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Abdullah El-Sherbeeney
Seattle University

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SGSU's Newly Elected Positions

Abdullah El-Sherbeeney, Staff Reporter

The Student Government of Seattle University's (SGSU) elections for the beginning of the 2024-2025 academic year have concluded. Results for the new positions were officially sent out April 26 by current SGSU President Isabelle Alamilla.

The new officers for the fall are as follows: President Sophia Cofinas, Senate Chair Jeremy Ruan, Chief Financial Officer Iona Robinson, Vice President of Academic Affairs Sarah Rauf, Student Employee Senator Zhanea Champagne, Multicultural Senator Masee Anderson, College of Arts and Sciences Senator Diego Gonzalez, Student Employee Senator Zhanea Champagne. These roles will take effect in the coming 2024-2025 academic year.



Kay McHugh

Some members expressed a readiness to plan new ideas during the summer for the upcoming academic year, and others are planning what they can do to improve what SGSU has already built.

The incoming president, Sophia Cofinas, a third-year public affairs and international studies double major, is currently the senate chair.

"When I walked into that first meeting freshman year, I was like 'one day, one day, I will get there.' And I met the president then, and I was like, this is so cool, I wanna be you one day, and I just feel so humbled and so grateful that it's actually happening," Cofinas expressed.

Cofina has been involved in student government since her freshman year and has been climbing the ranks since then. She shared her ideas for the upcoming academic year.

"In terms of guiding, the number one thing that I want to do is build trust between SGSU and the student body. I want people to utilize our space," Cofinas said.

Aside from plans to build that trust with students, Cofina wants to make sure that the connections between the other SGSU members are built first. The 2023-2024 iteration of SGSU was plagued by frequent resignations, with unproductive discourse and a lack of trust, transparency and communication between members cited as the reasons for several of the departures.

Cofinas' other goal as president is to have more student engagement.

"I want to see people bringing their concerns to us. That's what we're here for. There's no work if there's no student voice," Cofinas said.

Alongside Cofinas, other elected board members talked about their plans and ideas for next year, such as Sarah Rauf, a second-year

business management and marketing major, who will continue to serve as the vice president of academic affairs.

Rauf hopes to start working on a petition to help with the current issues around international students who come with visas to study nursing. Nursing is not considered a STEM major, which means they are not qualified to stay after their visa expires by a year.

"I would like my committee to explore that and probably write up a petition or a resolution for the university to petition the U.S. government to add nursing onto their list of STEM majors," Rauf said.

Elected College of Arts and Sciences Senator Diego Gonzalez, a first-year criminal justice major, hopes to utilize SGSU's resources to help other clubs.

"I want to support clubs that way, because SGSU has the resources they have the connection that most clubs don't. It's just a way to support all clubs, mostly the clubs that have less members or less resources," Gonzalez said.

Jeremy Ruan, a third-year cell and molecular biology major, served as the SGSU legislative assistant last year and currently serves as the senate chair after switching positions from chief of staff.

Ruan had many doubts when he was running for his position due to the competition. However, because this has been a goal of his since he joined SGSU, he persisted.

"I am grateful that the student body believed in my abilities and chose me as their Senate Chair—and I will work hard to live up to that trust they have placed in me in my work next year," Ruan wrote to The Spectator. "One of my main goals for the new year is to build trust, unity and collaboration within SGSU Senators as a foundational step in order to carry out more effective and greater work that will benefit the student body as a whole."

Cofinas also has plans for how SGSU will deal with potential internal issues next year. She believes that adding "intentional recruiting and hiring" and looking for people passionate about their roles in SGSU will make a difference.

"I think that aligning the two is really important. There is SGSU, the governing body, and there are students on the ground advocating, and I think those two can be completely aligned. I see so much potential in our student body to get involved and to really make a change. I just want to really hit the ground running with that," Cofinas said.

SGSU has many aspiring board members hoping to show their support to their fellow Seattle U students and help amplify students' voices.