

Graduate Students' Association Council Meeting Draft Agenda



University of Saskatchewan
Thursday, December 11th, 2014
5:00 P.M - 7:00 P.M
GSA Commons

- 1.0 Call to Order
- 2.0 Approval of the Agenda
- 3.0 Chair's remarks
- 4.0 President's remarks
- 5.0 Ratification of new Councils
- 6.0 Ratification of new Councillors
- 7.0 Ratification of new Social Groups
- 8.0 Old business:

8.1 GSA fee for 2015/16 fiscal year

WHEREAS the 2013 and 2014 inflation rates for Saskatchewan, based on the Consumer Price Index, were 1.2% and 2.7% respectively, and

WHEREAS the GSA membership fee is the main source of revenue for the GSA, and

WHEREAS the membership fee was not increased in the previous fiscal year, and

BE IT RESOLVED that the GSA membership fee for the 2015/16 fiscal year be increased by 5%, that is, by \$3.20/year for full time graduate students and by \$1.84/year for part time graduate students.

8.2 Motion: Approve to get a lawyer for the GSA

WHEREAS the GSA engages in contractual obligations with internal and external bodies (e.g., The City of Saskatoon), and

WHEREAS the GSA has not had prior professional legal consultation on any matters that may require legal consultation (e.g., ensuring good standing with Non-Profit

Corporations Act, contractual consultation for U-PASS);

BE IT RESOLVED that the GSA executives investigate options for legal consultation with the intent to hire professional legal counsel who is familiar with the Non-Profit Corporations Act,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that \$9,000 from the GSA reserve fund to be allotted for legal consultation costs for the 2014/2015 fiscal year,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that tasks that are critical to GSA operations, such as contractual obligations and ensuring good standing under the Non-Profit Corporations Act, be given priority for legal consultation,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the GSA Executive, the Constitution Review Committee, and the Code of Ethics and Discipline Committee also be given priority for GSA-related legal consultation should the need arise.

8.3 Motion to ratify Constitution Review Committee appointments

WHEREAS Constitution Review committee members have not been appointed; and

WHEREAS all committee appointments shall be made and/or ratified by academic Council according to item 8.1.6. Constitution; and

WHEREAS the Constitution review committee requires representation of at least two academic councillors according to item 8.1. 11 constitution.

BE IT RESOLVED that the following members be added to the Constitution review committee.

Izabela Vlahu - GSA President

Rahwa Osman – Vice President External Affairs

Patricia De Ciman- GSA Councillor

Dmitry Chesnakov – GSA Councillor

Ashton Rimer – GSA Councillor

Josie Steeves – GSA Councillor

Hardi Shahadu – GSA Councillor

Kathryn Forrester- GSA Councillor

Marion Pollock – GSA Councillor

Rajat Chakravarty- Vice President Student Affairs

Isaac Pratt – GSA Councillor

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the ratified councillors hold the membership until the new appointment by council

8.4 Motion to ratify representatives for Student Forum

WHEREAS the purpose of the Student Forum is to provide a venue in which the University Administration, governing bodies, and representatives of the university's key stakeholder groups hear and consider institution-wide issues that affect the nature and quality of the student experience at the University of Saskatchewan, and

WHEREAS the Student Forum terms of reference provide positions for two members of the GSA Executive and two Graduate Course Councillors appointed by the GSA Course Council, and

WHEREAS Isaac Pratt (College of Medicine) and Seth Dueck (Department of Physics and Engineering Physics) are both Graduate Course Councillors in good standing, and

WHEREAS Isaac Pratt and Seth Dueck represented the GSA Course Council to Student Forum in the 2013-2014 academic year.

BE IT RESOLVED that Isaac Pratt and Seth Dueck be appointed to represent the Graduate Student body at the Student Forum for the 2014-2015 academic year.

8.5 Motion to ratify members of Budget Planning Committee

WHEREAS GSA budget planning committee members have not been appointed;

WHEREAS all committee appointments shall be made and/or ratified by academic Council according to item 8.1.6. Constitution;

WHEREAS the budget planning committee requires representation of at least two academic councillors according to item 8.1. 11 constitution;

BE IT RESOLVED that GSA council approve, Jason Ho (PEGASUS), Andrew Frank-Wilson (College Kinesiology Grad. Students), Mostafa Aghbolaghy (EGCC), Marion Hewitt Pollock (Education Admin Academic Council) to sit in budget planning committee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the ratified councillors hold the membership until the new appointment by council.

9.0 Executive Reports

9.1 President (See report attached)

9.2 VP Operations and Communications (See report attached)

9.3 VP Academic (Oral report)

9.4 VP External (See report attached)

9.5 VP Student Affairs (Oral report)

9.6 Aboriginal Liaison (Oral report)

9.7 Q&A

10.0 Standing Committee Reports

10.1 Childcare Committee (No report)

10.2 Budget Committee (No report)

10.3 Bursary Selection Committee (No report)

10.4 Elections and Referenda Committee (No report)

10.5 Constitution Revision Committee (No report)

10.6 Code of Ethics Committee (No report)

10.7 Gala Committee (No report)

10.8 Q&A

11.0 New Business

11.1 Motion to ratify the Terms of Reference for the Code of Ethics and Discipline Committee (See terms attached)

11.2 Motion to ratify Jed Huntley and Thomas Seibel as Code of Ethics and Discipline Committee members (See introductions attached)

12.0 Q&A

13.0 Adjournment

President Report

GSA Week and the first 3MT Competition

The Executive has been working on organizing a week of GSA events in March 2015. In addition to the annual Conference and Awards Gala, this year the GSA is collaborating with CGSR on adding a Three Minute Thesis (3MT) competition. These competitions receive high praises nationally and we are happy to be organizing the first one for the U of S. The College of Graduate Studies and Research is providing the necessary financial support for this event.

Winter Orientation

The International Student and Study Abroad Centre (ISSAC) is organizing a Winter Orientation on January 3rd for all students joining the U of S in the winter term. The GSA Executive has been asked to participate in a session that is to be jointly delivered with the College of Graduate Studies and Research. Given the GSA's commitment to a Winter Orientation, both the VP Student Affairs and VP Academic have delegated the responsibility to present the academic and non-academic services of the GSA.

Tuition fee increases

On Monday November 24th the GSA organized a Town Hall meeting to discuss the tuition fee increases for the upcoming academic year. Adam Baxter-Jones, the acting Dean of CGSR, was invited to attend the meeting. After the meeting the Dean sent a summary of comments to the Interim Provost, Dr. Ernie Barber. Here is the letter:

On Monday November 24th I was invited by the GSA president to attend a town hall at Graduate Commons to discuss tuition for 2015/16. There were approximately 40 graduate students in attendance. Much of the discussion related to graduate student scholarships and awards but I will only be reporting the conversation that is relevant to possible tuition increases.

In relation to comparability there was a discussion as to whether there would be recognition of the UoS presenting ranking within the U15. Specifically, if our ranking is going down then the tuition rate should reflect this fact. The major question being why would our tuition be compared to the top U15 institutions when we clearly do not rank with them. The students also questioned any possible increase in the international differential, indicating that

the low differential balanced out the low ranking, making the UoS still a desirable destination. They questioned whether this would be the case if fees increased and rankings stayed the same.

It was highlighted that the affordability of programs need to be considered relative to institutional provision of scholarships and awards. The expectation was that increased tuition should be accompanied by increases in institutional support of graduate students, through teaching assistance, scholarships etc. The major concern was that increased fees would lead to students having to obtain external funding through earnings and that this would affect their ability to complete their programs in a timely manner and would detract them from their main objective, which is to be research intensive.

Students in programs where investment was thought to be lacking i.e. reduction in number of faculty, there were concerns that increased fees would not guarantee quality of degree programs. Concerns were also expressed that lack of investment in the library, services in student central, availability of software and lack of space for graduate students was effecting quality of programs and thus the expectation would be that increased tuition would result in identifiable improvements. The final concern was the limited availability of graduate courses across campus, questioning whether increased tuition would result in more resources put into graduate courses.

Sincerely,

Adam

Financial Report - GSA budget

Revenues and Expenses for the period May 1st to Nov 30th, 2014

	Revenues	Value	YTD	Rem.	Oct
1	GSA Fees	189,953	89,071	100,882	85,414
2	Commons Booking	4,500	2,416	2,084	282
3	GSA Handbook Ad Sales	1,500	150	1,350	0
4	Orientation Contributions	1,500	0	1,500	0
5	CGSR Bursary Contribution	20,000	0	20,000	0
6	U-Pass Administration	10,000	5,260	4,757	5,164
Total Revenue		227,453	96,897	130,556	

	Expenses	Value	YTD	Rem.	Oct
1	Office Staff Salary	70,000	(35,338)	34,662	4,510
2	President Stipend	6,397	(3,732)	2,665	533
3	Executive Stipend	33,265	(19,405)	13,860	2,772
4	Academic Council Funding	10,000	(1,812)	8,188	664
5	Annual Audit	1,500	0	1,500	0
6	Bank Charges	350	(744)	-394	92
7	GSA Handbook Printing	6,000	(4,662)	1,338	204
8	Commons Insurance	5,000	0	5,000	0
9	Commons Renewal and Repairs (Equipment)	1,000	0	1,000	0
10	Executive travel fund	3,000	(2,903)	97	0
11	Entertainment/Refreshments	2,500	(1,314)	1,186	164
12	Executive Discretionary Fund	3,000	(1,763)	1,237	0
13	Grad Student Club Funding	5,000	(900)	4,100	700
14	GSA (CGSR) Need-Based Bursary	40,000	(10,000)	30,000	0
15	GSA Awards Gala	5,000	0	5,000	0
16	GSA Conference	5,000	0	5,000	0
17	GSA Fall and Winter Orientation BBQ	7,500	(6,232)	1,268	0
18	Office Supplies & Operating Costs	6,000	(3,951)	2,049	684
19	U of S Student Travel Award Contribution	6,000	0	6,000	0
20	U-Pass Administration	10,940	(4,540)	6,400	0
Total Expenses		227,453	(97,396)	130,156	

VP Operations and Communications Report

In November, the VP Operations and Communications coordinated a number of council meetings. Certain information was updated on the website, and communication emails were sent to the graduate students about important notifications such as the U-Pass refunds and hiring of coordinators for the 3MT and the 2015 GSA Conference.

VP External Report

Meetings Attended:

- I was the GSA Representative on the **review committee for Dr. Trever Crowe's Contract renewal**. We discussed the future of support services and programs for graduate students.
- **CFS Lobby Week**: I met with SK MPs and lobbied for support for
 - o More Student grants than loans: a cost-neutral proposal suggesting that the funding put towards RESPs and educated-related tax credits get transferred into the Canada Student Grant Program so that students graduate and graduate with less student debt.
 - o We motivated support for the proposed Post-secondary act modelled based on the Health care act which proposed that the Federal government provides funding to Provinces with a dedicated funding for Post-secondary.
 - o Removal of targeted funding for research and increase in Graduate Student funding such that it reflects the growth in research in certain areas.
 - o To be frank, the SK MPs weren't very receptive on either recommendations.
- **The International Education Strategy**: I attended the announcement of the International Education Strategy by the Minister of Advanced Education, Minister Doherty. The Strategy's main objectives is to increase international recruitment of students and increase the opportunities for Canadian Students to go abroad and gain experience in different educational streams. The Strategy will be implemented by an International Education Strategy Council which presidents of University of Saskatchewan and University of Regina will be sitting on. I suggested that a student representative position be created for a more consultative effort. We are currently working with the

Minister to arrange a meeting to discuss it further as well as other post-secondary related issues.

PENDING Projects and campaigns

Tuition Hike Campaign

- **A rally against Tuition Hike** on December 12th: This rally is to show our position on Tuition Hike.
- **A Poster Campaign:**
 - Update: I have a volunteer photographer and a few volunteers. We will be printing close to 50 Posters, which will be distributed around the City of Saskatoon focusing on areas around the University and within the campus.

The Gala

Sponsorship:

- We have received a \$600 Sponsorship from the Chancellor's Office. Currently waiting to hear back from the President's office, Faculty Association, Alumni Association and the CGSR. We heard back from BHP Billiton and they will not be funding us this year. We are still looking into contacting more external sponsors in excess of 20 potential sponsors.

Planning:

- We have decided that we will be hosting the gala with the Radisson this year as well.
- Currently working on Entertainment, getting Sask photobooth, and other details.
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Nomination Committee

I will be sending a call out for members of the Academic council to volunteer to serve on this committee. The Nomination Committee will be chaired by the VP External and will look through the Nomination package sent for all Nomination categories of excellence and choose the winners.

University of Saskatchewan Graduate Students' Association
Code of Ethics Committee
Terms of Reference

1. Name

The University of Saskatchewan Graduate Students' Association Code of Ethics and Discipline Committee. Short form - Code of Ethics Committee

2. Purpose

The Code of Ethics Committee shall receive and investigate formal written complaints against GSA Executives, GSA Councillors, and/or GSA Members and also shall receive and investigate formal written complaints against ratified GSA Academic Councils and ratified GSA Social Clubs. The Code of Ethics Committee will recommend appropriate disciplinary action to be taken in accordance with the Saskatchewan Non-profit Corporations Act, the GSA Constitution, the GSA Policies and the University of Saskatchewan codes of conduct.

3. Scope

Code of Ethics Committee members must observe and letter and spirit the Saskatchewan Non-profit Corporations Act, the GSA Constitution, the GSA Policies, and the University of Saskatchewan codes of conduct.

4. Membership

The Code of Ethics Committee shall be comprised of the GSA Council Chair, GSA President, at least one (1) GSA Councillor, and at least one (1) GSA Member who is not a member of the GSA Executive nor a GSA Councillor. Membership of the Code of Ethics Committee, other than the GSA Council Chair and the GS president, is subject to ratification by GSA Council.

5. Receipt of Complaints

Complaints to the Code of Ethics Committee shall be made formally in writing and signed by the complainant. Anonymous complaints will not be accepted. Complaints must be delivered to the GSA Office (to be appropriately filed in the GSA records) and a digital (email) copy must also be sent to the GSA Council Chair. Upon the receipt of the complaint, the GSA Council Chair shall decide to:

- 1) immediately forward the complaint to the members of Code of Ethics Committee, or
- 2) refer the complaint to GSA Council, or
- 3) if the GSA Council Chair is the subject of, or has a conflict of interest with, a submitted complaint, the complaint shall be referred to the GSA President to dismiss it or submit it to The GSA council, or
- 4) dismiss the complaint.

The members of the Code of Ethics Committee may directly receive a formal complaint from the mover of a motion subject to a majority vote of GSA Council. If such a motion is made and passed, the mover must provide a written and signed copy (mover and seconder must sign) of the motion, including the date of the GSA Council meeting in which the motion was passed, to

the GSA Office.

6. Meetings

Quorum for meetings of the Code of Ethics Committee shall be 4 members with at least one (1) member present being a GSA Councillor and at least one (1) member present being a GSA Member who is not a member of the GSA Executive nor a GSA Councillor.

Meetings of the Code of Ethics Committee shall be called either by the GSA Council Chair, the GSA President or by GSA Council through a motion that was adopted with a majority vote.

7.

A meeting of the Code of Ethics Committee shall be called no earlier than two (2) weeks after and no later than one (1) month after receipt of a complaint. Notice of a meeting of the Code of Ethics Committee must be sent to all Code of Ethics Committee members no later than one (1) week in advance of the meeting.

When a member of the Code of Ethics Committee is the subject of or has a conflict of interest with a complaint, the member shall not be present at a meeting during the duration of any discussion, voting, or recommendations made by the Code of Ethics Committee when dealing with the complaint against the member. The member shall also be excluded from the writing of any reporting (reports for GSA Council or recording of meeting minutes, etc.) pertaining to the complaint against the member.

Minutes must be kept for all meetings of the Code of Ethics Committee. Minutes should be read finished and ratified by majority vote of the members attending at a meeting of the Code of Ethics Committee upon before the meeting is adjourned. These minutes will be filed with the GSA Office for record keeping purposes.

8. Right to a Fair Hearing

Pursuant to Section 120 of the Saskatchewan Non-profit Corporations Act, a GSA Member must be provided the opportunity for a fair hearing before the Code of Ethics Committee may decide on recommended disciplinary action against the GSA Member.

9. Investigation of a Complaint

The members of the Code of Ethics Committee shall be empowered to further investigate any complaint they have received up until such a time as the members of the Code of Ethics Committee have reached a decision in regards to the complaint. When a member of the Code of Ethics Committee who is the subject of or has a conflict of interest with a complaint, the member shall not be allowed to investigation of the complaint.

10. Committee Decisions

All decisions made by the Code of Ethics Committee shall be made by a majority vote.

For each complaint received by the GSA Council Chair, the GSA Council Chair must report any decisions made in regards to consideration of the complaint (as outlined in "Receipt of Complaints") to GSA Council. A brief justification for each decision must be included in the

report.

Recommended Disciplinary Action

All recommended disciplinary actions decided by the Code of Ethics Committee must be reported to GSA Council. A brief justification for each recommended disciplinary action must be included in the report.

Reporting to Relevant Parties

Any decisions made in regards to a complaint must be reported to all parties involved in the complaint (complainant and subjects of the complaint). A brief justification for each decision must be included in the report.

11. Confidentiality

All members of the Code of Ethics Committee must sign a confidentiality agreement. All business conducted by the Code of Ethics Committee shall be handled in a confidential manner. No member of the Code of Ethics Committee may share any information, in any way, about any business conducted, including discussions, votes, or decisions made, without the express written record of a majority vote by the members present at a meeting of the Code of Ethics Committee.

Jed Huntley (Councillor):

IGSC Executive

M.Ed Student

Department of Foundations

College of Ed., U of S

Code of Ethics and Discipline Committee

GSA Council

November 28, 2014

Hello, my name is Jed Huntley and I am an Aboriginal student at the U of S. I am in the second year of a Masters of Education program in the department of foundations, and am currently an executive member of the IGSC (Indigenous Graduate Student Council). While I do not claim to be the most qualified to be sitting on an ethics committee, I feel I can offer impartiality. After attending a few of the GSA council meetings it is blatantly obvious there is a rift among councillors, which has caused the emergence of two opposing factions – those for the president and those against the president. This has caused a divide that often impedes the basic functionality of a meeting. With that being said, I do not hold unwavering allegiance to either side. I believe graduate student issues must trump personal bias and agenda.

As part of degree requirements I have completed courses in ethics, including those pertaining to human subjects. It might also be worth mentioning, last academic year, during the GSA elections, I was asked by former graduate chair Mark Kroeker to sit on an unofficial ethics committee.

There were several complaints, throughout the election campaign, in which he asked for a second opinion when coming to a disciplinary decision. I respected the professionalism and neutrality Mark displayed when dealing with the complaints. Each irregularity was unique and he dealt with as such, in a firm but fair manner.

I hope this has answered some of the questions/ concerns you may have.

Respectfully,

Jed Huntley

Thomas Seibel (GSA member):

"I am a graduate student in the department of political studies. I am currently writing my Master's thesis on the subject of human rights theory. Prior to this I completed a double honours degree in Philosophy and Anthropology at the U of S. I believe that I am a good candidate for this position as I have always held and valued a deep interest in issues of social justice and collective problem solving. I look forward to serving my fellow graduate students and working with the members of this committee."

Thank you,

Thomas Seibel