

**Graduate Students' Association  
Executive Meeting Minutes**



**University of Saskatchewan  
Graduate Students' Association  
Executive Meeting  
October 14 2014 GSA Commons  
5:30 PM - 8:10 PM**

**Attendance:** President, VP Operations, VP Academic, VP Student Affairs, VP Finance.

**Regrets:** VP External, Aboriginal Liaison.

**1.0 Call to order — 5:30 PM**

**2.0 Agenda items for the breakfast meeting with the University President and attendance**

**2.1** The Meeting does not require attendance from all executives. Therefore, at least two executives will be agreeing to attend the Meeting each month. The decision was adopted by all executives.

**2.1.1** For the next President's Breakfast Meeting, the President and VP Academic will be attending.

**2.2** Since the GSA is required to submit agenda items prior to the meeting, upon the agreement of all executives, the following two items be submitted:

**2.2.1 Item 1: Student Advocacy**

2.2.1.1 Collaboration with ISSAC on student advocacy will be only reported to executives when proposal is completed, and it will not be brought to the Breakfast Meeting.

2.2.1.2 The GSA will raise the issue that we see lack of student advocacy which the University shall provide as a service or resource to students.

2.2.1.2.1 The advocacy should be at an arm's length.

2.2.1.2.2 We should raise the issue to the University President, and go to council after a proposal is ready.

**2.2.2 Item 2: Outsourcing U-Pass Sticker Distribution**

2.2.2.1 The U-Pass sticker distribution is putting too much stress on the operations of the GSA.

2.2.2.2 The GSA has contacted with the University to explore resource and support for the U-Pass sticker distribution.

2.2.2.3 There is a possibility to outsource the U-Pass sticker distribution to Student Central or the USSU, which would allow for distribution during the day from 9 am to 5 pm.

2.2.2.4 If confirmed, the outsourcing will be brought to Council as a point of information.

2.2.2.5 All executives voted in favor of outsourcing the U-Pass service.

### **3.0 Priorities to present to Planning and Priorities Committee of the University Council on November 26**

**3.1** The GSA is invited to present the GSA Objective to the Planning and Priorities Committee of the University Council on Nov 26, 11:30 am — 1:30 pm, at Room 238, Peter MacKinnon Building.

**3.2** The GSA presentation will be within the first half an hour on the agenda.

**3.3** Which executives should be required to attend the meeting will depend on what kind of priorities we will agree upon, but all executives would be free to attend.

### **4.0 GAA membership**

**4.1** An issue was raised to review the University Act in which the GSA was not mentioned anywhere regarding GAA seats.

**4.2** An amendment to the University Act will be sent, and the idea for now is to request 7 seats for the GSA executives, considering the seats in proportion with the USSU.

**4.2.1** The GAA members need to be elected. To facilitate matters it may be possible that the GSA Executives be classified as members of the GAA.

### **5.0 Reporting of the GSA Executive Meetings:** With the concern that executive conversations of who said what were communicated to Ashton Reimer, the issue of reporting of GSA Executive Meetings was discussed, as to its effect on the productivity of the executive team and the confidentiality and safety of the executive meetings.

**5.1** Meeting minutes are summaries of decisions made, reports presented, and issues raised, not details of discussions to the point of who says what. Conversations during executive meetings have confidentiality contents and shouldn't be spread out.

**5.2** When executives are being asked about discussions regarding decisions made by the Executive, it is best advised that we would contact the VP Operations and get the minutes as soon as possible to the person who raised the question.

**5.3** Every executive is free to have personal ideas on decisions made, but not free to dissimilate the discussions made by other executives.

**5.4** Update on the grief: Ashton Riemer stated that the intention of his posts was to raise awareness about improper financial activities at the GSA. When the president asked what improper activities he was referring to, his answer was that the executive has done nothing wrong, but a number of councillors don't like certain decisions made. Ashton Riemer's comments were reported to the GSA Chair on behalf of the Executive. Everyone is free to pursue further action.

### **6.0 Resignation of GSA membership**

**6.1** A concern was raised by a student regarding the resignation of GSA membership. The GSA has contacted the University Secretary, and was informed that under the University Act, the Provost's Committee of Integrative Planning (PCIP) is mandated with determining student fees, including GSA fees. Therefore, as much as the students can resign from the GSA, they will have to pay fees.

**6.2** This information of GSA membership resignation should go into the Q&A on the GSA website.

## **7.0 Time commitment by the GSA Executives for the work of the GSA**

- 7.1 All executives indicated being overworked and being unable to spend sufficient time on their studies.
- 7.2 As a result, the VP Finance had submitted his resignation to the President earlier in the day. The President convinced him to reconsider the decision.
- 7.3 Current challenges with the GSA is that our work has not been properly understood or appreciated, though executives are already working hard. A confusion exists that students think we get paid the same as the USSU and that we are full time employees.
- 7.4 International graduate students' study permits do not allow international students to work without a written permit from supervisors for more than 12 hours per week.
- 7.5 The GSA executives shall prioritize their student responsibility and need to succeed as graduate students first. We should succeed at our work without compromising our academic success.
- 7.6 Advocating roles should be taken priority of by the GSA Executives.
- 7.7 To be able to successfully carry out the student duties, the GSA executives agreed unanimously that no executive shall be expected to work more than 12 hours a week.
- 7.8 Given that writing reports takes too much time, that people rarely read the reports, and that writings often gets attacked, the executives agreed that future reports to council may be in oral form.

## **8.0 Request from a Councillor for Councillor Contact list on GSA website.**

- 8.1 It falls up to the University to decide how we prepare an involuntary list.
- 8.2 New laws about sending emails and spams needs to be looked into and considered.
- 8.3 We should be aware of possible abuse of email lists.
- 8.4 We need to wait for more information from the University secretary.
- 8.5 We need to look at examples of other GSA's and University Councils.
- 8.6 We could publish the names and department on the website in the meantime.

## **9.0 Conference and Gala**

### **9.1 Conference**

- 9.1.1 Considering the challenges and work priorities of the GSA, our time commitment on committees, advocacy for students, and our academic activities, a suggestion was made to reconsider organizing the GSA Conference this year, so that we would not compromise other work at the GSA. Financial support received from CGSR could be returned if events are not held.
- 9.1.2 VP Academic shall bring a proposal of vision for the Conference to the next executive meeting and a final decision will be made by the Executive.

### **9.2 Gala**

- 9.2.1 CGSR is not approving a coordinator for the Gala because they don't see the event that important.
- 9.2.2 An idea was presented to consider other simpler events (e.g. Graduate Appreciation Night) as an alternative to celebrate the accomplishment of the U of S graduate students, considering that fund raising as well as event

planning at a time of financial crisis of the University will be time and energy consuming, and that though holding events is a motivation for each executives, the work will eventually require team cooperation and coordination.

**9.2.3** Since VP External is absent for this executive meeting, she should give her proposal and opinion in the next executive meeting.

**10.0 Question raised by council members regarding the process followed for the laptop purchased for the U-Pass:**

**10.1 Clarification: the purchase of the laptop was at the discretion of the executive delegated with the U-Pass administration, namely the VP Operations. The President and VP Finance were aware of the transaction.**

**10.2** All executives agreed with the above clarification.

**10.3** VP Finance raised the issue that a laptop will be needed for the council meeting, because there are two laptops which are extremely slow responding for work, the current one doesn't read USB flash disk and it has to be used for the projector, and VP Operations has to bring her personal laptop for minute taking.

**11.0 Legal consultation regarding the U-Pass Contract**

**11.1** The GSA President met the University lawyer, and was advised that the GSA only has PR leverage instead of legal leverage to ask for money from the City for the transit lockout. Therefore, the GSA could not hold the money collected from the students for the U-Pass, or else the City can sue us, and we don't even have a lawyer.

**11.2** The students will get a refund at the end of the lockout through the University.

**12.0 Funding request from social group "Tox on Tap"**

**12.1** Their events are held regularly, not just for one time.

**12.2** Their events are talking academic related topics rather than socializing.

**12.3** More details are needed from them for future information, such as a breakdown of the budget.

**12.4** All executives unanimously agreed on \$300 in funding, and VP Finance will ask for more information.

**13.0 Adjournment — 8:10 PM**