

Graduate Students' Association GSA Council Meeting Minutes



**University of Saskatchewan
Thursday, March 13th, 2014
5:00 P.M - 7:00 P.M
GSA Commons**

Attendees:

Mostafa Aghbolaghy, Akindamola Awujoola, David Bennett, Dmitriy Chesnakov, Dorah Conteh, Patricia Deciman, Seth Dueck, Priyangi Edirisinghe, Kaitlyn Frolek, Brittany Gadzosa, Philip Garvey, Federica Giannelli, Layla Gould, Amanda Guy, Kim Harrison, Kristian Hermann, Daniel Karran, Laura Larsen, Cinnati Loi, Kendra Merier, Robert Nicks, Isaac Pratt, Fedir Razumenko, Christine Rosser, Fred Sage, Kumar Selvaraj, Ashton Reimer, Austen Smith, Jules Hamara, Robin Brown, Kim Davy, Steve Knaus, Natalia Terekhova, Sara Worsham, Cynthia Bottomley, Melanie Jean, Kristopher Novak, Samantha Purchase, Basir Mustafa

Executive:

President, Ehimai Ohiozebau
VP Student Affairs, Reanne Ridsdale
VP Operations and Communications, Kiri Staples
VP Finance, Mohammad Rafati
Aboriginal Liaison, Omeasoo Butt
VP External, Steve Jimbo
VP Academic, Izabela Vlahu

1.0 Call to Order – 5:31PM

2.0 Approval of Agenda

Motion 1 – Move approval of 2014-2015 budget prior to approval of fees, to become item 5.1 because it's a matter of urgency, to combine “new business” and “old business” into “business”

Motioned by Seth, seconded by Fred

2 Opposed

Motion passes

Motion 2 – Move to add reports from VP Academic, Externals and Student Affairs to end of meeting

Motioned by Izabela, seconded by Laura

Motion passes

Motion 3 – to add motion to agenda as item 4.4

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the executive membership explain how a controversial event is being sponsored by the GSA without having been voted on in Council or Executive.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the member responsible apologize to council and publicize that we are not in fact co-sponsoring said event.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this matter be referred to the ethics committee.

Motioned by David, seconded by Reanne

Discussion

- Why is this an issue because other events sponsored by the GSA haven't been cleared through Council?

2 Opposed

Motion passes

3.0 Approval of previous GSA Council meeting minutes

- Mistake made on item 2.0 and was corrected

Motion 4 – to approve previous GSA Council minutes

Motioned by Kiri, seconded by Ehimai

Motion passes

4.0 Ratification of Academic Representatives

Robin Brown (Soil Science), Ashton Reimer (Physics and Engineering)

Motion 5 – to approve academic representatives

Motioned by Reanne, seconded by Ehimai

Motion passes

5.0 Business

5.1 Motion 6 - to approve the GSA 2014-2015 budget

WHEREAS the GSA Budget Committee has agreed on a budget for the 2014-2015 GSA fiscal year;

WHEREAS the GSA Council has to approve the budget at least one month before the AGM;

WHEREAS the AGM is scheduled for Thursday April 17th;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the GSA Council approve the 2014-2015 budget as recommended by the Budget Committee.

Motioned by Moh, seconded by Steve

- Estimated expenses based on current year during Budget Committee meeting
- No big changes in revenue – main source is student fee and are assuming same number of students as last year, including 1.5% increase in enrollment rate
- Only difference is UPASS administration fee
- Would like to improve equipment for Commons

Discussion

- Point of information – we noticed that we had many applications for the bursary year, we are hoping we will get more money from CGSR, but to be on the safe side this increase is not yet on the budget
- Do we need to increase the cost of auditing?
 - Based on annual audit costs from previous VP Finance
 - GSA should try to reduce the auditing budget by combining audits, rather than doing it every year – might be able to save money
 - Current revenue from GSA limited us to increase audit budget because we have other items that had to take priority
- To clarify, the comprehensive audit hasn't been completed yet.
 - No, but we have room in the current budget for it
- Is there any reason for \$4000 for handbook printing?
 - The price of the handbook has increased because are printing more
 - Last year we tried to sell ads to compensate the costs, and this year we should be more effective in selling ads
 - We wanted our own handbook, not the CFS handbook, to reflect our institution and goals
 - Hopefully next budget will have more adverts and funding
 - Am going to encourage next executive to hire someone to pursue ad sales – this might lead to increase in ad sales
 - Current budget item only includes printing costs

- Could we set goal for ad sales in handbook to \$6000?
 - Last year we didn't meet ad sales and it affected our budget – this year we want to be more cautious
- What does UPASS material cover?
 - i.e. posters, printing material
 - Other item is for salaries, etc.
- Having a separate budget line for UPASS, but not having it covered by administrative fee, is a problem. Whatever costs we have should be covered by the fee.
 - It doesn't necessarily mean that we are going to spend this – because there are always unexpected costs, the remaining amount required to balance our budget was allocated to this budget line
 - If that's the case, shouldn't

Amendment by Izabela - to change UPASS material costs into “office supplies and operational costs”

Motioned by Izabela, seconded by Sarah

- It's important that whatever the labels say, accompanies the service in the budget
- The fee that students are charged should cover these costs entirely

Discussion

- UPASS is now a GSA service, like the Awards Gala, Health and Dental – it's in order for the GSA to allocate money to these services
- Technically the UPASS would add surplus to the GSA account, not deficit
- To be clear, we are not moving money, we are reallocating it
- There is a \$3 fee, but the University charges us 1%, so the GSA is not getting all of this fee – we need to print opt-out materials, maps, cards, posters, pens to let our students know that this program is going on so that when they're paying into the UPASS, they know about it
- We are also getting a swiper, so maybe in the future this item line could be changed
- The way budgets work, and being a record to track whatever our expenses are, I don't think it has to be moved to miscellaneous accounts – these are too confusing for future budgets

- It's the responsibility of the VP Finance to keep record of where the items within miscellaneous accounts are spent
- Other expenditure and revenue items for specific events, such as orientation,
- Friendly Amendment by Sarah: move cost of card scanner (\$180) into office materials budget line and remainder of money is combined with UPASS salary to become UPASS administration
- Move \$940 to UPASS salary and re-label this item UPASS Administration

2 Opposed, 2 Abstentions

Amendment passes

- Were Executive and President salaries changed?
 - They stayed the same
- It would be helpful to have previous year's budget and actual expenditure
- Don't we already have a card swiper?
 - A card swiper is a machine that automatically reads the card so the line moves faster rather than manually inputting information – it will also reduce error
- What is "conferences – external"?
 - Covering the costs
- Friendly Amendment: to clarify the line item from "conferences – external" to "executive travel fund"

Amendment passes

1 abstention

Motion passes

Point of information – current budget should be put on website as well

5.2 Motion 7 - regarding GSA membership fee

WHEREAS the inflation rate based on CPI (Consumer Price Index) for Saskatchewan in 2013 was 2.3%,

WHEREAS the GSA has increased its businesses in the past year to provide a better service to its member and plan to improve those services,

WHEREAS the estimation of the budget for the next year shows more than 5% increase,

WHEREAS the membership fee is the main source of income for GSA,

WHEREAS the GSA Course Council is allowed to approve an increase in 5% of the GSA membership fee (section 4.3.3 constitution),

WHEREAS any changes to the fee should be submitted to the university by the end of February

BE IT RESOLVED that the GSA membership fee for the 2014-2015 school year be increased by 5% from 32.04 to \$33.64 for the fall and winter terms (\$67.28 in total).

Discussion

- The deadline for increase in fee was the end of February, so we had to default to last year's fee
- Friendly Amendment by Ehimai– BE IT RESOLVED that the GSA membership fee for the 2014-2015 school year remain the same as the previous year

Motion passes

5.3 Motion 8 - to address Graduate Student concerns regarding the TransformUS feedback and implementation stages.

WHEREAS the TransformUS formation and task force stages included Graduate student involvement and Graduate Student membership on the task forces; and

WHEREAS the students are stakeholders in the University of Saskatchewan (U of S); and

WHEREAS the Graduate Student Association (GSA) represents the Graduate Students at the U of S; and

WHEREAS the TransformUS process has passed the feedback stage and is entering the planning and implementation stages;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the GSA Executive draft a letter regarding student concerns about the TransformUS feedback process

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the GSA Executive appeal to the Provost and President for Graduate student participation in the implementation process including Graduate student seats on the Provost's Committee for Integrated Planning, and the Board of Governors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT comments and concerns regarding the TransformUS feedback stage should be submitted to the GSA Executive within ten days of this motion passing (Feb 27, 2014).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT submissions shall be Carbon Copied to the Chair of the GSA Council, for transparency.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT all submissions, and the draft letter be presented to GSA Council for approval at the next GSA Council Meeting.

Motioned by Sarah, Seconded by Reanne

Discussion

- Point of information – the USSU non-confidence vote was because they weren't at the table anymore and weren't involved in the process
- Two Council meetings ago VP Academic announced that she would invite students to a round table discussion – eight graduate students and two faculty attended. Am wondering if this motion implies that VP Academic should forward this report?
- Diversity of opinions in this
- President was threatened with impeachment by faculty member regarding the TransformUS motion that was removed from the agenda last meeting – we should represent graduate student opinion, not faculty opinion
- Clarification – we know that the feedback stages have passed. The motion is to get feedback on the feedback stage? Or is it to pass on comments on how the feedback stage went?
 - Want to solicit feedback on the feedback stage which may have been missed
 - Point is to answer questions regarding the feedback stage, provide realistic objectives for possibly the implementation of this
 - We would like to demand to be involved, especially if the University wants to continue to turn us down

Amendment by Laura: to remove last three “be it further resolved” clauses because we don't have a lot of time – I think it would be polite to get things into them as fast as possible

Motioned by Laura, seconded by Cinnatti

- The implementation process is in process right now and if we want them to consider us in this process, we need to do so quickly
- Given that time for feedback has already passed, any involvement with the GSA, whether we want it or not, would be viewed as a backing up of the process

- Not sure the amendment would be beneficial seeing as the whole point of the motion in the first place is because it's such a contentious issue, we all vote on it together to ensure the letter captures the diversity of our opinions

Motion 9 - to extend meeting time by 30 minutes

Motioned by David, seconded by Fred

In favour – 16

Against – 17

Motion fails

Motion 10 - to call to question

Motioned by David, Cinnatti

Motion passes

Amendment fails

Friendly Amendment: remove date from “BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT comments and concerns regarding the TransformUS feedback stage should be submitted to the GSA Executive **within ten days of this motion passing (Feb 27, 2014).**”

Amendment passes

Amendment to change the second BE IT RESOLVED – we won't get a seat on PCIP because it's made up of senior administrators, suggest change to: “including involvement on PCIP in the implementation phase of TransformUS”...and a permanent seat on the Board of Governors

Motioned by Seth, seconded by Reanne

- We do not have a seat on the Board of Governors – USSU President is supposed to represent us

Amendment to Amendment: “including involvement and a seat on PCIP”

Motioned by Laura, seconded by Patricia

Motion 11 - to call to question

Motion passes

Motion 12 - to extend by 30 minutes

Motioned by Ehimai, seconded by Reanne

Quorum is lost

Attendance at end of meeting:

Dmitriy Chesnakov, Seth Dueck, Brittany Gadzosa, Kristian Hermann, Daniel Karran, Cinnati Loi, Kendra Merier, Isaac Pratt, Christine Rosser, Fred Sage, Kumar Selvaraj, Ashton Reimer, Steve Knaus, Sara Worsham, Melanie Jean, Ehimai Ohiozebau, Reanne Ridsdale, Kiri Staples, Mohammad Rafati, Steve Jimbo

6.0 Announcements

7.0 Next GSA Council Meeting/AGM: April 17th, 2014

8.0 Adjournment