

Graduate Students' Association



GSA Executive Meeting Minutes Tuesday, November 22nd, 2016 - GSA Commons 05:00 P.M. – 07:00 P.M.

Present: Ghaith (President), Absher (VP Operations), Sapal (VP Student Affairs),
Sharma (VP Finance), Kiani (VP Academic) & Gaspar (VP External).
Absent: Tootosis (VP Aboriginal Liaison)

1. **Call to Order** at 5:04 PM.
2. **Opening Remarks from the GSA President**
 - 2.1. According to the Bylaws, the President must chair the meetings and the VP Operations takes the minutes.
3. **Approval of the Agenda**
 - 3.1. Sharma amended the agenda to add 6.3 will sponsorships: SSGS and PSA, Gaspar added 6.10, Absher added 6.11 and Ghaith added 6.12 to 6.14.
 - 3.2. Ghaith moved a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Kiani. All in favor. Motion carried.
4. **Approval of the Minutes of GSA Executive Meetings:**
 - 4.1. **Minutes of GSA Executive Meetings on November 8th, 2016**
 - 4.1.1. Ghaith moved a motion to approve the minutes of Nov 8th as circulated. Seconded by Sharma. All in favor. Motion carried.
5. **Items for Actions/Information**
 - 5.1. **Presentation by ISA**
 - 5.1.1. This item is tabled and to send their representative to attend the next the meeting.
 - 5.2. **Three Minutes Reports**

Sapal

- Draft is ready, awaiting feedback before it's published.
- Sapal wants to organize a social event this month.

Sharma

- Will be meeting with auditors and they will provide report soon.
- Planning the next financial workshop
- Met with technicians regarding stoves
- Approaching people regarding the tax filing.

Gaspar

- Met with Health Chat group to organize December event.
- Ordered Gala invitations.
- Attended 6 meetings in the past two weeks.
- Positive Space Training.
- Partnering with Computer Science to develop a Guppies App.
- Planning a Guppies social difficult to find a date with all the current events.
- TLARC presented on Indigenization looks like at U of S and graduate student association is a head of engaging in this conversation with IGSC

Kiani

- Working with SECC for 3 workshops.
- Nov. 30 will be a workshop on Business Strategy.
- Will be meeting with students to address their GSA.
- Represent GSA at various committees.
- Positive Space training.

Absher

- 12 Meetings since last meeting.
- Coordinated and attended Positive Space Training.
- Bursary Committee Meeting this Sunday.
- Currently working to form a GSA Ad-Hoc Sustainability Committee and a Health and Wellness Committee.
- Helped out with coordinating an internal staff potluck.
- Met with USSU president to discuss collaboration opportunities.
- Health Chat on Maternal Mental Health is planned.
- Planned a Therapy Dog session.

Ghaith

- 7 meetings representing GSA.
- Regarding student representation, had meetings to address those.
- Forming a committee called student-supervisor agreement. Made a draft and will present it to CGSR Dean and Associate Dean.
- Spoke at the University Council and received positive feedback and appraised GSA Leaderships.
- Asked executive to send him items to speak about in the Council.

5.3. Commons Hot Water Kettle & Office Supplies (In Camera) [N. Absher]

5.4. Mental Health First Aid [N. Absher]

5.4.1. Absher explained that graduate students when in distressful situations come to the GSA as the initial help, particularly the office manager. However, none of the executives and staff are councilors, psychologists or therapists and therefore don't have proper training to provide support aside from hearing students out. Therefore, Absher proposed for the executive

committee to provide this training to the Office Manager to ensure the sustainability of this, as the executive changes every year. Gaspar said that she advocates for this, and thinks that the coordinators should also gain this training. Absher agreed but mentioned that this depends on the available funds. Sapal explained that she is also on board for this. Ghaith mentioned that this should also be offered to the executive and to contact the Vice-Provost teaching and learning if her office would be willing to sponsor this training. He also recommended to contact Student Care to see if they're also willing to sponsor it. Ghaith asked if we can allocate money from the Health Chat funds, but Gaspar explained that this funds are for Health Chat events. Sharma inquired where the Health Chat funds from the Student Care will go in the budget, and Ghaith explained that it will fall under the revenue line. Absher stated that she will contact the Vice Provost, as well as Student Care and see if they're willing to sponsor this initiative.

5.5. GSA Fall Bursary **[N. Absher]**

5.5.1. Absher stated that the GSA Bursary Selection Committee met on Sunday, November 20th, 2016. 25 graduate students were selected by the committee to receive the bursary. Ghaith explained that 10 students will be paid by the GSA and 15 students will be paid CGSR, as they donated funds to the GSA bursary for this academic year. Absher will send the winners name to Sharma to make the cheques on behalf of the GSA to 10 students, and Absher will be in touch with CGSR to issue those payments to the 15 students.

5.6. Therapy Dog **[N. Absher]**

5.6.1. Absher explained that she planned a Therapy Dog session for graduate students to destress on December 1st. She explained that although there's no cost for this service offered by St. John's Ambulance, the GSA needs to cover the volunteer's parking pass. The parking will cost around \$25. Absher explained that she will \$25 from her discretionary funds. All were in favor of this.

5.7. SSGSA Sponsorship **[K. Sharma]**

5.7.1. SSGSA

5.7.1.1. Sharma explained that SSGSA is planning annual holiday social and need funding. They haven't specified funding amount. Sharma asked if they're ratified. Ghaith stated that they sent their registration of the councilors but not the council itself. Sharma will follow up with SSGSA regarding this.

5.7.2. PSA

5.7.2.1. Sharma stated that PSA is planning an event, and need funding for their event. Ghaith explained that they're ratified. Sapal said that we

need to know the event details and the number of attendees. Sharma explained that this will be a social event in January. Ghaith recommended to ask them to write a one page brief about the event and invite them to come and speak to our executive. Sharma will follow up with PSA.

5.8. Health Chat **[C. Gaspar]**

5.8.1. Gaspar mentioned that there will be a Health Chat on December 1st on Maternal Health. Move a motion to allocate \$150.00. Ghaith explained we should enhance the advertising to reach out. Ghaith asked why this wasn't planned for the residence. Absher explained that it will be beneficial to print it out in color and make. \$150.00 is allocated Gaspar explained that she doesn't have the time to print it in color, that's why she printed in black and w. Gaspar explained that coloring books were paid for orientation for this purpose, where are they? Gaspar moved a motion to allocate \$150 for the Health Chat in December. Seconded by Absher. All in favor. Motion carried.

5.9. Holiday Cheer **[C. Gaspar]**

5.9.1. Gaspar explained that Campus Rec Executive is doing a Family Sponsorship for Holiday gift. Gaspar asked if the executive is willing to donate food/dinner and gifts to a family. Ghaith, Absher, Sapal Sharma, Kiani donated \$20.00 from their discretionary fund towards this initiative. Gaspar will take this forward to find a family.

5.10. CFS **[C. Gaspar]**

5.10.1. Gaspar moved a motion regarding her absence to the 35th Annual National General Meeting and U of S GSA's vote via email on November 9th, 2016:

Whereas the VP External (Elected CFS representative) will not attend the 35th Annual Nation General Meeting.

Be it resolved that the proxy vote for Graduate Student Association (Local 101) be given to Local 78 (Carelton Graduate Student Representative) for the duration of the 35th Annual National General Meeting.

5.10.2. *3 voted against 4 abstained*

VP Operations amended the above motion to the following:

Whereas the VP External (Elected CFS representative) will not attend the 35th Annual Nation General Meeting.

Be it resolved that the proxy vote for Graduate Student Association (Local 101) be given to Local 90 (First Nations University Representative) for the duration of the 35th Annual National General Meeting.

5.10.3. 4 voted in favour. 2 abstained. Motion carried.

5.10.4. Gaspar explained that FNU proxied GSA's votes accordingly.

5.11. Mentorship

[N. Absher]

5.11.1. Absher explained that she would like to collaborate with the USSU on mentorship. The mentorship program will be for undergraduate students to build a network with graduate students. It will also help graduate students build their skills and improve their CV. Absher explained that this is just an idea, and the USSU VP Academic is interested in collaborating, but she would like to gain feedback from USSU executive committee. Gaspar inquired how this will benefit graduate students and how will the GSA incentivize graduate students to participate as they're busy. Absher explained that a number of graduate students are interested in volunteering, but don't want to go off campus and this will be a great opportunity in our community and will help them improve their interpersonal skills. Ghaith explained that this initiative will create an opportunity to connect future GSA members to the GSA. Gaspar inquired how we will reach out to participants. Ghaith explained that there might be a process of matching through a database. Absher explained that if we move forward, this year will be a pilot year and the USSU will target students interested in graduate school through their Research Symposium and have a sign up application online. Once we have an idea of who's interested, we'll be able to make a call to specific people in those programs to volunteer as mentors. Gaspar explained that it might be better to just have a social night for each department that brings everyone together and to build those connections organically. Absher stated that there will be a social night to kickoff this program, but a program will be more beneficial to the students than one night. That way, students will be able to build relationships for a longer period of time. Sepal agreed that we can't arrange separate socials for each college. Gaspar stated that there're other opportunities on campus that allow students to meet graduate students and professors, and Sharma stated that there's a mixer and research days open to everyone. Ghaith says he sees the benefit of a more structured program unlike social event. Absher explained that the USSU and GSA will create a framework for the mentorship program. Ghaith stated that the executive committee should give feedback if they're interested in the principle. Gaspar mentioned that there're other initiatives on campus that we should tap into. However, everyone was interested. Gaspar recommended to form an MOU. Absher agreed about this to ensure that this initiative will be successful and represents both the USSU and GSA.

5.12. Nov Social

[Z. Ghaith]

5.12.1. Ghaith stated that the executive agreed to have one social event every month. Absher explained that she will facilitate the creation of the certificates for the volunteer appreciation night. The executive decided to

host this event on November 25th. Sapal explained that she will be able to organize this event in two days but will need help. Ghaith explained that this will be a short notice. Sharma inquired what kind of event will be as the budget for the event depends on this. Ghaith explained that this will be a volunteer oriented event. In terms of food and drinks, Sapal explained that there will be enough wine to give the volunteers, but we might need another box of wine. Ghaith said that there is enough wine.

5.12.2. In terms of the certificates, the executive committee will send a list of their volunteers to Absher by tonight. The certificates will be designed by Absher, but the coordinators will put it together. The office manager will print it out.

5.12.3. In terms of the food, Ghaith proposed to allocate \$250.00 towards this event to cover the snacks, as well as the certificates and little goodie bags. Sharma mentioned that there's \$1400 left in the GSA events and initiatives budget line. Ghaith moved a motion to allocate \$250 to the volunteers appreciation event on November 25th at 6 PM in the GSA Commons.

5.13. Gala and 3 minute coordinators [Z. Ghaith]

5.13.1. Ghaith stated that the coordinator application is ready online. Ghaith asked how long we will keep it open. He proposed the following dates: Nov 25th – Dec 15th and the interviews will be conducted in December. Ghaith will send Absher the link to distribute to graduate students.

5.14. Grad Students Student Representation (In Camera) [Z. Ghaith]

5.15. GSA Survey (In Camera) [S. Sapal]

6. Adjournment at 7:17 pm.