

Graduate Students' Association Course Council Meeting Agenda



University of Saskatchewan
Wednesday, November 14, 2012
5:00 P.M - 7:00 P.M
GSA Commons

1.0 Call to Order - 5:08

2.0 Approval of Agenda Moved

- Moved by Sarah Purdy and seconded by Adrian Hunt

3.0 Approval of last meeting Minutes

- Moved by Julien Kimmig and seconded by Justin Botterill

4.0 Ratification of new Course Councils

- Graduate Philosophy Course Council, Plant Sciences Graduate Students' Association , School of Public Health Students' Association
- Moved by Sarah Purdy, Julien Kimmig

5.0 Ratification of new Course Councillors

- Mustafa Andkhoie, Meghan Witzel, Lathika Sritharan, Sameena Vodvelo, Tom Lynch, Nitharsana Manoharan, Adehoyin Olunabunmi, Leina Liao, Megan Clarke, Andrea Dirarzo, Awujoola Akindamola Weicheng Qian, Muhammad Asaduzzaman, Abati Adeshola, Carling Beninger, Adebayo Gbenga, Sarah Younuss
- Moved by Elizabeth O'Meara and seconded by Sarah Worsham

6.0 VP Student Affairs Report – no report

7.0 VP External Report

8.0 Aboriginal Liaison Report

9.0 VP Academics Report

10.0 VP Operations and Administration Report

11.0 VP Finance Report

12.0 Presidents' report

- UPASS – waiting for survey questions

13.0 Questions and answers

14.0 GSA Long term planning and discussion

Broke into 5 groups and brainstormed options – based from the 4 original suggestions as outlined in the President's report

Discussion:

- Option 1 may not be able to benefit most students
- Option 2, we don't have stats for what's needed

- Option 3, are we competing with Louis? – liked the idea
- Liked option 4 to have more space, more for rental and more students can enjoy
- Money for conferences for students
- Open a store (fruits and vegetables)
- More bursaries
- Other investments
- No bar, but downstairs into a childcare facilities
- Increase start-up funds
- Not 1 and 2
- Questions about bar
- Renovate could provide more space
- Conference or travel fund
- Invest in a trust to have money for the extra grants
- Funding for innovative start-up for students
- Give money to university foundation to invest for us so we don't have to invest
- Let the fund sit there
- Purchase more recreation equipments that can be rented out
- Purchase software licenses for our computers for grad student use
- Look at what other GSA's have for ideas
- How to create revenue
- Property would be a functional building, one business unit to subsidize rent
- Set up a legal fund so that we could have a lawyer
- Social fund – such as market
- Liked childcare in basement or alternate location
- No to investing in commons since we don't own it
- Make building more secular but renovating will not make money
- No to housing
- Yes to childcare, USSU has one and it has a 4 year waiting list so ours would be filled – there is a need for GSA
- Bar is nice
- Renovating such as whiteboards to make it more study space
- Low risk investment
- Improve chapel heating
- Legal fund
- No for housing
- Childcare may not benefit many so not all of money into this
- Bar possible, could be nice to rent out facilities
- Renovate commons under bar to make more appealing
- More infrastructure around campus – would uni share these costs
- UPASS fund contribution to help subsidize it
- Travel cost
- Low cost bike stations and things

Categorized everything

- 1) Invest in residential housing for graduate students;
- 2) Invest in GSA owned childcare facility;
- 3) Seek permission to convert the GSA basement to bar; and
- 4) Renovate the GSA Commons to further appeal to graduate students
- 5) Conference money for students (grants)
- 6) Increase bursaries for students
- 7) Increase money for course councils
- 8) Let the money sit
- 9) Research more options
- 10) Legal fund
- 11) Social funds
- 12) Infrastructure projects
- 13) UPASS fund
- 14) Business Start-ups
- 15) Low risk investments

Course councillors to present these categories to their members and report back to the GSA via email by December 1st regarding top priorities out of this list.

15.0 Next Course Council meeting: Thursday December 6, 5 – 7PM

16.0 Adjournment

- **Moved by Elizabeth O’Meara**

NOVEMBER EXECUTIVE REPORTS

1) VP STUDENT AFFAIRS

- Will present at meeting

2) VP EXTERNAL

- Halloween party was a success
- Attended the CAGS conference
 - o allowed us to make good connections with other Graduate student associations across the country and we are planning to work together with associations specifically from Regina and Alberta

3) ABORIGINAL LIAISON

- The Aboriginal and Indigenous Graduate Students Council held our first event at the Aboriginal Students Centre (ASC) on November 1, 2012. This event was not well attended, however the AIGSC will continue to reach out and build our profile within the Aboriginal Graduate population.
- As a council, we attended the Remembrance Day activities on November 11, 2012 to honor our soldiers and those that have assisted in maintaining our freedoms.
- Our next event will be held on December 1, 2012, this is a Saturday. We hope that the change in time will accommodate those students with families. We will be hosting a potluck feast called miyawasin. Again, I ask for you to share this information broadly within your department.
- The AIGSC would like to create a sense of community on campus and build relationships across departments. Our constitutional review is in progress and in the future our group will be producing a strategic outreach plan.

4) VP ACADEMICS

- Academic Programs Committee
 - o -Discussed potential policy on lecture recordings, specifically in relation to IPR of professors and the rights of students.
- Research, Scholarly, and Artistic Works Committee
 - o -Discussed the university's custom Data Warehouse and uView system including governance, integrity, potential future additions to the system
- Reminder – New Copyright Act in effect at the U of S. Be aware of new guidelines. <http://www.usask.ca/copyright/>

5) VP FINANCE

- 1.) The budget (as of the end of October) is available on the website. No unexpected spending has occurred.

- 2.) The insurance policy for the Commons has been renewed. The policy premium is actually only \$3224.00 (it was originally budgeted as \$4500.00).

This was over-budgeted because in previous years the "income" of the GSA was reported as being both the GSA membership fee and the health & dental premiums, despite the fact that the instructions from the insurer explicitly state that one should exclude health & dental premiums from the income statement. Because the insurance premium is dependent on the insured organization's income, the GSA was previously overpaying on the insurance policy.

This again is a reminder why accurate accounting and bookkeeping is important.

- 3.) We have received payment of the membership dues, health and dental premiums, and CFS fees from the University. At the time of filing this report I do not have the exact break down of each amount (the University lumps all payment into one cheque), but I anticipate having this information by the actual meeting date and can provide more information at that time.
- 4.) We have received an invoice from our health and dental provider, Studentcare, for the fall health and dental premium. The invoice total is \$249 174.30.
- 5.) I intend to speak to our auditor early this week, I will hopefully be able to update council on the progress of the audit during the actual meeting.

6) VP OPERATIONS and ADMINISTRATION

- Fall Bursaries
 - o Will evaluate applications this week and announce results
- New commons coordinator hired (Luan Chu) after resignation of one last month
- Copyright Advisory Committee
 - o New copyright guidelines has been disseminated
- Health and Dental Plan review committee
 - o If interested in being part of this, please contact me

7) PRESIDENT

1) Today's Meeting

I reported in October Course Council meeting that we would spend most part of today's meeting discussing way forward for the association. We shall break into three groups and come up with recommendations. This is beyond intellectual exercise. I anticipate active discussion that would chart a strategic path for the GSA.

The GSA Commons amongst other examples is the dividend of such efforts by our predecessors. We can do better for future graduate students.

While we are limited by the available resources on what we can do, I suggest we think outside the box and come up with ideas. During the joint session, suggested ideas will be aligned with the GSA's current fiscal reality and the most feasible suggestion would be adopted as the GSA's strategic plan for capital investment.

Four suggestions have come up so far for the use of GSA's present and projected surplus:

- (1) Invest in residential housing for graduate students;
- (2) Invest in GSA owned childcare facility;
- (3) Seek permission to convert the GSA basement to bar; and
- (4) Renovate the GSA Commons to further appeal to graduate students

All the above options would require sourcing for extra funds from financial institutions. If we decide on any of the above, we would go through the GSA's internal approval mechanism before signing contract with any financial institution. We are opened to more suggestions before making a decision at the end of today's meeting.

2) College Quarter Graduate Student Residence Project

Some GSA members wanted an update on the College Quarter Graduate Student Residence Project. This is a follow-up to the request:

West Wing:

- 1st floor – painting in suites, closing up hallway ceiling
- 2nd floor – installing millwork (approximately 70% completed), painting
- 3rd floor – installing millwork (approximately 40% completed)
- 4th floor – painting
- 5th floor – closing ceilings up

North Wing:

- 1st floor – mechanical rough-ins for foyer/laundry room/retail space
- 2nd floor – taping/mudding drywall
- 3rd floor – boarding/taping/mudding drywall
- 4th floor – boarding/installing fire stop drywall
- 5th floor – closing ceilings up

Mechanical Room:

- 75% complete

Exterior:

- Storm sewer lines and catch basins has been installed.
- Brick work is approximately 80% complete.
- Swiss pearl (fibre cement panels – including okra colored panels) installation has started.

- Concrete retaining walls were 70% complete.
- Prep work has started for the front entrance sidewalk and stairs.

Schedule:

In the west and north wings, floors 1 to 4 would be ready for occupancy May 1, 2013 (80 units, 112 beds); 5th floor should be ready for occupancy by May 31, 2013. Move in is expected to be scheduled for June, 2013.

3) Canadian Association of Graduate Studies (CAGS) 2012.

Lizzie, the VP External and I recently attended CAGS conference at Ottawa. My trip was paid for by the College of Graduate Studies and Research (CGSR) and the GSA covered that of Lizzie. We had useful networking opportunities with GSA executives from other institutions. During the graduate students' sessions, we identified areas of common challenges, developed strategies to meet those challenges and shared ideas on ways we could better engage our members. We also had the opportunity to attend other working groups and training sessions.

4) Meetings attended in November:

4-7: I was at Ottawa for CAGS conference

8: Executive Student Forum; Meeting with Lawrence Martz; UPASS Committee; GSA Executive

14: Planning and Priority Committee

15: CGSR Executive

16: Meeting with CGSR staff

17: With Scott Hitching

21: With the University President; Planning and Priority Committee

22: GSA Executive

23: University Secretary Search Committee

28: Planning and Priority Committee

29: Interdisciplinary Committee; College Quarter Graduate Student Residence Steering Committee

30: Childcare Expansion Project Steering Committee