student life.
 - Noted this would be the first time in at least five years (and likely longer) that the Student Affairs Committee would receive a report specifically focused on graduate student life.
 - Emphasized the significance of this progress for the visibility of graduate students.
 - Indicated he intended to work with incoming Speaker Mederev and Dr. Hecht on the presentation.
 - Highlighted a busy legislative agenda, including a major recodification bill, and encouraged representatives to ask questions and engage in robust debate, particularly on the recodification legislation.
 - Noted that additional administrative updates would be covered by the advisor.
- Report of the Deputy Speaker for Finance (Mederev)
 - Directed representatives to review the COGS Financial Report PDF for detailed numbers.
 - Explained that the large change in financial figures since the last meeting was due to closure of the first cycle of presentation (conference) grants.
 - Reported that nearly all grants had been processed and reviewed; approximately \$10,000 remained from an initial \$110,000 allocation for the first cycle, indicating high utilization of funds.
 - Invited members to contact him with any questions regarding the financial report.
- Report of the Deputy Speaker for Communications (Baez)

- Announced that COGS merchandise had arrived and had been distributed to representatives, with additional items still en route.

- Reported a new partnership with the Center for Health and Wellness (CHA) for a “Mind, Body, and Soul” Lunch and Learn series.

- “Mind” session occurred the day of the meeting.

- Upcoming “Body” session would focus on physical health and nutrition.

- “Soul” session would address additional well-being topics.

- Noted that Chick-fil-A catering for the Lunch and Learns was provided through COGS support and encouraged representatives to attend, highlighting both the programming and free food.

- Announced that a COGS LinkedIn page had been created; outreach and usage details would be discussed more by Outreach Chair Logan.

- Indicated there were additional updates but deferred them due to time and misplaced notes.

- Report of the Deputy Speaker for Judicial Affairs

- Deputy Speaker Hussain was away at a conference and no report was given.

- Report of the Deputy Speaker for Advocacy (Stokes)

- Deputy Speaker Stokes waived his report to conserve time and allow the Assembly to proceed with business.

Advisor Announcements

- COGS Advisor Tanner addressed the Assembly.

- Congratulated newly elected officers.

- Announced that the new Student Program Coordinator, Veronica Nelson, had started.

- Veronica brings 10–15 years of guidance counseling experience and has quickly learned COGS processes, including Municode.

- Tanner encouraged members to visit the SGA suite to meet her.

- Informed members that Program Director Andy Johnson would be going on paternity leave in approximately two weeks and would not return until March 1.

- Noted that Andy had accumulated significant sick time through prior service in state and county government, enabling an extended leave.

- Stated that operations would effectively be managed by Tanner and Veronica during this period.

- Provided an update on the status of the upcoming Inauguration:

- There was a Schedule IV election violation under appeal to the Student Supreme Court which, if upheld, could disqualify the Forward political party and affect Student Senate seats and quorum.

- Inauguration was scheduled for Wednesday, November 12, but depending on when the Supreme Court met (possibly November 10 or November 12), it could not be held for candidates whose results were uncertified.
- Alternative date options were limited due to banquet season and heavy room bookings through the second week of December, as well as conflicts with finals week.
- Tanner suggested that, if Inauguration could not occur on November 12, COGS members could instead be ceremonially sworn in at the November 17 COGS meeting.
- Clarified that COGS representatives are already certified and not impacted by undergraduate political party issues; the concern relates mainly to Senate and ceremonial timing.
- Mentioned the “SGA Today” newsletter:
 - All COGS members of at least three months’ tenure should have received it; newer members may not yet be on the list.
 - Invited anyone who did not receive it to contact him, Speaker Rowan, or Deputy Speaker Baez (preferably Rowan or Baez) to be added.
- Offered to answer further questions about Inauguration or staffing.
- Speaker Rowan added the following clarifications:
 - COGS leadership would keep members updated on Inauguration via email and group chat, including any alternate swearing-in plans (e.g., a justice administering oaths at the November 17 meeting).
 - Emphasized that whatever occurred with the Supreme Court and undergraduate elections would not affect COGS operations; the Congress would continue its work regardless.
 - Reminded members that, because the Thirty-Third Congress would adjourn sine die at the end of the meeting, all current committees and the Congress itself would dissolve at adjournment.
- Committees will not meet the following week.
- Committees for the Thirty-Fourth Congress will convene only after the incoming Executive Committee makes committee appointments.
- Encouraged members with questions about Inauguration or transitions to reach out.
- Noted his hope that Inauguration could still occur as planned, in part to hear incoming Speaker Mederev’s speech and Deputy Speaker Stokes’ rendition of the national anthem.

Committee Reports

- Internal Affairs – Chair Nicolette
 - Reported that Internal Affairs had completed review of the recodification of the COGS Administrative Code and passed it out of committee.
 - Committee work included:

- Correcting typos and minor language issues.
- Clarifying procedures for removal of officers.
- Clarifying Medical School Council (MSC) and Law School Council (LSC) sanctioning authority.
- Codifying the Representative of the Year Award that had previously been presented.
- Expressed hope that the recodification bill would pass the Assembly.

- Student Advocacy – Chair Luis
 - Reported that the committee met and brainstormed advocacy priorities, focusing especially on international and immigrant graduate students.
 - Indicated that upcoming committee work would address transportation advocacy and professional development advocacy for graduate students.

- Outreach – Chair Logan
 - Reported that Outreach developed a social media strategy for the COGS Instagram account and gathered content ideas from members.
 - Discussed potential new outreach events and engagement opportunities.
 - Shared plans to create print materials, including:
 - A flyer to recruit representatives for vacant seats.
 - A general “What is COGS?” brochure for graduate students.
 - Provided feedback on attending the CHAW “Mind” Lunch and Learn, noting that it was informative and offered free Chick-fil-A, and encouraged others to attend upcoming sessions.

- Budget Committee
 - No separate oral report was given beyond discussion within later funding bills.

Funding Requests

- Bill 35 – Civil and Environmental Engineering Graduate Student Association (CEEGSA) Funding Bill
 - Sponsor: Representative Fahad.
 - Purpose:
 - To support the Civil and Environmental Engineering Graduate Student Association’s annual graduate student conference scheduled for December 1, 2025.
 - Conference activities include oral and poster presentations, awards (including \$700 awards for winners in four oral presentation subcategories), certificates, and a keynote industry speaker.

– Funding Context:

- Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering is providing approximately \$7,000 plus additional in-kind support (e.g., coffee and other arrangements).

- COGS is requested to allocate \$1,923 to provide lunch (catered by Chick-fil-A) for approximately 200 participants.

– Questions:

- Islamyat asked if the event is open to all students.

– Sponsor clarified that all may attend the conference and keynote, but only Civil and Environmental Engineering graduate students may submit abstracts for presentations.

– Pro-Debate:

- Shaheen noted that industry and academic professionals will attend to judge presentations and that the department is covering the majority of costs; COGS funding would be limited to lunch, providing valuable professional experience for roughly 150–200 graduate students.

- Deshawn calculated that the per-person cost of lunch is approximately \$9.60, which he felt was reasonable for a catered meal; he expressed support for the bill.

- Devin emphasized that the bill aligns with COGS' mission to strengthen graduate research and connect students with faculty and industry professionals.

– No con debate was offered.

– Motion:

- Nachika moved to call the question; motion seconded by George. Hearing no objection, debate was closed.

– Vote:

- Prior to the vote, members serving on the CEEGSA board were instructed to abstain.

- Final vote: 23 yes, 0 no, 3 abstentions.

- Bill 35 passed.

Unfinished Business

- None.

New Business

- Bill 30 – Recodification of the COGS Administrative Code

– Chair: Deputy Speaker for Finance Mederev presided while Speaker Rowan presented as sponsor.

– Sponsor's Opening Statement (Rowan):

- Explained that the COGS Administrative Code governs COGS operations, spending authority, and expectations for organizations funded under COGS.
- Noted that the code had grown into a lengthy, complex document over many years, with the last comprehensive review occurring in 2009.
- Described a multi-stage review process led by the Internal Affairs Committee, first under Chair Mederev and then under Chair Nicolette, with Vice Chair Nachika and Deputy Speaker for Judicial Affairs Ridwan, as well as members including Islamyat, Taylor, Diego, and Rosaline.
- Outlined key questions guiding the review: whether to change code to reflect current practice or adjust practice to match the existing code. Different choices were made in different areas.
- Reported spending several weeks reorganizing and reformatting the code to improve readability, including:
 - Reorganizing sections and chapters for better logical flow.
 - Adding bold “catch lines” (similar to Florida Statutes) to summarize each section’s content.
 - Aligning the code’s structure more clearly with current COGS operations.
- Expressed that the goal is a more workable, accessible code for members and the broader graduate student body.
- Questions:
 - A question was raised regarding tie votes in elections (referencing language on page 21 about resolving ties upon convening the new Congress).
 - Rowan clarified that the noted provision applies to COGS representative elections (e.g., at-large or college seats), not to internal officer elections such as Deputy Speaker positions.
 - Acknowledged that the Assembly should later adopt a clear process for officer-election ties, and suggested this fall under the future work of the Deputy Speaker for Judicial Affairs.
 - Noah asked about changing the conference grant distance threshold from 200 miles to 150 miles.
 - Rowan explained that the Internal Affairs Committee recommended lowering the threshold to include major cities like Pensacola and Jacksonville, which previously fell within the “local” range and could not qualify for certain grant levels.
 - Noah asked about the Representative of the Year Award language, which states that sitting officers are ineligible for the award.
 - Discussion with Advisor Tanner clarified that university HR policy requires that officer positions designated as paid cannot be served in on an unpaid basis.
 - As future officers cannot “waive” compensation, the existing restriction on officers’ eligibility for the award would remain, and no amendment was introduced.
 - Noah asked about granting MSC and LSC authority to freeze accounts of organizations under their jurisdiction.
 - Rowan explained that the enforcement chapter is intended as a last-resort mechanism for serious violations.

– Under the proposal, MSC and LSC may impose freezes (but not full spending restrictions), while the Congress retains ultimate authority for further sanctions.

– Emphasized that MSC and LSC know their organizations best, and the change recognizes their role while preserving Congressional oversight.

– Pro-Debate:

- Nicolette stated that the reorganization and use of a tracing document had made the code significantly clearer for student organizations, allowing them to better understand requirements without constant clarification from COGS.

– Praised committee participation and thoughtful discussion, including on the grant distance change.

- Mederev commended Rowan for extensive work on recodification over many months and praised the new Florida Statutes–style format as highly readable and user-friendly.

– No con debate was offered.

– Motion:

- Joey moved to call the question; motion seconded by Nachika. Hearing no objection, debate was closed.

– Sponsor’s Closing Statement (Rowan):

- Noted that when he began his second term as Speaker, he had three major goals: expanding the Congress to its current size, recodifying the COGS Code, and adopting a strategic plan.

- Expressed satisfaction that recodification had reached the floor and thanked all who contributed, hoping it would support years of future success.

– Vote:

- Final vote: 25 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions.

- Bill 30 passed.

- Resolution 10 – Amendments to the Internal Rules of Procedure (IROP)

– Sponsor: Speaker Rowan; presiding officer: Deputy Speaker Mederev.

– Sponsor’s Opening Statement:

- Explained that Resolution 10 makes technical changes to the Internal Rules of Procedure to bring them into alignment with the newly recodified COGS Code.

- Key changes include:

– Removing references to quorum that are now fully governed by the Administrative Code.

– Removing references to the Office of Governmental Affairs, which no longer exists.

– Adding a section to formalize the practice used during budget night for “conforming and implementing” legislation related to budget decisions.

- Noted that Internal Affairs had previously approved the resolution.
- No questions were asked.
- Pro-Debate:
 - A brief statement of thanks was provided for Rowan’s work; no substantive debate.
 - No con debate was offered.
 - Motion:
 - A motion to call the question was made and seconded; hearing no objection, debate was closed.
 - Sponsor waived closing.
 - Vote:
 - Final vote: 25 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions.
 - Resolution 10 passed.
- Resolution 12 – Adoption of the 2025–2028 COGS Strategic Plan
 - Sponsors: Representatives Deshawn and Diego.
 - Sponsors’ Opening Statements:
 - Diego explained that he joined COGS with two goals: to support the graduate student population and to help establish a formal strategic plan for the Congress.
 - Emphasized that strategic planning is critical for continuity, accountability, and elevating advocacy beyond day-to-day efforts.
 - Thanked Speaker Rowan, Deputy Speaker Stokes, and the Strategic Planning Committee for feedback, collaboration, and design work that transformed ideas into a robust plan.
 - Deshawn added brief remarks indicating he would speak more following the vote.
 - Questions:
 - Logan asked where the strategic plan would be accessible.
 - Sponsors responded that the plan would be posted on the COGS website and that Rowan intended to have physical copies printed, similar to the budget booklets.
 - Pro-Debate:
 - Logan, as a graphic design professional, praised the visual design and anticipated that the plan would be a strong tool for the Congress moving forward.
 - Noah thanked Deshawn, Diego, and the full Strategic Planning Committee for building a thoughtful, actionable plan and read committee members’ names into the record, emphasizing the importance of “giving flowers” where due.

- Rowan stated that adoption of the plan would make COGS the first SGA entity at FSU to have an approved strategic plan, underscoring COGS' leadership role and the importance of graduate student voices in shared governance.

- No con debate was offered.

- Motion:

- Joey moved to call the question; motion seconded by Madison. Hearing no objection, debate was closed.

- Sponsors' Closing Statement:

- Deshawn stressed that a key part of any strategic plan is accountability.

- Encouraged members to treat the plan as a guide for the next three years, not just a document, and to hold themselves and future leaders accountable for pursuing its goals.

- Vote:

- Initial tally was stated as 26–0–0, later corrected to 25–0–0 due to counting clarification.

- Final vote: 25 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions.

- Resolution 12 passed.

- Resolution 11 – CHAOS Off-Campus Waiver

- Sponsor: Speaker Rowan.

- Context:

- At a prior meeting, COGS had approved funding for CHAOS, the school psychology organization, but the off-campus waiver resolution was not moved at that time.

- Action:

- Rowan requested a motion to suspend the rules to take up Resolution 11.

- Joey moved to suspend the rules and pass Resolution 11; motion seconded by Nicolette.

- Hearing no objection, the rules were suspended and Resolution 11 (CHAOS Off-Campus Waiver) was approved.

Round Table

- A motion to waive Round Table was made by George and seconded by Shaheen.

- Hearing no objection, Round Table was waived.

Closing Announcements

- Deshawn thanked Speaker Rowan for his service and invited the Congress to applaud his work.

- Speaker Rowan recognized two representatives concluding their service in the Congress:
 - Representative Francis:
 - Noted that Francis was the most senior member of the Congress, having joined on April 3, 2023.
 - Thanked Francis for service on numerous committees and multiple budget committees.
 - Announced that Francis would receive a COGS lapel pin as a token of appreciation.
 - Francis addressed the Assembly, expressing gratitude for the opportunity to serve, to learn leadership, and to support fellow students.
 - Stated that he would always consider himself part of COGS and offered to assist in the future, especially in science and research matters.
 - Representative Diego:
 - Rowan reflected on their four-year friendship, noting shared interests and Diego's consistent support.
 - Highlighted Diego's service as Strategic Planning Committee Chair and his participation in Advocacy and Internal Affairs.
 - Presented Diego with a COGS lapel pin in appreciation of his service.
 - Remarks on Speaker Rowan's Service:
 - Speaker Rowan delivered an emotional farewell as Speaker, thanking early and continuing members (including Francis, Shazine, and Steven) for taking a chance on him as a new law student.
 - Reflected on the challenges and rewards of two years as Speaker, including difficult moments around failed constitutional amendments, but stated he would not trade the experience.
 - Announced he would remain in COGS as a member through May and expressed confidence in incoming Speaker Mederev and future leaders.
 - Urged members to maintain and build upon COGS' growing influence at FSU, ensuring that graduate student voices remain central to university decision-making.
 - Emphasized that administration, including the Provost, President, and Vice President for Student Affairs, now clearly recognize COGS, and he encouraged members to ensure that recognition is not lost.
- Advisor Tanner offered reflections on working with Rowan and the Congress:
 - Recounted his first lunch meeting with Rowan soon after becoming advisor and described how that meeting established a strong working relationship.
 - Compared COGS positively with a previous advisory board he advised at another institution.
 - Praised Rowan, Baez, and the leadership team for making COGS advising "easy" due to their competence and initiative.
 - Expressed confidence that Steven would successfully fill the "big shoes" left by Rowan.
- Noah offered remarks on Rowan's impact:

- Shared that he first heard of Rowan in the context of Student Senate, but truly came to know and appreciate him through COGS.
- Thanked Rowan for seeing potential in him and in all members, and for shaping their experiences as graduate leaders.
- Diego spoke to Rowan's broader impact:
 - Noted that Rowan's visibility with the COGS lapel pin at Board of Governors, Board of Trustees, and legislative meetings had made him widely recognized as "the graduate student guy" at FSU.
 - Emphasized the importance of graduate student presence in shared governance and praised Rowan for carrying that responsibility well for two years.
 - Encouraged Rowan to rest and commended his dedication.
- Speaker Rowan's final charge:
 - Urged members to "keep this going," ensuring that COGS continues to set the agenda for graduate student life at FSU and remains a leading force on campus and in the state.
 - Stressed collective responsibility—both for the incoming Executive Committee and for every representative—to maintain and grow COGS' influence.

Adjournment (Sine Die)

- Speaker Rowan requested a motion to adjourn the Thirty-Third Congress of Graduate Students sine die.
- Stephen moved to adjourn sine die; motion seconded by Deshawn.
- Hearing no objection, the motion carried.
- Following a brief explanation of the Florida legislative tradition of dropping a handkerchief to signify adjournment, Speaker Rowan replicated the tradition.
- The Thirty-Third Congress of Graduate Students was adjourned sine die.
- Elected officers of the Thirty-Fourth Congress were asked to come forward for a photo, and members were reminded to see the Deputy Speaker for Communications if they had not yet received COGS merchandise.

THE THIRTY-FOURTH CONGRESS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS

MEETING MINUTES

Date: November 17, 2025 at 6:55 PM

Location: Senate Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

- The first regular meeting of the 34th Congress of Graduate Students was called to order at 6:55 PM by Speaker Mederev.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

- Led by the Assembly.

INAUGURATION OF THE 34TH CONGRESS

- A mini■inauguration was conducted due to the previously canceled SGA-wide ceremony.
- Justice Steven of the SGA Supreme Court administered the oath to representatives in two groups.
- Officers sworn in:
 - Speaker: Stephen Mederev
 - Deputy Speaker for Finance: Joey Cerrone
 - Deputy Speaker for Communications: Noah Baez
 - Deputy Speaker for Judicial Affairs: Nicolette Lenane

ROLL CALL

- Members responded “here”; quorum was confirmed.

READING & APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- Previous meeting minutes were not yet available due to transition delays.
- Approval of past minutes was TABLED to the December 1, 2025 meeting.

PETITIONS INTO THE ASSEMBLY

- None.

SPECIAL INTRODUCTIONS & STUDENT COMMENTS

- Representative Baez introduced a survey project on SGA involvement and career readiness, created with Andy Johnson and Dr. Williams.
- Members were encouraged to participate; responses are anonymous.

OFFICE OF GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

- No announcements.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Speaker – Stephen Mederev

- Shared updates on transition into the Speaker role.
- Working with SurveyMonkey Apply staff on improving the COGS grant application workflow.
- Noted presentation grant budget usage:
 - \$102,000+ of \$110,000 already awarded.
 - Announced the likelihood funding will run out shortly after Thanksgiving.
 - Reminded representatives that funding resets March 1.

Deputy Speaker for Finance – Joey Cerrone

- Reported continued transition into the role and review of grant-processing responsibilities.

Deputy Speaker for Communications – Noah Baez

- Merchandise distribution ongoing.
- Developing a communications content calendar with Rep. Lamb.
- Announced COGS LinkedIn for student spotlights and encouraged submissions.

Deputy Speaker for Advocacy – Deshaun Stokes

- Absent (at a conference).

Deputy Speaker for Judicial Affairs / Outreach – Nicolette Lenane

- Reported transition progress and discussions with former Deputy Speaker Redwan.

Advisor – Tanner

- Provided updates on the delayed inauguration caused by an active election appeal.
- Explained possible outcomes:
 - VP of Student Affairs ruling → inauguration scheduled.
 - Loss of quorum in Senate → special election → inauguration delayed to spring.
- Encouraged students to reach out for support related to the recent student death on campus.
- Highlighted CAPS mental health resources.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Committees had not yet met; elections scheduled later in the meeting.

FUNDING REQUESTS

Bill 1 – Art History Association: Symposium Dinner

Sponsor: Representative Logan Lamb

- Funding requested for the networking dinner at the 42nd Annual Art History Graduate Symposium.
- Event includes research sessions, keynote lecture, and professional networking.
- Original request: \$1,650.
- Discussion included:
 - COGS meal-per-person cap (\$20).
 - Pre-tax vs. tax-included totals.
 - Organization fundraising capacity (spring book/poster sale).
 - Water purchasing policy (no bottled water).

Motions:

1. Amendment to adjust total to \$1,500.

– Passed 13–0–2.

2. Motion to waive the \$20 per-person meal cap.

– Passed 14–0–1.

- Final outcome: Bill 1 PASSED AS AMENDED for \$1,500 with waiver granted.

NEW BUSINESS – COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

Outreach Committee:

- Chair: Logan Lamb
- Vice Chair: Janai Nubal ■ Oladapo

Advocacy Committee:

- Elections postponed; will occur via Zoom Monday.

Internal Affairs Committee:

- Chair: Jack Rowan
- Vice Chair: Islamyat Ojelade
- Meeting time: Mondays at 5:30 PM.

ROUNDTABLE

- Members shared personal and professional updates including conference travel, research presentations, PhD applications, volunteer work, and academic workload.
- Representative Lamb announced it was her last COGS meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

- A motion to adjourn was made by Rep. Rowan and seconded.
- Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:57 PM.

COGS Financial Report, Fiscal Year 2025-2026 as of December 1st, 2025

ACCOUNT	ALLOCATION AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION	AVAILABLE
Reserves	\$92,787	For RSO funding requests at COGS meetings	\$68,159
PRESENTATION GRANTS (Jul-Oct)	\$110,000	Presentation Grant balance for the July-October funding period	\$8,435
PRESENTATION GRANTS (Nov-Feb)	\$110,000	Presentation Grant balance for the November-February funding period	\$85
ATTENDANCE GRANTS (Jul-Oct)	\$20,000	Attendance Grant balance for the July-October funding period	\$7,276
ATTENDANCE GRANTS (Nov-Feb)	\$20,000	Attendance Grant balance for the November-February funding period	\$13,800



COGS Bill #: 2

Sponsor(s): Deputy Speaker Lanane

AN ACT

Amending the 2025-2026 Annual COGS Budget to adjust Speaker work hours and hourly rate to comply with Graduate Assistant work limits while maintaining total personnel cost.

1 **WHEREAS**, the Congress of Graduate Students (COGS) annually adopts a budget establishing
2 compensation for the Executive Committee; and

3 **WHEREAS**, the current COGS budget allocates compensation for the Speaker at **12 hours per week**
4 **over 44 weeks at \$14.00 per hour**, totaling **\$7,392.00**; and

5 **WHEREAS**, under the collective bargaining agreement between FSU and the Graduate Assistants
6 Union, Graduate Assistants may work **no more than 30 total compensated hours per week**
7 across all university appointments; and

8 **WHEREAS**, any **Speaker holding a 20-hour graduate assistantship should remain eligible for the**
9 **full budgeted annual compensation** while ensuring COGS remains in full compliance with
10 graduate school policies; and

11 **WHEREAS**, amending the Speaker's hours to **10 hours per week over 44 weeks at \$16.80 per hour**
12 brings the position into full compliance with the collective bargaining agreement while allowing the
13 Speaker to retain the **same total annual compensation of \$7,392.00**;

14 ***Be it enacted by the 34th Congress of Graduate Students at Florida State University that:***

15 **Section 1. Adjustment of Speaker Pay.**

16 Proviso paragraph II(A)(1)(a) of Bill 2025 of the 33rd Congress is amended at "COGS Officers" to read:
17 Speaker: \$16.80/hr ~~\$14.00/hr~~ over 44 weeks at a rate of 10 ~~12~~ hours per week (\$7,392 total);

18 **Section 2. Effective Date.**

19 The provisions of this bill shall take effect upon becoming law.

DONE AND PASSED by the 34th Congress of Graduate Students at Florida State University this DAY of MONTH, YEAR.

FLOOR VOTE: Deputy Speaker to Add Vote Count

COMMITTEE REFERENCES AND DATES OF PASSAGE:

- Referred to Internal Affairs 11.24.25. Reported favorably without amendment 11.24.25.

By: _____
Steven Medarev
Speaker, 34th COGS

By: _____
Tanner McKinley
COGS Advisor

Date: _____

Date: _____

By: _____
Dr. Amy Hecht
Vice President for Student Affairs

Date: _____



34th Congress of Graduate Students Legislation Cover Sheet

COGS Bill/Resolution #: 3

Sponsor(s): Representative Rowan

Short Title: An Act Allocating LSC Funds for the Spring 2026 Semester.

Summary of Legislation:

The bill allocates funds to thirty-seven student organizations at the College of Law and provides funds for the Law School Council expense account. The total allocation is \$52,798.07.

Background Information:

Every year, in the annual budget, the Congress allocates funds to the Law School Council (LSC) for LSC to distribute to the student organizations at the College of Law. In fall 2023, the Law School Governance Reform Act was passed, which mandated that LSC allocate its annual funds in a semesterly budget.

As part of its budget process, LSC holds an initial informational session with student organizations walking through the budget process for the semester and answering any questions from the organizations. Organizations then have a period of time to submit budget requests to LSC. These requests are initially reviewed at a meeting of the LSC and Round One cuts are made. These cuts are made off of the submissions and are meant to bring down the volume of the initial request. Once the Round One cuts are provided to the organizations, each organization has a period of time to appeal the cuts and provide additional arguments for why that organization should receive more funding than initially proposed. LSC hears these arguments and incorporates them into a final allocation.

The final allocations are then transmitted to the COGS Speaker, who works with the representatives from the College of Law to draft a bill based off of the allocations made by LSC. Typically, a representative from the College of Law sponsors the budget bill.

The Congress, subject to veto by the university president or their designee, has final authority over the allocations made by LSC and may amend or reject the allocations as it sees fit.

Effect of Proposed Legislation:

Passage of the bill allocates \$52,708.07 from the Law School Council to the Council and to College of Law Student Organizations.

Attachment(s):

- Attachment #1: Proposed Bill





COGS Bill #: 3

Sponsor(s): Representative Rowan

AN ACT

Allocating LSC Funds for the Spring 2026 Semester

1 ***Be it enacted by the 34th Congress of Graduate Students at Florida State University that:***

2 **Section 1. Allocation of LSC Funds.**

3 The Congress hereby approves the following allocations from the Law School Council for the Spring
4 2026 semester to the following organizations in the following categories:

LSC Spring 2026 Budget					
Allocation: \$ 52,798.07					
Organization	Cont. Serv	Expense	Food	Clothing & Awards	Total
LSC Administration	Cont. Serv	Expense	Food	Clothing & Awards	Total
LSC Expense	\$0	\$0	\$428.07	\$0	\$428.07
LSC Reserve	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<u>LSC Administration</u> <u>Total</u>	\$0	\$0	\$428.07	\$0	\$428.07
LSC Student Organizations	Cont. Serv	Expense	Food	Clothing & Awards	Total
Asian Pacific American Law Student Association (APALSA)	\$0	\$0	\$850	\$0	\$850

Association for Criminal Justice (ACJ)	\$0	\$0	\$600	\$250	\$850
Black Law Students Association (BLSA)	\$0	\$946	\$604	\$0	\$1,550
Business Law Society (BLS)	\$0	\$50	\$750	\$0	\$800
Consumer Advocates Society (CAS)	\$0	\$0	\$250	\$0	\$250
Christian Legal Society (CLS)	\$0	\$400	\$650	\$0	\$1,050
Cuban American Bar Association (CABA)	\$700	\$60	\$490	\$0	\$1,250
Election Law Society	\$1,200	\$0	\$450	\$0	\$1,650
Entertainment, Arts, and Sports Law Society (EASL)	\$1,800	\$100	\$700	\$0	\$2,600
Environmental Law Society	\$0	\$350	\$450	\$0	\$800
Federal Bar Association at FSU	\$0	\$15	\$435	\$50	\$500
Federalist Society	\$0	\$0	\$240	\$110	\$350
Health Law Society (HLS)	\$0	\$0	\$350	\$0	\$350
Hispanic Law Students Association (HLSA)	\$125	\$100	\$1,175	\$0	\$1,400
Human Trafficking and Policy Law Society (HTPLS)	\$250	\$0	\$115	\$35	\$400
Italian American Law Student Association (IALSA)	\$0	\$0	\$800	\$0	\$800
Intellectual Property Law Society	\$0	\$50	\$250	\$550	\$850
International Law Students Association (ILSA)	\$0	\$250	\$600	\$0	\$850
Jewish Law Students Association (JLSA)	\$0	\$0	\$500	\$0	\$500
Judge Advocate Student Association (JASA)	\$0	\$0	\$400	\$0	\$400
Law Students Practicing Wellness (LSPW)	\$0	\$500	\$500	\$0	\$1,000

Middle Eastern Law Association (MELA)	\$0	\$240	\$1,010	\$150	\$1,400
National Lawyers Guild (NLG)	\$0	\$250	\$720	\$0	\$970
OUTLaw	\$0	\$100	\$250	\$0	\$350
Public Interest Law Students Association (PILSA)	\$0	\$0	\$1,350	\$0	\$1,350
Real Property, Probate, & Trust Law Society at FSU (RPPTL)	\$0	\$0	\$253	\$547	\$800
Student Animal Legal Defense Fund (SALDF)	\$440	\$200	\$510	\$0	\$1,150
Student Bar Association (SBA)	\$19,000	\$1,500	\$0	\$0	\$20,500
Student Veterans Law Symposium	\$0	\$0	\$450	\$0	\$450
Transfer Student Organization (TSO)	\$0	\$0	\$350	\$0	\$350
Women's Law Symposium (WLS)	\$250	\$860	\$990	\$0	\$2,100
<u>LSC Student Organizations Total</u>	\$23,765	\$5,971	\$17,042	\$1,692	\$48,470
Law Journals	Cont. Serv	Expense	Food	Clothing & Awards	Total
Business Review	\$0	\$0	\$450	\$0	\$450
Journal of Land Use & Environmental Law	\$0	\$0	\$350	\$0	\$350
Journal of Transnational Law & Policy	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Law Review	\$0	\$180	\$1,770	\$0	\$1,950
<u>Law Journals Total</u>	\$0	\$180	\$2,570	\$0	\$2,750
Competition Teams	Cont. Serv	Expense	Food	Clothing & Awards	Total
Moot Court	\$0	\$0	\$1,150	\$0	\$1,150
Trial Team	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

<u>Competition Teams</u>					
<u>Total</u>	\$0	\$0	\$1,150	\$0	\$1,150
Total	\$23,765	\$ 6,151	\$21,190.07	\$1,692	\$ 52,798.07

5 **Section 2. Authorization for Off-Campus Events.**

6 The organizations funded in this act are authorized to hold all off-campus events budgeted by the
7 Law School Council.

8 **Section 3. Effective Date.**

9 The provisions of this bill shall take effect upon becoming law.

DONE AND PASSED by the 34th Congress of Graduate Students at Florida State University this DAY of MONTH, YEAR.

FLOOR VOTE: Deputy Speaker to Add Vote Count

COMMITTEE REFERENCES AND DATES OF PASSAGE:

- Deputy Speaker to Add Committee References and Dates of Passage

By: _____
Steven Medarev
Speaker, 34th COGS

Date: _____

By: _____
Joseph Serrone
Deputy Speaker for Finance

Date: _____

By: _____
Dr. Amy Hecht
Vice President for Student Affairs

Date: _____

By: _____
Tanner McKinley
COGS Advisor

Date: _____