



*We acknowledge that we live and work on Treaty 6 Territory and the homeland of the Métis. We pay our respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of this place and reaffirm our relationship with one another.*

GSA Meetings on August 8, 18, and 27 2024

**Time: 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm**

**Attendance:** David Ohene-Amoako, Lindsay Carlson, Nickson Joseph, Jennifer Amarualik-Yaremko, Reza Golpayegani

**Regret:** None

**Guest:** None

**All executives approved all of these actions.**

**President:**

1. The President attended the Racialized and Indigenous Students Engagement (RISE) Conference held from July 29-31, 2024, in Huntsville, Ontario. This engaging event showcased notable speakers who motivated students by highlighting the significance of student advocacy and urging them to become more actively involved in student initiatives.
2. Additionally, the President shared with the executives that he received an email from the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) regarding GSA's lack of payment of dues since December 2022. He has forwarded this email to the VP of Finance for further action.

3. Furthermore, the President updated the executives about a career fair that he is currently discussing with career services, aimed at organizing an event for graduate students in the upcoming fall term.
4. Duties of coordinators and time schedule - Duties and Schedules of co-ordinators were discussed briefly and carried to the next meeting for a conclusion to be made.
5. International Students Identity Cards (**ISIC**) - The ISIC is found on our [website](#) Therefore, it is necessary for students to activate their national student ID cards for use and so must be attended to.
6. Onboarding of New Executives - To ensure a smooth transition, it is important that outgoing executives dedicate sufficient time to onboard the new executives effectively. This will promote a seamless handover of responsibilities and knowledge.
7. CGPS Final Fund Request Notification - The president has received the final fund request from the executives for various activities. Here's a summary of the financial requirements:  
Bursaries: \$40,000  
GALA: \$10,000  
Research Conference: \$2,000
8. The President: will be drafting a letter based on the information gathered. This letter will be shared on our Google Drive for comments and feedback before it is sent to the CGPS Dean.
9. Leadership Recommended Books - The President has suggested that executives explore the recommended readings ([Leadership summary](#)) to enhance their leadership skills.

### **VP Finance:**

1. Asked about the status of the August GSA Newsletter, and recommended that we maintain this practice monthly. Following the Newsletter's distribution, the VP Finance expressed frustration that important grammatical and content edits she provided were not used in the final

version. Poor quality communication not only makes us look bad, but is a missed opportunity to communicate important points with the student body.

2. Bursary update:

- a. The bursary selection committee was convened in early August, and bursaries were dispersed to 32 deserving applicants by cheque. Many individuals not selected expressed discontent, and the VP Finance wanted to reiterate that the need-based bursaries are not a guaranteed funding source, and that unfortunately in the current economy there is much more need than can be satisfied by \$110,000 of bursary funding per year. Unfortunately many deserving applicants were not awarded funds in this call.
  - b. Suggested we create resources that include other sources of financial assistance that we can provide to students in need.
  - c. The three-fund with CGPS to disperse bursaries electronically will be ready for the fall bursary call.
  - d. The bursary selection committee may consider changes to the long-used selection rubric, as they felt some items were weighted too heavily, and not all factors are considered by the rubric. Jen provided feedback on some changes to promote equity and inclusivity.
3. Discussed a student's inquiry for crisis financial aid. Provided recommendations about how to handle these requests, and suggested GSA increase our contribution to USask's Crisis Financial Aid program that we could refer those in need to, since we don't have the infrastructure or funding to assist these students in the best way.
4. Standing Committees update:
- a. The call for applicants to the GSA standing committees for the upcoming academic year closed on August 18 (open for approx 1 month).
  - b. The Chair is putting together a list of applicants for each of the 2024-2025 standing committee members, and is gaining insight from previous Chair/Executives on committee selection and ratification procedures.
5. Discussed requested changes to the office manager salary, estimates for needed Office Staff Salary budget line, and needed updates to coordinator contracts. Discussed concerns about office manager annual vacation days

taken and communication about this. The GSA executives provided a notice to the office manager about these concerns, and met in person to discuss. The executives plan to implement a new policy for hours recording for office staff, and address concerns about vacation hours and communication in an amended office manager contract.

6. Discussed budget approval procedure and budget details. The proposed budget has been completed since July, and we are awaiting convening of the Budget and Finance committee in order to improve it.
7. Shared the following update from bookkeeping firm regarding the digitization process: “The GSA company file set-up steps are complete in QuickBooks Online, with the exception of the invoicing module that is still in progress. I have processed two fiscal months of bookkeeping records to date. For payroll, all employee profiles are complete and active and direct deposit payments through QuickBooks Online are up and running with a back-up payment option configured in RBC online banking.”

### **VP Academic:**

1. Update on the Sustainability program masters’ students issue with lack of course availability.
2. Discussed his Plan to meet with USSU executives.
3. Orientation update.
  - a. Lunch ordering for orientation.
4. Discussions:
  - a. Urgency in the revision of bylaws and policies.
  - b. Toastmasters workshop (In September)
  - c. Social media handle boost

### **VP Indigenous:**

1. Asked for one volunteer from the executive board to help her with the Wanuskewin trip. (Nickson volunteered)
2. Missed the third meeting in August.

### **VP External:**

1. Moved to approve July meeting minutes.
2. Updates:
  - a. GDG Event at GSA Commons.
  - b. Meeting with PAC.