

Graduate Students' Association Council Meeting Draft Agenda



**University of Saskatchewan
Tuesday, January 20th, 2015
5:00 P.M - 7:00 P.M
GSA Commons**

- 1.0 Approval of the Agenda**
- 2.0 Approval of November 18th meeting minutes**
- 3.0 Ratification of new Councils**
- 4.0 Ratification of new Councillors**
- 5.0 Ratification of new Social Groups**
- 6.0 Executive Reports**
 - 6.1 President (Report attached)**
 - 6.2 VP Operations and Communications (Oral report)**
 - 6.3 VP Academic (Oral report)**
 - 6.4 VP External (Oral report)**
 - 6.5 VP Student Affairs (Oral report)**
 - 6.6 Aboriginal Liaison (Oral report)**
 - 6.7 Q&A**
- 7.0 Standing Committee Reports**
 - 7.1 Childcare Committee (No report)**
 - 7.2 Budget Committee (No report)**
 - 7.3 Bursary Selection Committee (No report)**
 - 7.4 Elections and Referenda Committee (No report)**
 - 7.5 Constitution Revision Committee (No report)**
 - 7.6 Code of Ethics Committee (No report)**
 - 7.7 Gala Committee (No report)**
 - 7.8 Q&A**

8.0 Process to appoint members to committees (information attached)

9.0 Q&A

10.0 Adjournment

President's Report

On Unionization

In December 2014, the GSA President was informed of a drive to unionize graduate students who work as teaching or research assistants at the University of Saskatchewan. Members of the GSA who are involved with the unionization drive made a request to the President that a Special General Meeting of the membership be called to discuss the unionization campaign.

On January 12th, 2015 the Graduate Students' Association held a Special General Meeting and considered a motion for official endorsement of the unionization campaign. Many students spoke in favour of unionization, pointing out to certain challenges that graduate students face as employees of the University. Some of the challenges mentioned were lack of health and safety measures on the job, pay rates, overtime hours for marking assignments, lack of official appointment letters, lack of review processes for teaching assistants, and a general lack of uniformity of expectations for TAs and RAs across campus. In addition to comments of support, there were some students who pointed out to possible challenges in unionizing, such as paying dues, possible impact on the University Budget and general confusion regarding the role that the GSA would have should TAs and RAs become unionized.

After a lengthy and fruitful discussion the motion was unanimously adopted.

Audit

The auditors have informed us that the audit report is in the final stages. Later in January, the President and the Office Manager will be meeting with the auditors to receive information on how to further improve the GSA accounting practices and archiving system, which will in turn facilitate future audits. The President and the Office Manager have been working on developing a better financial reporting system that will facilitate the work of incoming executives in the transition period. The goal is to implement practices, which will be easy and natural to follow, ensuring continuity within the GSA.

Budget Report

Revenues and Expenses for the period May 1st to Dec 31st, 2014

Revenue	Budgeted	YTD	Rem.	Dec
GSA Fees	\$189,952.82	\$88,604.12	\$101,348.70	\$71.90
Commons Booking	\$4,500.00	\$3,121.00	\$1,379.00	\$705.00
GSA Handbook Ad Sales	\$1,500.00	\$150.00	\$1,350.00	\$-
Orientation Contributions	\$1,500.00	\$-	\$1,500.00	\$-
CGSR Bursary Contribution	\$20,000.00	\$-	\$20,000.00	\$-
U-Pass administration	\$10,000.00	\$5,254.00	\$4,746.00	\$15.00
Total Revenue	\$227,452.82	\$97,129.12	\$130,323.70	

Expenses	Budgeted	YTD	Rem.	Dec.
Office Staff Salary	\$70,000.00	\$(41,140.84)	\$28,859.16	\$(4,998.08)
President Stipend	\$6,397.20	\$(4,264.80)	\$2,132.40	\$(533.10)
Executive Stipend	\$33,265.40	\$(22,176.76)	\$11,088.64	\$(2,772.12)
Academic Council Funding	\$10,000.00	\$(1,847.44)	\$8,152.56	\$-
Annual Audit	\$1,500.00	\$-	\$1,500.00	\$-
Bank Charges	\$350.00	\$(999.46)	\$(649.46)	\$(249.60)
GSA Handbook Printing	\$6,000.00	\$(4,661.99)	\$1,338.01	\$-
Commons Insurance	\$5,000.00	\$(3,708.00)	\$1,292.00	\$(3,708.00)
Commons Renewal and Repairs (Equipment)	\$1,000.00	\$-	\$1,000.00	\$-
Executive travel fund	\$3,000.00	\$(2,902.67)	\$97.33	\$-
Entertainment/Refreshments	\$2,500.00	\$(1,315.28)	\$1,184.72	\$-
Executive Discretionary Fund	\$3,000.00	\$(1,927.77)	\$1,072.23	\$-
Grad Student Club Funding	\$5,000.00	\$(1,200.00)	\$3,800.00	\$(300.00)
GSA (CGSR) Need-Based Bursary	\$40,000.00	\$(10,000.00)	\$30,000.00	\$-
GSA Awards Gala	\$5,000.00	\$-	\$5,000.00	\$-
GSA Conference	\$5,000.00	\$-	\$5,000.00	\$-
GSA Fall and Winter Orientation BBQ	\$7,500.00	\$(6,232.46)	\$1,267.54	\$-
Office Supplies & Operating Costs	\$6,000.00	\$(4,486.92)	\$1,513.08	\$(467.27)
U of S Student Travel Award Contribution	\$6,000.00	\$(6,000.00)	\$-	\$-
U-Pass administrations	\$10,940.00	\$(4,539.82)	\$6,400.18	\$-
Total Expenses	\$227,452.60	\$(117,404.21)	\$110,048.39	

Process to appoint members to committees

According to section 8.1.6 of the GSA Constitution, “*all committee appointments shall be made and/or ratified by Course Council.*” The meaning of “*committee appointments*” in this section could be interpreted to extend to the appointment of members to committees as well. However, such an interpretation would conflict with section 1.3.1.1 of Policy 1, in particular with the statement, “*the president will appoint GSA members to committees as needed.*”

According to Robert’s Rules of Order, (RONR, page 589, ll. 4-7.) “*When a provision of the bylaws is susceptible to two meanings, one of which conflicts with or renders absurd another bylaw provision, and the other meaning does not, the latter must be taken as the true meaning.*” (For the meaning of bylaws see note below). In other words, the interpretation of section 8.1.6 of the Constitution must be restricted to the appointment/ratification of new GSA committees, while the members to GSA Committees must be appointed according to section 1.3.1.1 of Policy 1.

The above implies that ratification of members of committees by Council is a process that is inconsistent with the GSA Constitution and Policies. In conclusion, the President is to appoint the membership to any Committee.

Note: the following excerpt from Robert’s Rules of Order (RONR, page 12, ll. 8-29, and page 13, ll. 1-9.) implies that in the case of the GSA, the term bylaws refers to the Constitution and Policies as one combined instrument.

“In general, the constitution or the bylaws—or both—of a society are the documents that contain its own basic rules relating principally to itself as an organization, rather than to the parliamentary procedure that it follows. In the ordinary case, it is now the recommended practice that all of a society’s rules of this kind be combined into a single instrument, usually called the “bylaws,” although in some societies called the “constitution”—or the “constitution and bylaws,” even when it is only one document. The term bylaws, as used in this book, refers to this single, combination-type instrument—by whatever name the particular organization may describe it—which:

1) should have essentially the same form and content whether or not the society is incorporated (except for the omission or inclusion of articles on the name and object as noted below);

2) defines the primary characteristics of the organization—in such a way that the bylaws serve as the fundamental instrument establishing an unincorporated society, or conform to the corporate charter if there is one;

3) prescribes how the society functions; and

4) includes all rules that the society considers so important that they (a) cannot be changed without previous notice to the members and the vote of a specified large majority (such as a two-thirds vote), and (b) cannot be suspended (with the exception of clauses that provide for their own suspension under specified conditions, or clauses in the nature of rules of order as described on p. 17, ll. 22–25; see also pp. 263–65, 580–82).”