

**GSA Course Council Minutes**

**Thursday, March, 8 2012.**

# Graduate Students' Association Course Council Meeting Minutes



## University of Saskatchewan Graduate Students' Association March, 8 2012, 5:00 P.M -7:15 P.M GSA Commons

**Executives:** Xue Yao, Ehimai Ohiozebau, Ranjan Datta and Steve Jimbo.

**Councillors:** Spike Postnikoff, Cherie Dugal, Rodringo Albornog, Kota Kimura, Lindsay A. Stokalko, Matthew Munson, Sara Kuleza, Madison Yurach, Gareth Perry, John McLeod, Layla Gould, Wendie Marks, Collen George, Leanne Flahr, Jonathan Doering, Karen Gesy, Kamalpreet Banye, Sarah Purdy, Madeline Gierc and Eamon McDermott (Speaker).

**Others:** Bawa Arnita, Farjana Eishita, Mohammad Khan, Sharif Uddin, Muhammad Asaduzzaman, Tanjil Hassan, Miu haz Zibran, Tuhin Paul, Edgar David and Duncan Munron.

**1.0 Call to Order:** 5:00p.m

**2.0 Approval of Agenda**

Motion: *BIRT agenda be approved: Sarah and Gareth, motion carries*

**3.0 Approval of Meeting**

Motion: *BIRT minutes of February, 8 2012, Course Council meeting be approved: Lindsay and Sarah, motion carries.*

**4.0 Guest Speakers:**

**4.1 David Hannah,** Vice President, Student Services U of S.:

He spoke about the university's proposed expansion of childcare space. His presentation is a followup to an earlier one at January 2012 GSA Course Council meeting. He commended the GSA for passing a motion to support the expansion of childcare space and further requested the GSA to pass an additional motion supporting a flat fee of \$10/graduate student over time. In his presentation, he reiterated the fact that the UofS currently has 110 childcare spaces, out of which 12 are allocated to graduate students. With the current expansion plan, a total of 220 spaces

will be available and two-third will be allocated to students. He assured the house that the new project when completed, will guarantee graduate students more spaces. His presentation was followed by a discussion session. Amongst others, the house wanted a documented guarantee from the University authority directing the childcare providers on the percentage of spaces that will be allocated to graduate students. Dr. Hannah ended his presentation with a call for more dialogue with GSA representatives.

4.2 Amanda Smytanuik, Studentcare.net Priarie representative: Amanda gave a short presentation on the GSA Health and Dental Plan. A detailed report of the GSA Health and Dental Plan can be found in January Course Council minutes.

## **5.0 Ratification of new Course Councillors**

The following councillors were ratified: David Sanders and Adrian Hunt. Motion to ratify them was moved by Sarah and Gareth. Motion carries.

## **6.0 President report**

### **Residence Rental Rates Increased**

I had a conversation with USSU president about the issue of residence rental rates. He would propose this issue in the Board of Governors meeting as students' representative. The petition letter has been written and delivered to most of the members of the Provost's Committee on Integrated Planning (PCIP). For more information, see VP student affair's and VP academic's reports.

### **Survey**

After contacting IPA, I am working on the documents to go through official ethics approval and determine other steps leading up to fielding the survey. At the same time, I sent email to all course councilors for your inputs of the questionnaire.

### **Student Association Ratification**

USSU has the campus group policy which outlines the requirement, process and services for ratified students group. It is rational for GSA to develop more specific policy for ratification of the students group which has graduate students involved.

### **Funding for the U of S table tennis tournament**

GSA provided the funding for the U of S table tennis tournament in February which has graduate students participated. GSA keeps seeking to provide such students groups with as much support as possible.

### **Meetings:**

Presidential Search Committee

Student Forum

GSA Bursary

University Council

Planning and Priority

## **7.0 VP Operations and Administrations Report**

GSA Bursary: The 2012 winter bursary has been awarded. The sum of \$1,000.00 each was given to six graduate students. Many thanks to the councillors who volunteered to be in this committee.

GSA Election: We have released the 2012 election schedule and call for nomination has been made. We encourage graduate students to participate in the election process. Most especially in the Candidate Forum that will be holding on Tuesday, March 20 at 12:00 pm.

Policy Review Committee: We are in a process of constituting a Policy Review Committee. Our first meeting will be by the end of March. We call for volunteers from course councillors.

2012/2013 Health and Dental Fee: I have been in discussion with Amanda Smytanuik about the process of reforming the Health and Dental Plans. We are looking at changing the present policy on prescription drugs claims.

GSA Commons: The Office Manager is back from her one month annual leave.

## **8.0 VP Academics Report**

Developing Your Career Potential for Graduate Students Session on Feb 17, 2012

We had successful workshop event. More than 100 graduate students had registered for this workshop. We had to close registration for the GSA common space limitation. We provided light breakfast and tea/coffee for all.

GSA 2012 Conference 7th March, 2012 Update (From Conference Coordinator)

The deadline for abstracts and registration has closed and there were a total of 26 oral abstracts submitted as well as 5 poster abstracts. All poster abstracts were accepted but there were only 21 slots for oral presenters. A call was made out to all GSA executives to see if anyone had time to participate as an abstract reviewer. The final abstract selection committee was Ranjan and I. We used a blinded selection process with an evaluation form to select the abstracts. Once the 21 abstracts were selected, authors were sent an email informing them of the selection and were asked to confirm their attendance. A schedule for the day's event was then created and the abstracts were grouped into 7 sections, with 3 presentations for each section. The presentation will be judged against the others within their section and total of 7 prizes valued at \$25 will be provided to the top presenters after the event.

For the conference logistics, breakfast and lunch will be ordered from a catering company as that ended up being less expensive and would require less preparation than purchasing everything separately and setting it up ourselves. Donuts, muffins and fruit trays will be ordered for the refreshment breaks throughout the day. Coffee will not be purchased but will be made throughout the day. There are currently 45 people registered to attend the full day event, not including GSA executives, volunteers and guests of the presenters.

Other activities:

Working for Ombudsman person position, Serving for VP Teaching and learning recruitment process, and various Academic Misconduct meetings.

## 9.0 VP Finance Report

- 1) We are yet to hear from CGSR despite sending two reminders inquiring on the student list they were to send in order to issue the course council funds for Fall 2011. I urge the CC to put a motion forward to use the student numbers from winter term of 2011 and have the cheques issued effective immediately.
- 2) All the bursary funds have been used for this fiscal year. Like in Fall 2011, the awards were awarded to six successful applicants each getting \$1,000.
- 3) Although the current excess is \$397,387.90, big payments for health and dental premiums (\$274,736.76) along with CFS fees (\$14,525.22) are yet to be made. Payments will be issued this coming week.
- 4) I have attached financial summary (page 3 of this report) for the past four years in order to give CC a clearer picture on our history of financial operations. Commons was in full operation in 2010-11 fiscal year and operated from Jan-April in 2009-10.

### University of Saskatchewan Graduate Students' Association

#### Statement of Operations for the Fiscal Year 2011-2012

##### Revenues

	Proposed 2011	Current
GSA Fees	\$ 136,000.00	\$ 151,599.99
CFS Fees	\$ <b>22,000.00</b>	\$ <b>27,741.34</b>
GSA Commons Booking	\$ 1000.00	\$ 2,756.60
Health and Dental Fees	\$ <b>5500,000.00</b>	\$ <b>583,816.77</b>
GSA Orientation	\$ <b>4,250.00</b>	\$ <b>940.00</b>
CFS Handbook	\$ <b>2,000.00</b>	\$ <b>2,140.00</b>
Bursary	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 9,000.00
<b>Total Revenue</b>	\$ <b><u>724,250.00</u></b>	\$ <b><u>777,994.70</u></b>

##### Expenses

Audit	\$ 500.00	\$ -
Bursary	\$ 18,000.00	\$ 18,000.00
Conferences	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 2,762.75
CFS Handbook	\$ <b>2,000.00</b>	\$ <b>2,278.50</b>
CFS Fees	\$ <b>22,000.00</b>	\$ <b>13,216.12</b>
Course Council Funding	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 150.00
Entertainment	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,028.18

GSA Orientation	\$	<b>4,250.00</b>	\$	<b>3,746.03</b>
Health and Dental Plan Premiums	\$	<b>550,000.00</b>	\$	<b>269,754.60</b>
Honoraria	\$	28,500.00	\$	22,749.81
Insurance	\$	3,500.00	\$	<b>4,018.00</b>
Miscellaneous	\$	3,500.00	\$	499.20
Office	\$	6,000.00	\$	3,198.79
President/Student Fund	\$	6,000.00	\$	6,000.00
Bank Charges	\$	200.00	\$	16.71
Office Salaries	\$	60,600.00	\$	24,988.11
Operating cost – W/Internet System	\$	1,000.00	\$	1,000.00
Operating cost – Media equipment	\$	700.00	\$	700.00
Equipment renewal	\$	6,000.00	\$	6,000.00
Computer renewal	\$	500.00	\$	500.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	\$	<b><u>724,250.00</u></b>	\$	<b><u>380,606.80</u></b>

**Excess** **397,387.90**

**NB:**

Numbers that are not in bold in the proposed column 2011 should add up to \$136,000

The excess is calculated from the figures NOT in bold.

The figures in red indicate overspent accounts.

#### University of Saskatchewan Graduate Students' Association

##### Statement of Operations for the Past Fiscal Years

#### Revenues

		2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
GSA Fees	\$	99,420.33	111,541.37	119,686.26	145,382.08
CFS Fees	\$	<b>20,714.43</b>	<b>21,975.53</b>	<b>22,592.42</b>	<b>25,940.48</b>
GSA Commons Booking	\$	-	-	-	850.00
Health and Dental Fees	\$	<b>468,376.52</b>	<b>499,405.79</b>	<b>535,825.98</b>	<b>573,197.677</b>
GSA Orientation	\$	<b>4,000.00</b>	<b>4,618.68</b>	<b>1,608.00</b>	<b>2,650.00</b>
CFS Handbook	\$	<b>1,955.00</b>	<b>900.00</b>	<b>1,130.00</b>	<b>1,540.00</b>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	\$	<b><u>594,466.28</u></b>	<b><u>638,441.37</u></b>	<b><u>680,842.66</u></b>	<b><u>749,560.32</u></b>

#### Expenses

Audit	\$	300.00	385.00	412.50	412.50
Bursary	\$	9,000.00	9,000.00	9,000.00	9,000.00
Conferences	\$	2,477.40	4,075.35	2,495.91	4,509.87
CFS Handbook	\$	<b>1,840.16</b>	<b>1,594.95</b>	<b>1,367.10</b>	<b>4,509.87</b>
CFS Fees	\$	<b>20,714.43</b>	<b>21,975.53</b>	<b>22,592.42</b>	<b>25,940.48</b>
Course Council Funding	\$	4,076.87	4,117.44	4,610.47	1,330.93
Entertainment	\$	1,373.72	203.31	1,452.61	1,494.77
GSA Orientation	\$	<b>4,000.00</b>	<b>4,347.86</b>	<b>4,047.16</b>	<b>2,048.71</b>
Health and Dental Plan Premiums	\$	<b>451,513.93</b>	<b>456,970.43</b>	<b>536,079.18</b>	<b>567,400.41</b>
Honoraria	\$	16,625.00	24,499.80	22,458.15	26,120.07

Insurance	\$	2,418.00	2,311.00	2,256.66	5,520.00
Miscellaneous	\$	924.67	180.04	1,959.66	2,749.04
Office	\$	4,984.50	2,190.98	5,378.00	3,745.58
President/Student Fund	\$	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00
Bank Charges	\$	229.82	138.19	72.60	166.20
Wages - Office Administrator	\$	19,707.11	15,303.41	31,964.22	71,004.57
Operating cost – W/Internet System	\$	-	-	1,000.00	1,000.00
Operating cost – Media equipment	\$	-	-	700.00	700.00
Equipment renewal	\$	-	-	6,000.00	6,000.00
Computer renewal	\$	-	-	500.00	500.00
Other costs from old accounts	\$	2,288.78	724.18	-	-
<b>Total Expenses</b>	\$	<b><u>548,474.39</u></b>	<b><u>554,017.47</u></b>	<b><u>660,346.64</u></b>	<b><u>739,763.94</u></b>
<b>Excess</b>	\$	<b><u>29,014.46</u></b>	<b><u>42,412.67</u></b>	<b><u>23,425.48</u></b>	<b><u>5,517.61</u></b>

**NB:**

The excess is calculated from the figures NOT in bold.

**10.0 VP Student Affairs Report**

**U-PASS:**

I have been working on the issue of having graduate students be allowed to have U-PASS and also with an option of opting out for those who drive or who do not need it. I have held a series of meetings with the Saskatoon transit and am having a series of meetings with USSU to figure out how best this can be done.

Student Residences on Campus: There has been an issue raised by the students regarding the intended increase in the rents they pay for the residences. The residence service management purport to have consulted the GSA regarding this issue but we were not consulted and thus we have been consulting them to stop this increase.

**11.0 Aboriginal Liaison Officer**

The Aboriginal liaison Officer neither submitted a written report nor gave oral presentation at the previous Course Council meeting.

**12.0 Motions:**

**12.1 Motions to decide the 2012/2013 Executive Honoraria. Motion sponsored by the 2011/2012 GSA Executive:**

Whereas the purpose and process of the GSA executive honoraria is stated in policy 8.3 “Executive Honoraria”;  
and

Whereas the present executive get a monthly honorarium of three hundred and thirty-three dollars, thirty-three cents (\$333.33) and three hundred and seventy-five dollars (\$375) for vice presidents and president respectively;  
and

Whereas the GSA executive honoraria have not been reviewed since 2008; and  
Whereas the GSA is a non-profit organisation but has had a budget surplus since the past five years; and  
Whereas it was resolved in February 2012 Course Council meeting that the GSA Fee be increased by the regular 5%.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the GSA monthly executive honoraria for the 2012/2013 academic year be set at four hundred and thirty-three dollars, thirty-three cents (\$433.33) and five hundred dollars (\$500) for vice presidents and president respectively; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this new rate takes effect from May, 1 2012.

Motion was moved by Rajan Datta and support by Gareth Perry. Motion carries.

## 12.2

WHEREAS graduate students in the Department of Physics and Engineering Physics have submitted a bid to the Canadian Association of Physics (CAP) to host the 2013 Canadian- American-Mexican (CAM) Graduate Student Physics Conference; and

WHEREAS one purpose of the Graduate Students' Association (GSA) is to ensure its members have access to quality services that support their academic success; and

WHEREAS the CAM conference will allow graduate students in Physics the opportunity to expand their research environment by making connection that advance their field of research;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the GSA wholeheartedly supports the Physics graduate students' bid to host the CAM 2013 conference at the University of Saskatchewan.

Motion moved by Gareth Perry and supported by Ehimai. Motion carries with two opposing votes.

## **13.0 GSA Position Statement on the Ratification of Student Groups (Point of discussion)**

The VP Operations and Administration requested for clarification on the position of GSA in ratifying student groups. Although Policy 4.3 "Campus Clubs" states the process of ratifying new campus clubs; and whereas lately, we have had request from different campus groups to be ratified by the GSA. It is our understanding that previous Course Council stopped the ratification of campus clubs.

It was discussed that the GSA could go ahead and ratify student groups in line with GSA Policy 4.3 but that presently, there is no added advantage to be a ratified group. The VP Operations and Administration promised to work with members of the policy review committee and recommend possible incentives to ratified groups.