



Graduate Students' Association

*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 Executives Meeting on December 20, 2024

**Time: 2:00 PM to 4:30 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.**

The GSA Executive Board has decided not to renew the current office manager's contract, which expired on December 26, 2024. The office manager position will be posted promptly, with assistance from the hired HR contractor to begin receiving applications.

**President:**

1. Informed the executives that during the period without an office manager, the executives will assume the office manager's responsibilities and the GSA Coordinators' working hours will be extended to handle GSA office tasks. During this time, the GSA office will be open from 10 AM to 3 PM on weekdays from December 16-20, then the GSA Office will be closed for the holidays from Dec 23- Jan 3, except for events.

**VP Finance:**

1. Scheduled a meeting between all executives and HR contractors to talk through the new Office Manager/Operations manager job description and contract details.

2. Notified executives that GSA did not receive fall disbursement of fees from USASK until Dec 19. Based on past records, this normally occurs in mid-November. Was unsure of the reason why funds were delayed this year, but fee remittance was received before the end of the year.
3. Updated executives about what was learned during a meeting between GSA President/VP Finance and our RBC bankers. The previous office manager was removed as a signing authority and his company credit card was cancelled. Progress is being made on updating our RBC interface so that we can more easily make wire transfers to our vendors (Studentcare, etc) online without having to visit the bank in person. We received a planning questionnaire from the investment manager which can help us plan a direction for future investments (beginning with a high-yield savings account). We will meet with them again in early 2025.
4. Recommended that GSA seek volunteer advisory assistance from a USask professor, Such as faculty with business management, accounting, governance, ethics, or strategic planning experience.
5. Updated the executives about the outcome of the Bursary Selection Committee Meeting and the new bursary dispersal procedure. There was one former GSA Executive who applied for the bursary and had to be removed after selected individuals were de-anonymized to check enrolment status with CGPS. Also, a few individuals wrote to express frustration about not being selected for the bursary after applying multiple times. VP Finance recommended that GSA make a statement when advertising the winter call that many individuals apply for this bursary (one of few bursaries that does not restrict applicants to a specific study area, country of origin, funding type, etc), but only a small proportion are selected each call and that bursaries are not a guaranteed source of funding, but we are doing the best we can to support students in need.
6. After successfully advocating for graduate students to be allowed to keep their 1TB OneDrive storage, the VP Finance and President were invited to meet with individuals from USask ICT to discuss DataStore and other technology initiatives for data-intensive research for graduate students. However, the meeting was canceled by ICT and will be rescheduled in 2025.

**VP Academic:**

1. Updated regarding the communications sent out to invited speakers for the GSA Winter Orientation that is planned for January 17th, 2025.

**VP Indigenous:**

1. Spoke with HR consultant to clarify office manager duties; clarified office administration staff plans after Paul's departure.
2. Expressed frustration following a meeting with the university regarding tuition "consultation." Other executives agreed that there was not much "consulting" going on, but it was more of an information-sharing meeting to check a required box.

**VP External:**

1. Moved to approve October and November executives' meeting minutes.  
**(Approved)**
2. **GALA 2025:**
  - a. Discussed ordering 500 pens with GSA logo for GALA 2025 and other GSA events. **(Approved)**
  - b. Informed GSA executives that Marquis Hall's booking form for booking the venue for April 12, 2025, was sent to them and we are currently waiting for their answer as their office is already closed for the New Year holidays.
  - c. Asked all of the executives to send their guest list for GALA 2025 to VP External.
  - d. Shared the GALA 2025 guest list for their review and approval.  
**(Approved)**
  - e. Announced that the GALA Awards Committee has approved the opening of applications for the GALA Awards 2025, maintaining the same application process and award categories as GALA 2024.
3. **GSA Discord Server:**
  - a. Notified the Executive Board that the GSA volunteers group will be moved from WhatsApp to Discord to accommodate the high level of student interest and to eliminate the need for students to share their phone numbers with executives.