

Graduate Students' Association



GSA Executive Meeting Minutes Tuesday, July 19, 2016 - GSA Commons 05:06 P.M. – 07:23 P.M.

Present: Z. Ghaith (President), N. Absher (VP Operations), K. Sharma (VP Finance), C. Gaspar (VP External), A. Kiani (VP Academic), S. Sapal (VP Student Affairs), Dana Carriere (VP Aboriginal Liaison).

1. Call to Order

1.1. Meeting is called to order at 5:06 pm.

2. IGSC presentation

3. Approval of Chair

3.1. Ghaith nominated himself, seconded by Gaspar. All in favor. Motion carries.

4. Approval of Minute Taker

4.1. Ghaith nominated Absher, seconded by Sharma. All in favor. Motion carries.

5. Approval of the Agenda

5.1. Sharma adds U-Pass to 7.1

5.2. Ghaith moved to approve the agenda as amended, seconded by Carrier. All in favor. Motion carries. The agenda is approved as amended.

6. Approval of the Minutes of GSA Executive Meetings:

6.1. Minutes of GSA Executive Meetings on June 14, 2016

6.2. Minutes of GSA Retreat Meetings on May 15, 2016

6.2.1. Ghaith moved a motion to approve the May 15 meeting minutes, seconded by Carrier. All in favor. Motion carries. Ghaith moved a motion to approve the June 14 meeting minutes, seconded by Gaspar. All in favor. Motion carries.

7. Items for Actions/Information

7.1. U-Pass

[K. Sharma]

7.1.1. Sharma stated that GSA has underpaid Saskatoon transit and owes a remaining amount of 257,074.27 for the winter UPASS. Sharma will be writing a cheque to the transit as soon as Sherry is back and consulted well in this regard. The last cheque received from university had an amount of 25,999.75 for Upass. Sharma contacted Christine Gillis (Saskatoon Transit), Sylvia Fitzgerald (University student finance department) and Amanda (USSU) to get to the bottom of this calculation. Amanda and Sharma have sat several times to go through these calculations. Ghaith asked if Sharma contacted anyone from transit. Sharma spoke with Christine and that's how

she realized there's a mistake. Sharma will check with GSA Admin, and go through all the pay slips, then write a cheque by next week. Sharma will also keep track of any communication regarding finances with the University or USSU for the upcoming year by keeping a copy of all the payments made or received on behalf of GSA.

7.2. Graduate Survey

[Z. Ghaith]

7.2.1. Ghaith stated that Sapal and Kiani taking lead. Sapal will set up a meeting for a survey meeting. She has spoke with SSLR lab who is interested to participate. Sapal will use Qualtrics - student voice. The lab is helping Sapal out to have a survey page, which will be active for 30 days (trial – free), if more than that, it will cost the GSA extra. Sapal suggests the executives to sit on this committee. The previous president made a set of certain questions, so we can reuse it and modify it. Sapal hopes to have a meeting at the end of July, and a couple of times by September. Ghaith inquired how many want to volunteer. Sapal mentioned that there are about 10 volunteers. Sapal claimed that we should offer refreshments to keep the volunteers. She has contacted Eleonore from CGSR to help with the survey for further questions. Ghaith stated that it's best to call for a meeting to include all the executives, as well as all the volunteers. Ghaith inquired if Sapal will sent an email to set up a meeting. Sapal asked when everyone is available. Ghaith suggests to send an email to everyone giving options. Sapal asked when everyone is availability. Sharma told Sapal to send an email. Ghaith asked Carrier to suggest any volunteer from IGC to participate. Carrier said that she will look into this. She can only meet next Tuesday at 5. Sapal asked if she knows of anyone to sit on this committee. Sapal will send an email.

7.3. GSA Orientation

[Z. Ghaith]

7.3.1. Ghaith stated that Sapal will give an update. Sapal explained that we will buy t-shirts. We could either buy t-shirts, bottles, bags – but we'd be short by \$1000. Sharma explained that the sustainability already gives out bottles. Sapal said lanyards could be an option. We could buy pens as well, but the bags are expensive. Ghaith said that GSA orders pens from CFS. Sharma said that we should cut down pens, as there's a lot that will be handed out. Sapal said that cutting down pens will save us \$377. So we can order bottles and lanyards. Sharma asked about Frisbees. Sapal said that RBC doesn't give out Frisbees any more. Ghaith said that lanyards and water bottles are fine. Sharma asked if the GSA could collaborate. Ghaith and Sapal said that this is not feasible. Gaspar explained that Sustainability might be open to collaborate. She can share contact information and ask. Ghaith explained that we need to start fundraising. Last year we made \$1000. Sapal stated that if executives would like to talk to people to fundraise. Gaspar said that she

can't ask anymore, as she asked for the planner. Ghaith said that fundraising is an executive responsibility. For organization sake, Sapal would be lead and anyone can help. Let us not duplicate our efforts. We can ask RBC again. Sapal talked to university council, as there is a member who is open to donating money for university orientation and Sapal can ask them for our orientation too. She is in contact with Bobbi. We must decide colors for t-shirts, and it will cost \$8. Cheapest color is white. Ghaith explained that a bright color would look nice. Sharma asked how much white costs. Sapal \$412 for 50 t-shirts. Absher asked if 50 t-shirts is enough, as we currently have 79 volunteers. Sapal went through different colors, and most of the executives liked white with the logo on the front. We will order our own t-shirts. Ghaith stated that we shouldn't ask CGSR for money, as we have already asked for money. Sapal asked if wine and cheese event is included in the orientation budget as well for which Sharma said yes. Sapal explained that there's 3 qualities of bags. Sharma said that the quality of the previous bag is good. Absher asked if Sapal could send things on email for the executives to decide. Sapal explained that they will take forever, so we should decide right away. Ghaith stated that Sapal should take the lead.

7.3.2.

7.4. GSA Academic Council

[Z. Ghaith]

7.4.1. Ghaith explained that the council is finishing on August 31st. We hire them by October. In general, VP Student Affairs was the lead. Ghaith advised Sapal to take the lead by sending an email and visiting departments, and she can start in August to have members ready by the September and Ghaith volunteered to help. Sapal asked the executives to ask their departments.

7.5. GU15 Conference

[Z. Ghaith]

7.5.1. Ghaith explained that Absher and Gaspar will travel for this, and congratulated them. He advised them to gain as much knowledge to improve our practices for the GU15 at the U of S. Sapal stated that everyone was interested in this. She inquired to raise money so that all the executives to go for equality, to increase the opportunity of executives traveling. Ghaith explained that we have already agreed to take turns. There's \$500 in budget, but every executive will have a chance. Sharma asked why things are missing from the minutes. Absher explained that the minutes are an executive responsibility. Absher further explained that the minutes are sent out to all the executives after every meeting for review and corrections, however; only a few have been providing feedback. Therefore, it is important to provide timely feedback to ensure the minutes are comprehensive and fully captures the meetings.

7.6. Student Union Development Summit 2016

[Z. Ghaith]

7.6.1. Ghaith explained that this conference takes place in August. Sharma forwarded the email as well. Ghaith explained for us to attend this conference. Last year the President went to this summit. This year we can send one person. The cost will be \$500. If anyone is interested put your name. Absher suggests to do this process through email. Ghaith will send an email for nomination and vote via email. Sapal stated that she's interested in this. Sharma feels that this is more undergraduate event, but we should attend. Sapal asked how many conferences there are. Carrier replied that there's no list for conferences, but they just come up. Sapal explained that we should pick executives based on portfolio. Ghaith explained that if the conference is clear on one person's portfolio, we will do that, but this is not the case of every conference.

7.7. Tech Venture Challenge

[K. Sharma]

7.7.1. Sharma explained that she sent an agreement. GSA will be lending \$10,000 to Mr. Tedric Soh (winner of TVC). She also consulted with the previous president. A major concern is that the university isn't involved, if the person terminates the agreement. Sharma will involve with university and meet with Beth to improve this process, especially since executives change every year. Sapal advised that we should involve the university. Ghaith said that GSA promised to give \$10,000 for two students each year, since 2013, and this is the last year. One student won this year. We can decide how to give it out. Sharma and Ghaith were looking to give him \$8000 in the beginning. Ghaith explained that we should publicize it. We are close to finish the agreement, and early August should be given out. Absher stated that she is writing an article on it for the new website. Sapal suggests involving Patti, as the Teaching and Learning Provost. Ghaith recommended another key stakeholder to consult from the Edward's School of Business. Sapal recommended another person as well.

7.8. Operating Budget 2016/17

[K. Sharma]

7.8.1. Sharma has two concerns. She will not approve any unannounced spendings. She would like two days notice. Operating budget will be live on the website, and she will update it every week. If the executives have concern, they should consult the budget. Ghaith stated that any event should be brought to the executive meetings, unless it is urgent. Or an email would suffice. Bursary committee meeting. Kusum asked where in the budget we will take our refreshments. Ghaith explained that there's a budget line for committees and it's about \$250. Absher explained that she saw a budget line for refreshments. Ghaith said that we should give food to members as the meeting is about 3 hours.

7.9. Coffee Bar

[N. Absher]

7.9.1. Absher ordered the coffee cups with the GSA logo. In total, the cups costed \$243.55. We ordered 36 cups. Sharma asked from where they were ordered. Absher stated that she has sent Sharma the receipt today, and it is from 4Imprint. Sharma asked which budget line to use. Ghaith said that we should use the GSA improvement line. Sharma stated that we are using this line for too many initiatives. Ghatih recommended to use this budget line but Sharma can make the final decision.

7.10. Website

[N. Absher]

7.10.1. The website is in its final stages. I have held a website committee meeting on July 12, 2016. During the meeting, committee members gave feedback on every page of the new GSA website. Absher has made the changes according to the feedback given. Now, the GSA coordinators are helping upload the previous executive and council meeting minutes. Once that's finished, it should be ready to launch. Absher is still waiting on content from Sharma, Sapal, Dana and Kiani for their social events and workshops. Ghaith thanked Absher on her progress. He asked if it will be possible to launch on August 1st. Absher said yes.

7.11.GSA Library

[N. Absher]

7.11.1. Absher stated that the GSA is planning to have a GSA mini library in the Commons, as well as a library mailbox outside the Commons for people to exchange books. So we will order a bookshelf, and Absher will make a call for book donations. Sapal explained that she could donate some books. Ghaith stated that we will have a shelf, and a book shelf exchange outside the commons. We will call it "leave a book, take a book". It will be under the GSA improvements. Sapal asked where it would go. Ghaith explained that it will go where Sharma asked who would take care of the exchange. Ghaith explained it will be open for everyone. Sharma is concerned if people take the book and don't return it. Ghaith \$250 for this initiative. Absher asked if this amount will be flexible, as she is not sure how much will cost. Sapal explained that we could find a cheap bookshelf for \$50 through Kijiji. Sharma was asking how we will ensure the box will contain book they're interested in. Absher explained that people would look to find a book they're interested, then they take it and leave a book behind. Sapal asked if we should have a locked box. Sharma said that there are people who would take all the books. Sapal explained, as a book lover I'd want to donate many books. Ghaith explained that we should leave it open. And we should approve \$250 as a maximum value. Ghaith moves a motion for \$250 for this initiative. Gaspaer seconded this. All in favor. Two abstained. The motion carries. Sharma said that she couldn't promise this amount. There're too

many initiatives. Ghaith said that there's an approved budget by the AGM allocated for initiative. Carrier explained that we should record all the initiatives to approve the money allocations. Ghaith said that we tried to save as much money as possible.

7.12. Summer Bursary **[N. Absher]**

7.12.1. Absher updated the executives that the GSA Summer Bursary was closed for submission. The committee is meeting tomorrow to select 10 winners who will receive \$1000 each. Ghaith stated that the committee will meet tomorrow at 5pm. Kiani, Sharma, and himself will be part of this, along with two other councillors.

7.13. Notary Service **[N. Absher]**

7.13.1. Absher wants the GSA to offer a Notary Public service for its members. Sherri would be the best person to become certified, as she is the GSA Admin. The training costs \$200. Notary public is someone that authorizes documents, such as passports, birth certificates, etc. This is really useful for international students in particular who may have documents that need to be authorized in Canada, so a notary public would witness their signature to authorize their documents. Ghaith explained that USSU has the same services. Sherri will need a criminal record cheque as well, costing \$75. He said that this is a nice initiative for our members. Absher explained that Sherri is willing to become certified. Ghaith moved a motion to allocate \$250 for this initiative. This motion seconded by Sapal. All in favor.

7.14. Volunteers Training **[N. Absher]**

7.14.1. Absher stated that the GSA now has 79 graduate students registered to volunteer for the upcoming year. She inquired when the GSA should hold a training session prior to the GSA orientation. We need to tell the App producers so that they're able to train the volunteers on how to use the App. Absher inquired who's responsibility it will be to plan this. Ghaith explained that Sapal would be responsible to train volunteers by dividing them up, and Ghaith will help out. Absher can send out the list to Sapal. We should upload their names on the website, and have an appreciation session. Sapal explained that there's more for the survey. She asked if they need to include them. Ghaith stated that she should keep them separate.

8. Motions

8.1. 3-Minute Report **[Z. Ghaith]**

8.1.1. Ghaith opens this motion for discussion. The goal is to add an item called 3 minute report to every executive meeting. This is to keep all executive on the same page and to have transparency. Seconded by Gaspar. Absher explained there should be a system in place where the executives send their written report or main points to VP Operations prior to the meeting. Ghaith explained to have an oral. Sharma suggested having an oral report. Sapal

explained that we should work on the report to keep in camera, to reduce the labor. Ghaith recommends having points that everyone, but we cannot have this in camera. Absher passes a motion to amend this motion to add the reports to the minutes and to have the executives send their main points prior to the meeting. Seconded by Gaspar. No discussion. 2 in favor. 1 oppose. 3 abstain. Seconded by Gaspar. 4 in favor. 1 abstains. Motion carries.

WHEREAS the GSA executive committee meets once a month in summer and twice a month during the Winter and Spring terms.

WHEREAS there is a lot of unseen work done by the executive

WHEREAS it is important to keep all the executive committee members up to date and on the same page

WHEREAS the it has been a previous practice in the GSA to have a short report by each executive in each executive meeting

WHEREAS such report will keep the GSA executive accountable and will ensure transparency

BEING IT RESOLVED adding an item in every executive meeting called 3 minutes report

BEING IT Further RESOLVED if an executive send their regrets to send a written report to the VP Operations and Communications no later than 3 days of the executive meeting

9. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 7:23 pm.