

**Graduate Students' Association  
Annual General Meeting Draft Agenda**



University of Saskatchewan  
Tuesday, June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016  
5:00 P.M. – 7:00 P.M.  
GSA Commons

- 1 Call to Order**
- 2 Announcements**
  - 2.1 Quorum**
- 3 Approval of Chair**
- 4 Approval of Agenda**
- 5 Approval of Council Minutes**
  - 5.1 April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2016 AGM Meeting.**
- 6 Executives Reports**
  - 6.1.1 VP Finance Report (Report Attached)**
  - 6.1.2 Aboriginal Liaison Report (Oral Report)**
  - 6.1.3 VP Academic Report (Oral Attached)**
  - 6.1.4 VP Operations Report (Report Attached)**
  - 6.1.5 VP Student Affairs Report (Oral Attached)**
  - 6.1.6 VP External Report (Report Attached)**
  - 6.1.7 President Report (Report Attached)**
  - 6.1.8 Q&A**
- 7 Committee Minutes**
  - 7.1 Website Committee Minutes (8/6/2016) (Oral)**
  - 7.2 Executive Meeting Minutes (14/5/2016) ([Minutes Attached](#))**
  - 7.3 Executive Retreat Meeting Minutes (15/5/2016) ([Minutes Attached](#))**
  - 7.4 Executive Meeting Minutes (10/5/2016) ([Minutes Attached](#))**
- 8 New Business**

**8.1 Motion:**

**Introduction of two new revenue lines in GSA annual budget for (a) ISIC cards and (b)  
Vending machine sale**

**8.1 Summer Bursary Selection Committee**

**9 Q&A.**

**10 Next GSA Council Meeting 23<sup>rd</sup> of August 2016.**

**11 Adjournment**

**University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association**  
**GSA President Ziad report (June Council Meeting)**

Dear GSA Councillor:

It is my pleasure to provide to you the first report on my activities as the GSA President. It has been a busy period of time where the GSA executive committee met several times to plan the GSA activities and initiatives for the next year. This year, we made every possible effort to ensure GSA representation in different university and CGSR committees. I am glad that the executive committee members are highly committed to have a full representation in all of these committees to address the graduate student's needs.

This year, I ran on a platform to improve the graduate students' wellness, representation and to better address our members' needs. Over the previous period of times I was busy in the following:

- **Graduate Students' representation**

I have met the University Secretary, the dean of the Collage of Graduate Studies and Research to address this proposal. I got a good feedback from them and they were supportive for this proposal. Further, I have recently communicated with different university leaders in this regards, and currently I am drafting my proposal to the to the minister of Advanced Education to address this issue. I had also the opportunity to address this issue in the University Council, where the members show their support for it

- **Addressing Graduate Students' needs**

The GSA executive committee agreed on conducting a graduate wide survey to get input from our members in order to develop a long term strategic plan to better advocate for our members and to address their urgent needs. Currently we are forming a survey committee, we would appreciate our councillor participation in this committee.

- **GSA retreat**

he GSA Executive Committee had their retreat on May 15<sup>th</sup> 2016. The plan for the entire year has been set based on the Graduate students' priorities to create wellness and support for our graduate students. The millstones of our annual plan are as follows:

- Graduate Students workshops and Industry Talks. The GSA will hold a monthly workshop starting September 2016 to address the graduate student's needs. These workshops will include tax filing, industry talks, and Indigenous awareness workshops.
- The GSA orientation will take place on September 6<sup>th</sup>. This year orientation will be under an indigenization theme, where the incoming students will have an opportunity to learn about treaty 6 as they arrive to the university.

- GSA Services. The GSA Plans to keep the current services and to add several new services for the students this year, this will include tax filing and notarization service.
- Graduate Students Achievement week. The GSA will hold its 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Graduate Students Achievement week in March. This year the GSA executive have decided to merge the GSA conference with the 3MT. The GSA executive decided to merge the annual GSA conference and the 3MT in order for the graduate students to have a better opportunity to present their research. This week will be concluded by our annual GSA Gala.

Finally, I would like to provide the council with a list of meetings where I represented the GSA:

Date	Meeting details
May 3, 2016	<b>Meeting with CGSR dean</b>
May 10, 2016	<b>First Executive Committee meeting</b>
May 10, 2016	<b>Graduate Faculty meeting</b>
May 12, 2016	<b>Meeting with the University secretary</b>
May 18, 2016	<b>Meeting with CGSR dean</b>
May 19, 2016	<b>University council</b>
May 19, 2016	<b>Library transformation meeting</b>
June 7, 2016	<b>Meeting with the university secretary</b>
June 8, 2016	<b>Planning and Priorities committee meeting</b>
June 8, 2016	<b>GSA Website committee meeting</b>
June 9, 2016	<b>Building Bridges meeting (IGSC)</b>
June 9, 2016	<b>Meeting with the university postdoctoral fellows representative</b>
June 15, 2016	<b>Meeting with the TVC winner</b>
June 16, 2016	<b>CGSR executive meeting</b>
June 17, 2016	<b>Governance training</b>

Ziad Ghaith, President

Graduate Students' Association

## **VP Operations and Communications' Report for June 2016:**

I am quite thrilled to be serving the GSA as your VP Operations and Communications. The past couple of months have been busy. However, there are a number of initiatives that I have been involved in that I am excited to share with you.

### **GSA Summer Bursary:**

Over the past few weeks, I've begun creating the GSA Summer bursary on Fluid Survey. After I made the application for both the applicants and the referees, I've emailed all graduate students via CGSR to announce that the applications are now open for submissions. With this, there were a number of inquiries from applicants. Therefore, I have been consistently replying to emails on a timely manner (within a few hours). I have also promoted the GSA Summer Bursary on the GSA social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Currently, I'm working on forming a GSA Bursary Committee, which will consist of the VP Finance, VP Academic, as well as three councillors. I will chair these meetings, and take the minutes. After the final selection of the bursary winners, I will notify them by email.

### **GSA Social Media:**

The previous GSA VP Operation has kept the Facebook page quite active. However, GSA didn't have Instagram or Twitter. So I took the initiative of creating GSA accounts. I have been consistently active on all the social media platforms. I've made a number of posts on Instagram, Twitter, as well as Facebook. I've updated our followers on social events taking place on campus, various services, as well as announcements, such as the GSA Summer Bursary, the current position opening of the Council Chair and more.

Currently, I'm working on creating a new GSA website. My goal for this new website is that it will be comprehensive and showcase all the services that the GSA offers. The 2015/2016 GSA President has initiated this process, and once my term begun, I have taken over this task. As I had no experience working on designing or editing websites, this task has been a challenging, yet a rewarding learning experience. To help with this process, particularly with content regarding new initiatives/services, I formed a GSA website committee that consists of all the GSA executives. Certain tasks were allocated to each member of this committee based on their executive profile to provide me with content relating to their initiatives. The deadline for these tasks is on June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016. The new GSA website is expected to launch mid-July if all goes as planned.

### **GSA Mobile App:**

I am currently working with the company Oohlala to develop a GSA Mobile app. This app will be a great outlet to build a community and culture for graduate students. The app will launch in July, but it will be promoted heavily during orientation to help new members transition into the U of S. It includes a map, tour of the campus, services provided at the U of S, class schedules, events, student clubs pages, and much more.

### **GSA Communication:**

Aside from social media, I have been sending out emails to students through CGSR for a number of announcements, such as the GSA Summer Bursary and the GSA Survey committee, as well as the opening for the GSA Council Chair position. I employed the Paws dashboard to post announcements related to graduate students. Many graduate students email me about various topics, and I have been responding in a timely manner (within a few hours). I have also posted the executive meeting minutes,

including the retreat meeting. These are usually up within the five days timespan highlighted in the bylaws.

**GSA Commons:**

The GSA Commons is normally quiet during the spring/summer months. Therefore, we don't have coordinators at the moment, as the hours of operation have changed. We are now open at 9 am to 5 pm Monday to Friday effective May 16<sup>th</sup>. We will resume to normal hours on August 22<sup>nd</sup>. We will hire a coordinator then.

In terms of the enhancement of the GSA environment, I have been working on a few tasks. First, I found a few Indigenous artworks. These were donated to us by the Gordon Oakes Red Bear Student Center. We will look to find more to display throughout the commons. Indigenization is something that the GSA is passionate about, and this will promote education and acceptance within the GSA Commons. Second, I am currently working to create a coffee bar at the GSA Commons. As we have a coffee maker, we only need to invest in new coffee. I will also make the coffee/tea area nicer by decorating it with artwork. We are ordering new coffee mugs, as we haven't ordered any cups in the past five years, and we're running out. The GSA executives felt that it would be nice to customize the coffee mugs, so I'm currently working on finding a place that offers this service.

**GSA Council Chair:**

I'm working on hiring a new council chair at the moment. I have already advertised this position on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Student Employment and Career Centre, as well as sent an email to all graduate students.

**Executive and Council Meetings:**

To prepare for these meetings, I have engaged in a number of tasks. I call for items for the agenda, prepare the agenda, distribute the agenda, write the minutes, and publish the minutes on our website to make it available for our members. We had two executive meetings, and a daylong executive retreat meeting.

**Meetings:**

Date	Discussion
April 21 <sup>st</sup> , 2016	Meet and greet with the U of S President, Vice-provost Teaching and Learning, CGSR Dean and USSU. Discussed upcoming year initiatives and advocacy.
	Meeting with the RBC bank advisor to switch the signing authorities of the GSA.
April 27 <sup>th</sup> , 2016	Annual General Meeting. Minutes can be found on the GSA website.
April 28 <sup>th</sup> , 2016	Meeting with GSA President 2015/2016 to discuss the new website.
April 29 <sup>th</sup> , 2016	Lunch meeting with the Vice-Provost of Teaching and Learning and CGSR Associate Dean, as well as USSU to discuss advocacy initiatives in the upcoming year.
May 10 <sup>th</sup> , 2016	First Executive Meeting via skype. Minutes

	can be found on the GSA website.
<b>May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016</b>	Attending the Executive Retreat Meeting.
<b>May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2016</b>	Skype meeting with Oohlala to discuss the App.
<b>June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016</b>	Attending the U of S convocation.
<b>June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016</b>	Meeting with U of S Communications Coordinator to discuss increasing GSA news in the USASK Newsletter.
<b>June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016</b>	Meeting with GSA Admin to discuss the coffee bar.
<b>June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016</b>	GSA Website Committee meeting via skype to discuss the content of the new website.
<b>June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016</b>	Skype meeting with Oohlala App developers to discuss the app.
<b>June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016</b>	Attending the Wellness Strategy Team's first committee meeting.
<b>June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016</b>	Attending the Executive meeting via skype. Minutes can be found on the GSA website.

Regards,  
Nafisa Absher

## VP External Report

1. Canadian Federation of Students Annual General Meeting: The meeting was in Gatineau, Quebec from June 4-12<sup>th</sup>.

Key points:

- National Day of Action will be held on November 2<sup>nd</sup> 2016 details to follow.
    - Need to mobilize a sub committee to start planning this initiative
    - Need to work closely with U of R and FNU
  - Student Ambassador to be hired by CFS to solicit discounts for students.
  - Potential Skill Building Workshop for 10 delegates to attend in Manitoba, date TBD.
  - A motion is to be put forward to have an International Representative on the National Executive Committee.
  - International Students tuition fees are a priority of the CFS and they are working on developing a potential international campaign.
  - The CFS has several campaigns for the U of S to participate in during the school year. (Info will be shared, as it is available).
  - Anne-Marie Roy- Deputy Chairsperson would like to attend the August council meeting to talk to members about the benefits of CFS.
  - Anne-Marie Roy- to set up a booth at orientation.
  - Potential funding for orientation and help with the survey (may be able to develop the tool).
  - Delegate fees are to be paid (will discuss this with Sherry, Natalia says she is the one who takes care of this).
2. Sustainability Grant was approved so we can move forward with the garden. We cannot do major landscaping. The garden will consist of a raised planter box with the potential of flowers.
  3. Planner update:
    - 1700 copies were ordered.
    - Discounted \$210- to be reduced from the final instalment.
    - Final instalment is due in August.
    - Potential to promote Health Chats on the inside cover.
    - To date sponsorship total is \$610. Budgeted total sponsorship is \$800. 3 pending confirmation still.
    - Indigenous Artwork is being submitted from 2 U of S students.



The following our meetings attended to date:

Date	Meeting details
April 21 <sup>st</sup> , 2016	<b>Meet and greet with the U of S President, Vice-provost Teaching and Learning, CGSR Dean and USSU. Discussed upcoming year initiatives and advocacy.</b>
April 27 <sup>th</sup> , 2016	<b>Annual General Meeting. Minutes can be found on the GSA website.</b>
April 27 <sup>th</sup> , 2016	<b>Meeting with Health Promotion Leader, VP External (2015-2016) and current VP operations around Health Chats</b>
April 28 <sup>th</sup> , 2016	<b>Meeting with GSA President to discuss responsibilities this term.</b>
April 29 <sup>th</sup> , 2016	<b>Lunch meeting with the Vice-Provost of Teaching and Learning and CGSR Associate Dean, as well as USSU to discuss advocacy initiatives in the upcoming year.</b>
May 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 2016	<b>Meeting with past VP External related to planner</b>
May 6 <sup>th</sup> , 2016	<b>Meeting with Office of Sustainability about garden/green initiative</b>
May 10, 2016	<b>First Executive Committee meeting</b>
May 14 <sup>th</sup> , 2016	<b>Meeting with VP Operations around Health Chats</b>
May 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2016	<b>Attending the Executive Retreat Meeting.</b>
May 23 <sup>rd</sup> , 2016	<b>Meeting with Ethical Purchasing for quotes on t-shirts</b>
June 1 <sup>nd</sup> , 2016	<b>Attending the U of S convocation.</b>
June 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2016	<b>CFS Provincial Meeting</b>
June 4 <sup>th</sup> - 12, 2016	<b>CFS Annual General Meeting</b>
June 17, 2016	<b>Governance training</b>

## **GSA VP Finance Kusum's University council meeting report for June 2016**

Dear GSA members,

I am very happy to present you all with my first council report since I started as VP finance for the year 2016-17.

1. Responsibilities Transition: all the financial reports and accounts were successfully transferred to me by former VP finance Mr. David Bennett. The transition period was quiet challenging for me but I was able to handle GSA finance independently within a week and has been maintaining updated records since then. A finer bookkeeping has been adopted starting May 2016 for quicker and accurate record keeping avoiding manual errors. Various financial decisions were made in different executive meetings that helped in saving as well as sticking to the budgeted operating budget for the upcoming year.
2. Consumer's services: A meeting with Mr. George Foufas (Associate Director, Consumer services) was attended to discuss a few student's concerns regarding food wastage, opening coffee station in engineering building, particular stoves in Assiniboine Hall. The stoves in Assiniboine hall have additional iron plate on top of the coil that prohibits almost 40% of heat from reaching the vessel surface. This slows down cooking speed and the residents (99% are graduate students) end up spending double the time on cooking. I discussed in detail about fixing this problem. Though I have yet not reached to any conclusion in this regard, I am hoping for a better solution in the coming weeks. The conversation is underway.
3. Tech Venture Challenge award: Mr. Tedrich Soh has won TVC challenge for 2016. A meeting was held to discuss his project idea and expectations. In the past 3 years nobody won this award and the money for this award was lying around. As per the agreement, the award money has been deferred for this year and will be given to Mr. Tedrich Soh as a loan amount for a defined term. Currently, I and GSA president are working on the terms and negotiations for the loan.
4. Monthly financial reports: As per retreat minutes, we have decided to provide GSA website with monthly financial reports. This will aid in transparency within GSA accounts. Also, financial awareness workshops will be organized throughout the school year in collaboration with different banks. The correspondence in this regard is underway.

Here are the meetings I have attended:

Date	Discussion
April 21 <sup>st</sup> , 2016	Meet and greet with the U of S President, Vice-provost Teaching and Learning, CGSR Dean and USSU. Discussed upcoming year initiatives and advocacy.
	Meeting with the RBC bank advisor to switch the signing authorities of the GSA.
April 27 <sup>th</sup> , 2016	Annual General Meeting. Minutes can be found on the GSA website.
April 29 <sup>th</sup> , 2016	Lunch meeting with the Vice-Provost of Teaching and Learning and CGSR Associate Dean, as well as USSU to discuss advocacy initiatives in the upcoming year.
May 3 <sup>rd</sup> 2016	Lunch meeting with Dean of CGSR to discuss the plans for graduate studies in the upcoming year.
May 10 <sup>th</sup> , 2016	First Executive Meeting. Minutes can be found on the GSA website.
May 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2016	Attended Executive Retreat Meeting.
May 16 <sup>th</sup> 2016	Attended first University council scholarship committee to discuss upcoming scholarships for the year.
June 1 <sup>st</sup> 2016	Dinner at President's place. Discussed subsidized UPass with USSU representatives.
June 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 2016	Attended the U of S convocation.
June 13 <sup>th</sup> , 2016	Attended Provost "Thank you" reception to discuss student's issues with Patty MacDougal.
June 14 <sup>th</sup> , 2016	Attended Executive meeting. Minutes can be found on the GSA website.
June 15 <sup>th</sup> 2016	Meeting with the TVC winner (Mr. Tedrick)
June 17 <sup>th</sup> 2016	Governance meeting with Elizabeth Williamson. Meeting with RBC bank manager i.e. Jeremy Batting for signing transition documents.

Note: attached are the financial records for May and June (Till date) 2016. Accounting codes are similar to the ones used in last year bookkeeping.

- I. [Budget document 1](#)
- II. [Budget document 2](#)
- III. [Budget document 3](#)