



# LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

UCF Student Government  
GAP Committee Meeting  
Charge On Chamber  
09/12/2023  
4:30 PM  
[Zoom](#)

## MEETING AGENDA

1. Call to Order: 4:31 PM
2. Roll Call & Verification of Quorum (7): 9/12

Name	Email	Initial	Final
Chair Temple	sgagap@ucf.edu	P	P
Vice-Chair Polera	Sgasci9@ucf.edu	V	P
Senator Duke	sga_sci2@ucf.edu	P (5:01 PM)	P
Senator Herrera	sga_cah2@ucf.edu	A	A
Senator Humayun	sga_chps3@ucf.edu	A	A
Senator Lacasse	sga_sci8@ucf.edu	P	P
Senator Richmond	sgsci12@ucf.edu	P	P
Senator Sandlin	sgsci13@ucf.edu	P	P
Senator Vasquez	Sgasci14@ucf.edu	P	P
Senator Vorn	Sga_ba6@ucf.edu	P	P
Senator Yalamanchili	Sgachps6@ucf.edu	P	P
LJR Representative	sga_ljr@ucf.edu	V	V
Pro Tempore Representative	sga_pro@ucf.edu	A	A
Governmental Affairs Coordinator	sga_govaffairs@ucf.edu	P	P

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1. Approval of the Minutes: [9/5/2023](#) - Approved by GC
2. Approval of the Agenda: - **Approved by GC**
3. Open Forum
  - a. Hurst: The agenda looks long and I looked at more of the google form, so I wish you luck!
4. Announcements from the Chair-
  - a. Good afternoon, everyone!
    - i. Today we will be electing a new Vice Chair!
    - ii. After the election is complete, we will move into divvying up the legislative priorities and begin working on them today, if we have time.
    - iii. Also I wanted to begin a new initiative: there is a special primary election for House District 35 (which is Lake Nona), and after meeting with a Democratic figure tasked with supporting House Candidates, we will be moving ahead with a voter education initiative specifically for the Lake Nona campus. Short end, I'm going to need no more than 4 individuals for this task who want to be apart of the electoral research, as the final product will be a voter's guide.
    - iv. OTD:
      1. In 1897, the Battle of Saraghari occurs. 21 Sikh soldiers, under British command, attempt to tend off 14 standards of Afghan tribesmen who had rebelled against the Raj. This totaled out to be 21 Sikh riflemen vs 10,000 tribesmen. The Saraghari garrison's objective was to delay this onslaught so reinforcements could be received by nearby Forts Gulistan and Lockhart. Ultimately, all 21 Sikh soldiers would fall, but so too would anywhere from 450-600 Afghans. The tribesmen were delayed long enough so that the British reinforcements would arrive and turn them away. The entire garrison would receive the Indian Order of Merit (they were from the Punjab), which is equivalent to the Victoria Cross posthumously.
5. Announcements from the Vice Chair-

Vice Chair Polera: Thank you for everyone for voting for me. I look forward to working with GAP to make DATC a success!

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## 6. Announcements from Committee Members-

- a. GAC Martin - Hey everyone! My apologies for not being able to attend the meeting in person today. Reminder: **DATC is January 30, 2024**. Tomorrow, I am meeting with Chris Carmody from GreyRobinson to discuss my initiatives and continue planning my Downtown Day event at the Orlando Courthouse and City Hall. On **September 24**, myself and President Greenaway are meeting with various UCF staff and alumni to discuss DATC. The meeting will include the Office of the President, Alumni Engagement, and the Office of Government & Community Relations. Congrats to the new VC!
- b. Yalamanchili: 1962, The We Choose to Go The Moon! Kennedy's speech at Rice university that formed the foundation of NASA and the winning of the Space Race. \*Hurst says Ethan's fact is better\*

## 7. Announcements from Non-Committee Members

- a. AG Moore: Congrats to the new Vice Chair! So, the military and veteran's caucus will be on the floor thursday, I want to see as many there, and I appreciate everyone for showing up to the 9/11 Memorial
- b. Justice Collazzo: Echoing the same sentiments, the caucus is starting this Thursday, Holmes will be appointing new members to the caucus this Thursday. We've been to several events already with Military Success and Veteran Center.

## 8. Old Business-

- a. [Policy Advocacy Breakdown](#)
- b. [Final Student Priority Survey](#)
- c. Update on Responses
  - i. Temple: **Link to current responses spreadsheet:**  
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1WYAq-T59uIS4Oj1EMhYfrezgUvfPSciKYs1pw5M60A/edit?usp=sharing>
  - ii. **Total Responses So Far: 82 responses!!!!!!**
- d.
- e. Bills
  - i. None.
- f. Resolutions
  - i. None.

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## 9. New Business-

### a. Legislative Priorities

- i. As mentioned up top, we need to get a move on these Priorities ASAP, so this week we can divvy up the major policy area we have from the Survey. So far, we have 83 responses! That may not sound like much, but it is representative based upon the majors of the applicants, so we can operate off that!
- ii. Yalamanchilli: Discussed threshold for the topic for legislative priorities. I think it was 42. It's unfortunate that students don't care that much about the economy or drug policy, which are important. There are some issues that affect niche groups like LGBTQ+ community. Some students are not members of that community. I think it should be included because when it comes to niche issues that affect minorities, the majority is not the only thing that should be considered. Wants to include LGBTQ+ rights.
- iii. AG Moore: Housing should be considered. Lots of issues with student housing with landlords taking advantage and credit scores raised. Lots of students have to go to Student Legal Services. Maybe military stuff.
- iv. Chair Temple: Agrees that housing should be considered.
- v. ELA Richmond: Identity has been stolen twice in the past year. Wants to advocate for credit and knowledge on how to check credit.
- vi. Chair Temple: Four core sectors: civil rights, environmental, safety and welfare, and education.
  1. [Student Priorities Survey 2023-2024 - Google Forms](#)
- vii. Our goal here is to parse through which are the most important topics, based on this survey's results, and from there consolidate them if need be. Further, I want to assign these

### b. HD 35

- i. [Agenda for Meeting with Drew Shannon - Google Docs](#)
  1. Provided are the minutes from yesterday's meeting with Drew Shannon, who works with the Florida Democratic Party (tangentially, the minutes provide more insight).
  2. Short end: HD 35 is a three way primary for both the Democrats and Republicans, meaning three candidates are going to show up for each party.

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3. From what Brooke and I gathered it is that his aim is to get more people registered for VBMs, but we also know that it is in his best interests to get more people out to vote in general, not just through VBMs. As such, GAC Martin and I developed the following plan: between now and the end of the early voting period (26 October), GAP and the wider SG will initiate a voter education program to inform students about the candidates and where to vote early for the election (which is happening on 7 November). This would be through tabling at the Lake Nona campus. Meantime, and if they are to assemble there, we'd be working parallel to People Power (Eskamani's nonpartisan registration group) and canvassers associated with Drew and State House Minority Leader Fentrice Driskell.
4. Despite the fact we communicated with primarily Democratic officials, we are **not** canvassing for them. We are there instead as SG, replete with its nonpartisan status, and only are providing information on the candidates and polling locations, alongside merch to advertise SG to the Nona campus. If you wanted to help canvass for the candidates, I'll pass that information along to Drew, but you will only represent yourself or the Democratic Party in that capacity, **not** Student Government nor GAP.
5. For now, our primary task here is to develop a voter's guide that details
  - a. The candidates for each party (their background, platform, etc)
  - b. The early polling locations (found on the Orange county SOE site)
    - i. This will require no more than 4 senators, including the Vice Chair. This is because I want to optimize our work capacity, and 4 senators should be enough for this.
6. Further, there are mayoral and commissioner elections occurring on that 7 November ballot, so I want this working group to keep that in mind if they want to add that so we can circulate this more broadly across UCF.

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- c. Bills
  - i. None.
- d. Resolutions
  - i. None.
- 10. Member Discussion-
  - i. None
- 11. Miscellaneous Business-
  - a. Vice Chair Elections (5/5 +3 minutes additional/5)
    - i. Candidates:
      - 1. Senator Polera
      - 2. Senator Lacasse
      - 3. Senator Yalamanchili
    - ii. Speech
      - 1. [Polera Vice Chair Presentation](#)
        - a. If you don't know me, my name is Gabby, and I'm running for GAP Vice Chair. I'm majoring in Psychology on the Clinical track, minoring in Legal Studies, and pursuing a certificate in Litigation and Advocacy. I have a lot of work experience ranging from fast food to early education and childcare to different offices. I currently work in The Office of the President over in Millican Hall, and before that, I worked for the Dean's Office for the College of Community Innovation and Education. I'm also relatively new to the Senate after just having been confirmed this past June. I'm also very involved on campus from clubs to volunteering to different jobs and lots of leadership roles. I would love to use the skills from all of my experience in the Vice Chair position. I was the former Mediation Team President. If you don't know what mediation is, it's a form of alternative dispute resolution that is largely based on compromise. The team competes in different tournaments; I competed last year at Brenau University. My role was supervising the team, and I would like to use the skills I obtained at UCF Day at the Capitol. I was also a 2023 Legislative Scholar. I worked for Senator Baxley who is the

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Senate President Pro Tempore. Working for someone in leadership was very interesting. I was able to make lots of meaningful connections, and I had a unique experience during UCF Day at the Capitol. Pictured here as some of the officials I connected with, including Chief Justice Muniz, Representative Amesty, Representative Roach, Representative Eskamani, Speaker Renner, Senate President Pro Temp Baxley, and Senate President Passidomo. As a legislative scholar, I also saw things that went well and things that didn't go well during Day at the Capitol, so I have new ideas about things I would like to implement next year. That's about it. I would love to use mediation skills of compromise in having respectful and professional conversations with legislators. I was able to see different communication skills that were effective and weren't effective in the conversations with legislators. I would like to utilize the effective communication skills at Day at the Capitol. Thank you for your consideration.

- b. Lacasse: Hi! I represent the college of sciences seat 8, with a political science major and public admin minor. I have been interested in government affairs since 7<sup>th</sup> grade, especially the internal side. I got a perfect score on the civics test. I am the youth leader to a political org and treasurer of a collegiate political RSO. I think it is important to advocate inside of the political cycle and outside of it, as we are government agents as we're funded by the state. Why VC? I have the passion and care a lot about the needs of the students, especially at the government level. If we are collected and coordinated we can do well. I'd love to assist in the work of the chair and I feel proud to continue that work. I am a big lover of research, especially political research. Typing notes out, I am capable of simplifying things, and you know with the chair he speaks a lot (wait a minute...). I care about the body and want to be the vice chair.

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c. Yalamanchili: My name is Vihan and I am running for GAP Vice Chair for a few reasons. I have been in Seante since the 54<sup>th</sup> and been in GAP since then too. I know of the internal workings of the committee, and want to continue this for the students, hence that is why I am running. I am a Health Sciences major with a history minor. I am apart of Student Governmen, United Nations Association \*(MUN) as I find geopolitics fascinating. I also organize for LGBTQ rights (specifically trans and abortion rights). Over the summer, I interned in Washington, DC for the Care Giver Action Group, drafting policies and memos for the group. This was focused on peopel impacted by chronic illnesses and dementia, as well as Alzheimer's. I gained a lot of experience into federal policymaking and sat in on coalition calls with attorneys, pharma groups, seeing all sides. I am also a Legislative Scholar this year. I am aware of the subcommittee works the chair intends to do and am capable of writing nonpartisan legislation and informative voters guides. The health of our democracy depends on the engagement of its people. I am very excited about the HD35 voter education efforts to encourage students to vote, regardless of their affiliation. I am quite good at writing and typing.

iii. Question

1. Sandlin: UCF has a reputation for being very diverse across gender, religious, etc. This is what makes UCF so great, and in a time where diversity equity and inclusion is under attack, what can you as a VC do to ensure open communication with all students
  - a. Polera: I do agree that UCF has a diverse body, and that it is what makes this campus so fascinating. Having been a LS and making connections, I will reach out to my connections to this. I will remain open to these sorts of communications because I am familiar with this discrimination which is why I joined Senate and want to be VC.
  - b. Lacasse: I am on several caucuses for SG, and the RSO I am apart of has caucuses for minorities as well. In my role as a

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- Senator and outside it I seek to genuinely understand these communities and have these conversations by genuinely reaching out to them and figuring out what they want.
- c. Yalamanchili: I think that Diversity is a hallmark of UCF, we are an HSI and I believe to advocate for the body we need to advocate for all of them, regardless of their identity or appearance. I believe that when we advocate as a committee, we need to take into account these minorities. This state government isn't particularly nice to minorities and it is in our interest to protect our Diversity and advocate for the rights of minorities. Each community has their own concern within this state, as someone who is familiar with this I am aware of this issue.
2. Richmond: You all have prior experience with government officials, how do you want to change DATC?
- a. Lacasse: has not attended but will go there with the strongest mindset possible. Through appropriate conversations we will hold firm on our stances and refuse to go there compromising with less than what the students deserve. Stand firm going in with our acts
  - b. Yalamanchili: as going last year all bills advocated for but one was successful. Many bills legislatures agreed with but couldn't do anything or not being receptive or hostile because of what we were pushing for. Should advocate for both controversial and noncontroversial ones that are realistic and that still matter to the students. Priorities should be on local issues too at the state capitol, city hall, local court house. Can only do so much but should explore more ideas beyond DATC.
  - c. Polera: as legislative scholar has insight and implications. Implement making sure to train students on how to communicate respectfully and professionally (utilize course from scholars). Mediation skills. Implementing admin concerns to be coherent. Referencing right bill with each respective

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member. Going with compromises and more to elaborate on than just saying vote yes or no.

3. Hurst: Based on SG 9/11 service, how can we increase Senator turnout?
  - a. Yalamanchili: when it comes to SG sponsored events related to historical matters i believe we need more inter-branch cooperation, encouraging senators and justices to attend. I was there to commence the victims of 9-11, was moved and learned alot. Alot of people could learn alot, for example the sacrifices made to sacrifice eachother. Must advertise better, mentioning in senate and committee meetings, letting student body know. Willing to work with comms to ensure event is known to sb and senators
  - b. Polera: agrees about interbranch collaboration, comms, let RSOs know, and emphasize that SG is non-partisan because political RSOs should be coming together.
  - c. Lacasse: to increase senator turnout – genuine outreach, to show we are not robotic and are genuinely passionate and want to see our colleagues show up because it is important that our student representatives show up. We have to care. Agrees about general turnout by utilizing social media and emails.

#### iv. Debate

1. Sandlin: this is difficult, but based off of this candidates answers and working with this candidate, in favor of yalamanchili
2. Vasquez: hard, all are qualified, as a new senator sympathizes with Polera and wants to see new senators in power. Gives GAP a good perspective. Apart of DATC not in SG past 2 years. Experience is refreshing. Voting for Polera
3. Duke: really hard, agree with vazquez wants to see new senators in power, in favor of Lacasse
4. Richmond: I agree with the past remarks, I do want to see the new senators in positions, and I think everyone had a great answer, but I will vote for Polera, because her perspective will be here the whole semester and see the behind the scenes scenes.

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v. Vote:

1. **3-2-2-1 Senator Polera is VC**

a. Chair Temple: Everyone did amazing.

12. Final Roll Call: 10/12

13. Adjournment: 5:54 PM

Key:

P - Present

A - Absent

MTD - Move to Debate

MTV - Move to Vote

MTA- Move to Amend

PP - Postpone

PPI - Postpone Indefinitely

GC - General Consent

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