

Graduate Students' Association



University of Saskatchewan Graduate Students' Association Course Council Meeting Minutes

November 3rd, 2010, 5:00-7:00p.m
G.S.A Commons

Present: Nicholas Fraser, Yimeng Wang, Chad Hammond, Sara McPhee-Knowles, Tina Leckie, Lyle McRe, Alison Ward, Bonie Cherewyk, Edgar David, Emma Turner, Holly Kelleher, Jason Grier, Julie Anderson, Lisa Johnson, Maria Mampe, Matthew Manson, Shannon Dyck, Spike Pasnikoff, Tanya Andrusieczko, Travis Lingerfelter, Axel Guskjden, Rita Orji and Karol Kycanowski-Narfuson.

1.0 Call to Order: 5:06 p.m

2.0 Approval of Agenda

Motion: BIRT the agenda be approved with the following amendments: Section 4.0 Guest Presentation by: Pauline Mellis on Integrated Planning , 5.0 Ratification of remaining Course Councils, 14.0 Election Results and also all items be numbered accordingly following the these changes.

Second: Jania Chilima, Matthew Munson and Mohammed Mohammed, motion carries.

3.0 Approval of Minutes

Motion: BIRT the minutes of both September 1st and October 6th meetings be approved as circulated.

Second: Emma Turner and Matthew Munson, motion carries

4.0 Guest Presentation:

5.0 Pauline Mellis, Director of Institutional Planning, to present on Integrated Planning.

Regret due to sickness

6.0 Ratifications of Course Councilors

Motion: BIRT the named and (read out) course councilors be ratified for the term of 2010 to 2011 and also the ones added after the first bunch were ratified.

Second: Julie Anderson and Tina Leckie, Motion carries.

7.0 President Report

Omeasoo summarized her report. See President Report as circulated

7.1. **Safety in the Commons**

Omeasoo advised of her work to come up with a policy of making the Commons safe especially as the winter approaches. She advises the executives have discussed some options and would like to have input from course councilors. A survey/flyer will be made to request of the much-needed help in this area

7.2. **Saskatoon Speaks**

Omeasoo invited Course Councilors to come out to the November 8th Saskatoon Speaks Event which is an extension of the City Summit held on Sept 29-Oct 2nd. GSA endorsed this event to include more graduate students voice in shaping our city. *See Appendix 1.*

8.0 VP Aboriginal Report

Omeasoo delivered VP Aboriginals Report given that she was sick and couldn't attend the meeting. See executive reports.

No discussion arose from the report.

9.0 VP Finance Report

Mohammed delivered his report. See executives Reports.

No discussion arose from the report.

Motion: BIRT the insurance quotation for the GSA Commons of \$ 3799.00 be approved so we can move to HUB International coverage.

Motion carries unanimously.

10.0 VP Academic Report

No report due to position being vacant. *See Section 14.0*

11.0 VP Student Affairs Report

Jania delivered VP SA Report given that he was unable to attend the meeting.

Discussion: **On Honorarium Increase for GSA Executives.**

Emma wanted to know how to measure the input from executives and also by how much should this increase be.

Omeasoo advised the hours vary and gave example of herself: how she manages work and how it's overwhelmingly taking a lot of time given the issues that require to be tackled daily.

Jania advised that she spends at least 18 hours a month on meetings and broke down as other responsibilities as follows: 4 University councils meeting per month: 2 hours, each 1 Graduate Council meeting per term: 2-3 hours, 1 Bursary Selection Committee per term: 3 hours, 2 Executive Meetings per month: 2 hours each and one Course Council Meeting per month: 2 hours. Then there are emails only a daily basis, which vary in range as well as preparation and readings of all the meeting materials and university policies.

Emma advised perhaps would be better to include the hours spent by each executive on their reports to council as well as she wanted to know when was the last time this was increased.

Mohammed advised it was I 2008.

Omeasoo said the executives have not really discussed this item in depth and would discuss in the executive meeting to come so as to prepare well in its discussion, but an increase could be a motivation to have next year volunteer more and take up position when our term ends given that last year no one was willing readily to be the President of GSA and the position was uncontested when she ran of it.

Ian and Emma advised perhaps this issue could be forwarded to the AGM after the discussion in the executive meetings.

Mohammed advised of procedures for change since the amount will require constitutional amendments as per section *11 Amendments* of the GSA Constitution.

12.0 VP External Report

Omeasoo read VP External's Report as he is away at a CFS meeting.

No discussion arose from the report.

13.0 VP Operations Report

Jania delivered her report. See Appendix 2.

No discussion arose from the report.

14.0 Election Report

Alison (CEO) delivered the results of the VP Academic election carried out Oct 28-29. *See Appendix 3A and 3B.*

Discussion: On low turn out and what are our options for passing the results

Alison advised as per GSA Constitution, for the results to be valid there has to be 8% of total graduate students voting for a candidate. She also advised that she had a meeting with Jania (CRO) on these results. Their stance is that given 45% of the 111 voting population selected Sunisha and this is lower than course councilors turnout at the meeting.*

*Course Councilors are vested with the power to vote at a meeting for a candidate if there is a lower voter turnout or any other discrepancy. however , the GSA constitution doesn't contain sections on by-election neither is it clearer on the steps to follow throughout the constitution: some sections on Policy Manual 2. Election and Referenda are contradicting each other.

Karol wanted to bring forward the constitution and see how we can respect the constitutional requirements and at the same time respect the people who voted for Sunisha.

Alison advised the other option will be to run another election but given that we have used all the possible approaches in promoting the by election (see report appendix 2A) and the voter turnout is still low, and also the VP Academic position has been vacant for almost a month now, we need a working resolution and we also need to fill this position quickly.

A parallel discussion about the Constitutional Amendments arose and constitutional amendments were suggested. Omeasoo advised VP External-Eamon is in charge of amendments and all those interested can register with Jania for names to be passed to him. Shannon Dyck volunteers to sit on the committee.

Alison advised we would have 3 points for and 3 points against the motion to pass Sunisha as a newly elected VP Academics and close the discussion

Point Against: Rita advised perhaps we should re-open just the voting and increase the days to vote from 2 days.

Tina also advised perhaps re-advertising the election and how the poor outcome of the result doesn't satisfy the constitution requirement would open up more voters.

Points for:

Lyle advised if we keep on prolonging the election this position will remain vacant for even longer that a month/a month and a half and this will nullify the importance of the position given that the 2010-2011 term in office ends in April of 2010.

Jania echoed Alison words and advised that we have even released multi announcements on a biweekly basis and have included a write up in the GSA Newsletter way before the Course Council officially declared the campaign and election period open on the October 6th Course Council

Meeting. This shows further cooperation is needed to spreading the word of GSA events and Course Councilors should task themselves with this duty.

Motion: BIRT the VP Academic election results be ratified and pass Sunisha as the new VP Academic for the term ending April 2011.

A vote was held :All in attendance voted to approve results and one abstained (Shannon Dyck).

15.0 Next executive meeting:

December 1st, 2010- 5:00-7:00 p.m (**This is also an AGM/SGM**)

16.0 Adjournment :

Motion: BIRT the meeting be adjourned at 5:53 p.m
Second: Karol and Tina, motion carries.

Appendix 1:

Saskatoon Speaks - Shape Our Future Community Visioning Session - Monday, November 8th, 4:30 PM, Kirk Hall 144 (University of Saskatchewan)

Help shape Saskatoon into a city that captures your imagination, meets your needs and reflects your aspirations.

If you missed the Saskatoon Speaks City Summit, you haven't missed your opportunity to speak up and shape our future! We're bringing the Summit right to you at the University of Saskatchewan campus.

Come and share your vision for Saskatoon on **November 8, starting at 4:30 PM in Kirk Hall, room 144**. In small groups and with help from a facilitator, we want to know your opinions and aspirations relating to areas such as how our city grows, social well being, recreation and culture, the environment, the economy, the city centre and how we move around our city.

Background:

On October 1st and 2nd hundreds of people came together to have a discussion on the future of Saskatoon and how we want to see our city develop. The event was part of **Saskatoon Speaks**, a visioning project that intends to engage the community in a conversation where citizens talk about what matters to them, what they like and value about Saskatoon, what they want to improve, and what we aspire to achieve as Saskatoon grows over the next 50 years.

Saskatoon Speaks aims to provide the community with the tools to further understand where Saskatoon has come from, where we are as a city now and what opportunities and challenges face us as we continue to grow. Knowing the background and important information will help prepare citizens to engage in a conversation about the future and the choices it will bring about how our city will grow and prosper.

The result of **Saskatoon Speaks** will be a collective Vision Document that will provide direction for the City's overall Strategic Plan and other major civic documents. It will act as a guide for major decisions as the City grows over the next 50 years.

As part of **Saskatoon Speaks**, The City of Saskatoon has teamed up with The University of Saskatchewan Regional and Urban Planning program, the University of Saskatchewan Graduate Students Association, and University of Saskatchewan Students Union to host a **Community Voice Session on Monday, November 8th from 4:30 to 7:00 at Kirk Hall Room 144 on the University of Saskatchewan campus**. All students are welcome to attend. Refreshments will be provided. The session will feature two short presentations and a chance to discuss your vision for Saskatoon. The session is free, but space is limited. Drop in's are welcome, but if you'd like to save a spot email: SaskatoonSpeaks@saskatoon.ca. Join us and help Shape Our Future!

For more information on **Saskatoon Speaks** or this Community Voice session please see SaskatoonSpeaks.com or email SaskatoonSpeaks@saskatoon.ca



Saskatoon Speaks Community Voice Session

Learn and discuss the contemporary issues facing growing cities. Have conversations on your vision for our city and how you want to see it grow!



Join us and help Shape Our Future!

Monday, November 8th

4:30 to 7:00

Kirk Hall - Room 144

(Refreshments provided)

for more information visit SaskatoonSpeaks.com
or email SaskatoonSpeaks@saskatoon.ca



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Appendix 2:

VP Operations and Administration Report for November 3rd, 2010:

GSA Commons Management (Administration):

1. Monthly meeting.
2. Updated job descriptions
3. Handling general inquiries from staff and students.

Governance Activities:

A. Bursary Committee:

Held the fall bursary selection meeting on October 19th. We had received 43 applications with about half qualifying however only 5 individuals were selected. The following were the distribution of the awards:

| | <u>Award amount</u> |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 st Recipient | <u>\$ 620.9150327</u> |
| 2 nd Recipient | 614.379085 |
| 3 rd Recipient | 607.8431373 |
| 4 th Recipient | 588.2352941 |
| 5 th Recipient | 568.627451 |
| Total | 3000 |

A. Streamlining course council processes:

Worked on inviting returning Course Councilors and new student councils on board GSA. A list of course councilors from 2009 was generated and these were contacted to inquire if they are being replaced and if so to remind their student councils to do so as soon as possible.

I am continuing to receive ratification forms. Last day to ratify as per constitution is December 15th. I have collected a few constitutions as well.

B. University and CGSR Committee meetings:

Attended breakfast meeting with CGSR for a casual discussion about graduate students concerns. All the executives who could attend presented a topic for discussion: the emphasis topic for me to open up a discussion on better ways to communicate career opportunities for graduate students outside the Academia, given that as per Tri-council statistics 75 % of all the PhD students receiving scholarship don't return to Academia and choose industry instead.

I could not attend most of my other university council committee given my time away from town most of this month. Replacements were sought and represented me whenever possible.

C. SECC for Grads Career Initiatives

As per my agenda for running for VP Operations and Administration, I pledged to improve the graduate students exposure to industry and improve the available opportunities for the those who want to pursue that option. I have initiated a communication with the Student Employment Centre on Campus (SECC) and will be working with them to see what can be done in that aspect. More information on this is to follow.

D. VP Academic election

Prepared the election and campaign package for the potential candidates, a few announcements to be sent to the graduate students and worked with Alison (CEO) and Sarah (Officer Manager) on other election related activities.

Appendix 3A:
VP Academic By-election Report
November 3, 2010
Chief Electoral Officer

Alison Ward was appointed as the Chief Electoral Officer at the October 6th Course Council meeting. The nomination period was held from October 6th to October 20th. The Chief Returning Officer (Janina Chilima) drafted a condensed version of the election procedures to be distributed with the nomination forms (see Appendix).

Four nominations were received: Tammy Adair, Ranjan Datta, Sunisha Neupane, and Jason Sampara. The candidates were contacted via email and given information on campaigning and election procedures. They were invited to submit a photo and a brief biography to be posted on the GSA website. The campaign period ran from October 21st to 27th. A candidates' forum was held at the Graduate Commons on October 27th. Student turn out was poor, likely due to bad weather and the fact that the Commons had been closed for the previous two days for a conference.

Graduate students were notified of the by-election and candidates' forum through email and PAWS bulletins (both via Bea Reid in CGSR). Voting was held through PAWS on October 28th and 29th. The results were as follows:

- Sunisha Neupane – School of Public Health – 50 – 45.05%
- Jason Sampara – Philosophy – 26 – 23.42%
- Tammy Adair – Education Foundations – 8 – 7.21%
- Ranjan Datta – Environment & Sustainability – 20 – 18.02%
- Abstain from voting for this position – 7 – 6.31%
- Total Answers – 111

The Constitution requires a minimum of 8% of graduate students to vote for an election to be valid. Assuming an estimated enrollment of 3000 students the voter turn out for this election was less than 4%. The Elections Committee (CEO and CRO) has decided to ask Course Council to ratify the results of the election, thereby officially electing Sunisha Neupane as VP Academic.

The low of voter turn out and attendance at the candidates' forum was disappointing. In future elections a greater effort should be made to promote and advertise the election; emails and PAWS announcements alone are clearly not effective.

Appendix 3B

Candidate's Nomination and Campaign Time Responsibilities.

As per GSA Constitution Policy Manual 2. Election and Referenda, found at : <http://gsa.usask.ca/main/wp-content/uploads/2-Elections-and-Referenda-April20101.pdf>

For any inquires please contact:

Chief Electoral Office (CEO): Alison Ward, Alison.ward@usask.ca

Chief Returning Officer (CRO): Jania Chilima, gsa.opad@usask.ca

Nomination period (7:00 PM of October 6th – October 20th, 2010):

- Nomination Forms must be signed by: A nominator and a seconder, The nominee and 5 supporting GSA members.
- Shall not hold campaign during this nomination period.
- Shall read and understand the duties of the VP Academic provided as part of the Campaign package.

Campaigning period (7: 00 PM of October 21st- October 27th, 2010)

- The GSA will provide the copying of all campaign posters.
- All campaign materials and promotions are subject to the approval of the CEO. A sample of all campaign materials shall be submitted to the CEO to be kept on file for the duration of the campaign. All posters must be stamped by the CEO to indicate approval.
- Campaign posters shall be no larger than 11 inches by 17 inches. There shall be a limit of 50 posters approved per team/candidate.
- Candidate shall fill out the campaign expense form no later that *October 28th, 4:00 p.m* and attach all relevant proofs of expense (i.e receipts , photocopy cards etc) for reimbursement by the CEO. Campaign expense are capped at **\$10.00** per candidate
- Shall hold a Candidate's Forum as outlined by the Chief Electoral Office (CEO)
- Campaigning includes and is limited to the use of booked rooms for public gatherings, public appearances, emails with more than 5 recipients, and distribution of posters.
- No candidate may campaign publicly inside campus pubs or cafeterias.
- Campaigning shall be permitted in line-ups but shall not occur past the point where patrons are requested to provide identification for entrance. Campaigning in line-ups shall also be subject to any applicable residence or university regulations.
- Campaign materials shall not be distributed in campus pubs, cafeterias, or GSA Commons.

- Course Council shall be a neutral forum. No promotional materials shall be displayed or distributed to Course Council.
- *Should a candidate decide to withdraw his or her candidacy during the campaign period, a notice of withdrawal in written form shall be given to the CEO.*