

2016-2017 REPORT

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University of Saskatchewan

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Welcome Note

Thank you to all the members who supported me during my time as VP External. This year has been highly productive to the GSA internally and externally. I have worked on many of the initiatives to provide sustainability to the association. The GSA has grown a positive reputation over the past two GSA executive terms and I await the growth of the association in the future to come.

Many thanks to the council members for being critical and providing important insights to the association. We have been able to accomplish a lot this year and it's because of your dedication and hard work, so thank you.

A huge thank you goes to the Office Manager, Sherri Rohovich! Thank you for always being there to help the team.

1. Lobbying/Day of Action

The CFS-SK component lobbied the provincial government with three asks: 1. Eliminate tuition fees; 2. Increase non-repayable, up-front grants for Indigenous learners. 3. Sustainable and stable mental health funding. Further, we partnered with Northern Teacher Education Program (NORTEP)-Northern Professional Access College (NORPAC) is an education institute in Northern Saskatchewan. The provincial government signed a 5-year agreement in 2015 to fund NORTEP-NORPAC and is no longer upholding this agreement. NORTEP-NORPAC is in the best years of its program with the highest enrolment rate. The provincial government has asked NORTEP-NORPAC to consolidate with another post-secondary institute in the province.

At the National Graduate Student Caucus, graduate student leaders from the nation gathered to discuss pertinent issues to our members and how to move forward. The three top areas of concern across the nation were: 1. A Mental Health Strategy for Graduate Students; 2. Beyond Child-Friendly Campuses; 3. Student and Worker Solidarity. We also shared best-practices around governance structures and member engagement.

This year the GSA undertook a huge commitment to mobilize students on November 2nd for the National Day of Action against tuition. We had the most successful event in the province with 75 to 100 students attending. We also had media coverage with 4 different broadcasters. We had endorsement from the Faculty Association, CUPE Local, and the Saskatchewan Labour Board.

2. GU15

The U15 is, since 2011, a group of 15 research intensive universities in Canada who meets twice per year to exchange common concerns, best practices and to provide political views. The GU15 on the other hand, is an informal meeting of but not-exclusively, associations representing the graduate students of these 15 universities. This group of graduate students now meets twice per year at different locations to also discuss best practices.

In August of 2016 I travelled, with VP Operations & Communication, to Hamilton, Ontario to attend the second annual GU15 meeting at McMaster University.

At this meeting we talked about getting student representation on TRI-Council's governing bodies. Further, it was discussed that having student representation on the Board of Governance of universities is 'best practice' amongst the U15.

However, a lengthy discussion by McMaster, Waterloo, UBC, and University of Montreal was around incorporation of GU15. A vote of 7 to 9 participating graduate student leaders voted for incorporation. The new identity of GU15 was to have a think tank, ThinkGRAD (Graduate Research and Development), for graduate students across the nations to come together and share best-practice and set lobbying priorities for federal governments. It was decided that the University of Saskatchewan would host the first ThinkGRAD conference in April 2017. This decision was made by the previous VP External and VP Finance when they attended the GU15 meeting in April 2016.

3. ThinkGRAD

ThinkGRAD is scheduled to occur April 19th to 21st at the time of writing this report I have little information about the conference to share. The agenda item deadline is April 17th and registration is open until April 14th. Thank you Naheda for your help in planning this initiative.

4. STUDENTCARE

I worked with STUDENTCARE representative (Colten Yamagishi & Kirstin Foster) on the negotiation of the health and dental plan for graduate students and post-doctoral fellows. The Health & Dental committee of council made a recommendation to increase our health and dental plan by 5% to ensure we will not over spend the money in the reserve. It was also suggested that we work with the post-doctoral fellow (PDF) union to have PDFs automatically enrolled in our health and dental plan to help subsidize the cost. Currently we have approximately 100 PDFs enrolled in the plan which affects the overall claims made. This is something the VP Finance & Operations should continue to work on with the Health & Dental committee of council.

5. Board of Governance

I have worked with the GSA President on this initiative meeting with the leader of the opposition, Trent Wotherspoon NDP to discuss the importance of having student representation on the Board of Governance. This would require the University of Saskatchewan 1995 Act and it was important to have provincial government support. Further, I helped in the development of the GSA President's presentation for the Government in Regina, due to my class schedule I was unable to attend. Further, I met with the Governance committee and Board of Directors of the University to discuss the importance of student representation.

6. GSA 5th Annual Awards Gala

This year I planned the 5th Annual Awards Gala on April 1st, 2017 at the Delta Bessborough. We had approximately 270 guests in attendance (including the honorable Mayor, Dean and Associate Dean of College of Graduate and Post-Doctoral Studies, Faculty Association, Alumni Association, Associate Dean of Arts and Science, Senate and Board members of the university) with many compliments on the decoration and theme “Great Gatsby”.

This task was a huge undertaking as it required fundraising the entirety. I was successful to get sponsorships from the different associations, colleges, and units on campus as well as securing off-campus sponsors. Thank you to the GSA Gala coordinator Kereen Morrison-Spence for her help, to our MCs, and to the photographer who helped captured a memorable night.

7. Misc. Initiatives

- I worked on a garden for the GSA with the office of sustainability. This is an initiative I hope the Sustainability Committee of council continues to work on.
- I also worked on the Health Chat initiative and am currently working with VP Operations & Communication to create a sustainable plan for this initiative as mental health is a concern for our members.
- I worked on the GSA Survey proposal with College of Graduate Students and Post-doctoral studies and the development of the final draft. It is unfortunate that ethics was a barrier and hope to see this initiative move forward next year. Thank you VP Student Affairs for organizing the survey committee.
- I coordinated the GSA Guppies for the Campus Rec intramural teams.
- Helped with the GSA website
- Participated in the REACT campaign on sexual assault.
- Worked on the student-supervisor agreement
- Worked on a U of S universal volunteer registry
- Created the GSA Annual Academic year planner
- Helped with orientation
- Press release on Travel Band
- Press release on Budget

8. Committee Participation

GSA Council Committee's:

Health & Dental Committee (Chair)

Gala Committee (Chair)

Health & Wellness Committee (Co-chair)

Finance & Audit Committee

Governance Committee

College of Graduate and Post-Doctoral Fellow Committee's:

College of Graduate and Post-Doctoral Fellow Council Member

Interdisciplinary Committee

Earned Degrees

University Committee's:

Teaching, Learning and Research Committee

Planning Advisory Committee (delegate Isaac Pratt)

Fee Review Committee

External Committee's:

Canadian Federation of Students' National Committee

Canadian Federation of Students' National Graduate Caucus

Campus Rec Committee, College of Kinesiology

9. GSA Meetings

Meeting	Date
GSA Annual General Meeting	April 27th, 2016
President Executive Committee Breakfast	April 29 th , 2016
Lunch with CGPS	May 5 th , 2016
Office of Sustainability Meeting	May 6 th , 2016
Executive Meeting	May 10 th , 2016
CGPS Council Meeting	May 10 th , 2016
GSA Executive Retreat	May 15 th , 2016
Graduate Student Convocation Rep	June 1 st , 2016
CFS Semi-Annual Meeting	June 5 th – June 9 th , 2016 (Ottawa)
University Secretary Meeting	June 17 th , 2016
Executive Meeting (sent regrets)	June 21 st , 2016
University Secretary Meeting	July 11 th , 2016
Website Committee	July 11 th , 2016
Executive Meeting	July 19 th , 2016
Survey Committee	July 29 th , 2016
UofS volunteer database	August 8 th , 2016
GU15 conference	August 9 th – 12 th (Hamilton)
Survey Committee	August 15 th , 2016
Trent Wotherspoon Meeting	August 16 th , 2016
Executive Meeting	August 16 th , 2016
CFÍ Day of Action Meeting	August 17 th , 2016

CFS Provincial Meeting	August 22 nd , 2016
GSA Council	August 23 rd , 2016
CFS Meeting	September 1 st , 2016
President Executive Committee Breakfast	September 6 th , 2016
Orientation	September 6 th , 2016
Executive Committee Meeting	September 8 th , 2016
GSA Survey Meeting	September 12 th , 2016
Campus rec Meeting	September 12 th , 2016
REACT Campaign	September 13 th , 2016
University Council	September 13 th , 2016
CFS Meeting	September 13 th , 2016
David Suzuki Lunch	September 19 th , 2016
College of Arts and Science Dean Meeting	September 20 th , 2016
Executive Meeting	September 20 th , 2016
Interdisciplinary Meeting	September 26 th , 2016
Dean of Library Lunch Candidate	September 29 th , 2016
Dean of Library Lunch Candidate	October 4 th , 2016
Provincial Government Meeting (sent regrets)	October 5 th , 2016
TLARC Meeting	October 6 th , 2016
Executive Meeting	October 11 th , 2016
President Executive Committee Breakfast	October 11 th , 2016

Survey Meeting	October 12 th , 2016
President's Appreciation Dinner	October 13 th , 2016
Health & Dental Meeting	October 13 th , 2016
CGPS Dean Meeting	October 13 th , 2016
GSA Council Meeting	October 18 th , 2016
Student Health Meeting	October 18 th , 2016
Provincial Lobbying	October 19 th & 20 th
Executive Meeting	October 25 th , 2016
Vice-President of Research	October 26 th , 2016
TLARC	October 27 th , 2016
CFS Meeting	October 27 th , 2016
CFS Meeting	October 30, 2016
Interdisciplinary Meeting	October 31 st , 2016
CFS Meeting	November 1 st , 2016
Day of Action	November 2 nd , 2016
Executive Meeting	November 8h, 2016
Positive Space Training	November 16 th , 2016
TLARC	November 17 th , 2016
CFS Semi-Annual Meeting (proxy votes to FNU Local 9)	November 18 th - 22 nd , 2016
Interdisciplinary Meeting	November 28 th , 2016
President Executive Committee Breakfast	November 29 th , 2016
GSA Council	November 29 th , 2016
Executive Meeting	December 6 th , 2016

Academic Misconduct Policy Training	December 6 th , 2016
TLARC	December 8 th , 2016
Fee Review Committee	December 9 th , 2016
GSA Governance Committee	December 12 th , 2016
GSA Council	December 13 th , 2016
GSA Governance Committee	December 13 th , 2016
GSA Health & Dental Committee	December 14 th , 2016
Fee Review Committee	December 15 th , 2016
Executive Meeting	December 20 th , 2016
Fee Review Committee	December 22 nd , 2016
TLARC	January 5 th , 2017
Fee Review Committee	January 6 th , 2017
Executive Meeting	January 10 th , 2017
President Executive Committee Breakfast	January 10 th , 2017
Gala Committee Meeting	January 16 th , 2017
Governance town hall	January 17 th , 2017
GSA Governance Committee	January 17 th , 2017
Executive Meeting	January 24 th , 2017
Faculty Association	January 24 th , 2017
Interdisciplinary Meeting	January 30 th , 2017
GSA Council	January 31 st , 2017
Executive Meeting	February 7 th , 2017
CGPS Council	February 7 th , 2017

TLARC	February 9 th , 2017
CFS	February 12 th , 2017
Finance and Audit Committee	February 13 th , 2017
President Executive Committee Breakfast	February 14 th , 2017
Executive Meeting	February 21 st , 2017
CFS National Graduate Caucus	February 23 rd – 27 th
Interdisciplinary Meeting (sent regrets)	February 27 th , 2017
GSA Council	February 28 th , 2017
TLARC (sent Delegate)	March 2 nd , 2017
Executive Meeting	March 7 th , 2017
President Executive Committee Breakfast	March 14 th , 2017
Faculty Association	March 14 th , 2017
Student Forum	March 14 th , 2017
Finance and Audit Committee (sent regrets)	March 16 th , 2017
Board of Directors Network	March 20 th , 2017
Executive Meeting	March 21 st , 2017
TLARC	March 23 rd , 2017
Interdisciplinary Meeting	March 27 th , 2017
GSA Council	March 28 th , 2017
Finance and Audit Committee (sent regrets)	March 29 th , 2017

GSA Governance Committee	April 4 th , 2017
Executive Meeting	April 7 th , 2017
TLARC	April 13 th , 2017
Executive Meeting	April 21 st , 2017
GSA AGM	April 25 th , 2017