This document describes the outcomes of the votes for the 4 September 2020 Assembly Meeting as well as addresses any concerns/questions/comments that were submitted. For this meeting, an informal meeting also took place via Zoom on 4 September 2020 at 5:00pm. There were six assembly representatives present as well as the Interim GSA Treasurer and the Assembly Speaker.

Vote 1
Do you approve of the May Meeting summary?

Yes- 18  No- 0  Abstain- 3

Vote 2
Do you approve of the Treasurer's budget report?

Yes- 18  No- 0  Abstain- 3

Vote 3
The GSA Grants Chair resigned on 31 May and a new Grants Chair was appointed over the summer, namely Christina Scharmer. Christina served on the GSA Grants Committee in previous years as a reviewer. Christina's appointment is until 31 May 2021. Do you confirm the appointment of Christina Scharmer as the Grants Chair?

Yes- 16  No- 3  Abstain- 2

Vote 4
The GSA Programming Chair will resigned on 15 September 2020 and a new Programming Chair was appointed, namely Desann Chin-Carty. Desann served as the UAlbany Student Association President last academic year and was active with the organization throughout her time as an undergraduate student. Do you confirm the appointment of Desann Chin-Carty as the Programming Chair from 15 September 2020 to 31 May 2021?

Yes- 16  No- 3  Abstain- 2
Vote 5

After reviewing the applications for the Judicial Board positions, please select five (5) people who you would like to see serve on the Judicial Board until 31 May 2021. Your vote will be disregarded if you select more than 5. Since there are many applications, the Assembly Speaker and the current Judicial Board Chair would like to suggest the candidates with a * next to their name, after thorough review of their applications.

**Based on the below image, the 5 people who have been elected to serve on the Judicial Board are Kevin Caramancion, Tsveta Dobreva, Krista Dotterer, Rita Francesca Loffredo, and Anwesha Sarkar.
Vote 6

After reviewing the applications for the Assembly Speaker position, please select one(1) person who you would like to see serve as the Assembly Speaker until 31 May 2021.

**Based on the below image, the person who has been elected to serve as the Assembly Speaker is Heather Sussman. The breakdown of the number of votes was:**

Christina Cobb - 1
Sarah (Seong Eun) Kim - 5
Rita Francesca Loffredo - 3
Santos Norales - 2
Michael Poindexter - 1
Heather Sussman - 6
Abstain - 3

Feedback, Questions, or Public Comments (Responses are italicized)

I have a few concerns that I would like a response to. First, I am concerned that the GSA is asking us to vote on the confirmation of the Grants and Programming Chairs in spite of the fact that we were not given any forewarning of this vote and, even worse, virtually no information on these candidates. The Bylaws were clearly not followed in this case, and I don't think it's in line with the Constitution either. In light of these circumstances, I am opposed in principle to voting on these candidates at this time. As great as they may potentially be, we have been given no opportunity to prepare for this vote in any way, and it is our right to do so per the Bylaws. Also, per the Bylaws, it is the responsibility of the President-Elect to nominate for these positions. Not only is it not the President-Elect nominating these candidates, we're being asked to vote on this 5 days before the E-Board election proceedings begin. On Friday, September 4, I formally requested that these votes be delayed, and now I am formally requesting this again.

The email with the Google Form was sent out one week prior to the Assembly meeting. You do not need to be ready to vote to open up the Google Form and see what is being voted on. Therefore,
forwarning was given. A brief description of the candidates directly related to the role they are nominated for was also given.

You are correct that the President-Elect should be nominating these positions as per the Bylaws. However, the Bylaws also state that if there is a vacancy, the President has the right to nominate any position. The 2019-2020 Grants and Programming Chairs have resigned and these positions need to be filled. This is especially crucial for the Grants Chair since Fall grants have a deadline of October 01, therefore, we cannot wait for a new President to be elected mid-September, have a call for applications late-September, and maybe have someone confirmed in the role by the October meeting. We cannot delay the confirmation of the Grants Chair. Since the Grants Chair and Programming Chair are seen as equivalent in the eyes of the Constitution and Bylaws, we cannot delay one and not the other.

Second, on a related note, I feel that the GSA Assembly no longer has an appropriate method to discuss matters and vote as an entire legislative body on these important issues. I know it's a lot easier to not have to attend these meetings and it's the last thing any of us want to do on a Friday evening, but the GSA is a very important organization, and we need to make sure we're fulfilling our roles as GSA Assembly members. We can't do that in the current set-up with only optional Zoom meetings. Even when we do show up to these meetings, almost no E-Board members are there to listen to our concerns. The E-Board is shirking its responsibilities and attempting to remove a check on its power by not having the Assembly meet in person. Because of this, the GSA is not functioning in the way that the Constitution and Bylaws intended it to. I strongly encourage the Assembly Speaker to have mandatory GSA Assembly meetings so that the Assembly is serving its constitutionally appointed duty and so that we, as Assembly members, have the opportunity to discuss and debate important matters before voting.

As Assembly Speaker, if I do not hear that something is not working within the legislative branch, I assume everything is fine. There were no comments on a similar matter during the latter-half of the Spring semester, so it was assumed this method was working. Since I have now heard what we have been doing may not be the best, I will work towards fixing it prior to the October meeting by bringing back in-person meetings, but via Zoom.

Lastly, I've been very disgruntled with the lack of transparency of the upcoming elections. Per the Constitution, elections are to be held in May and the new administration takes over on June 1. My understanding is that there was a directive from SUNY to postpone elections until the fall semester of this year, but I have heard very little about why there was a problem with having online elections before September (and these elections will, presumably, be online anyway). Furthermore, I don't recall the Assembly being consulted or even informed at all about any of this. I also had heard virtually nothing about these upcoming elections until I was given some information at the meeting on September 4. I am calling for increasing the transparency of these proceedings and to be given an explicit justification on record for going against the Constitution.

The postponement of elections was a SUNY mandate imposed on all student government organizations throughout the SUNY system. The mandate stated elections could occur once the Fall semester began. Of course, it would be unwise to hold elections during the first week of the semester when people are settling into their new classes and new students have just arrived to
Albany. Therefore, elections could not be held before September. The Elections Committee has set new dates to be in mid-September. The Elections Committee is essentially an ad-hoc committee elected by Assembly representatives in the spring semester of each year and operates outside all branches of government. Any questions about elections should be sent to gsaelections@albany.edu.