



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 Meetings on January 3, 10, and 28 2025

Time: 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM

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

Guests: Ali Versi (Student Care) on January 3rd, and Danyil Dmytriiev (Ukrainian Students' Research Association) on January 28th.

All executives approved all of these actions.

President:

1. The Executive Board received an update on the progress made for the Daycare/Child care for GSA, The proposal suggests beginning with a drop-in session and designating one or two days for utilizing the GSA Commons as a daycare space. Additionally, both short-term and long-term plans will be developed, and a committee will be established to oversee ongoing implementation in the future.
2. **Coordinator Transition**
 - a. It was discussed that a current GSA Coordinator has successfully defended their project and is in the process of graduating.
 - b. There was discussion about whether GSA Coordinators need to be GSA regular members (e.g., enrolled students).
3. It was requested to provide certificates in recognition of the contributions of GSA staff and volunteers.
4. A proposal was made to organize an immigration update session for graduate students.
5. The Executive Board received an update on recent Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) provincial and national meetings from the President.

6. The Board discussed a motion to extend the current executives' term by an additional month to allow for a proper onboarding process for new executives.

VP Finance:

Health and Dental Plan Decisions and Fee Submissions

1. The GSA Executive Board held a meeting to discuss the rising costs of insurance coverage for graduate students at the University of Saskatchewan. Ali Versi from Student Care provided a briefing on the reasons behind the increase, which were primarily due to increase in claims.
2. The executives requested Ali Versi to present the same information at an information session (Chaired by Lindsay current VP Finance) for GSA council members on Monday, January 20, 2025. This session was advertised widely and was open to any interested graduate students.
3. During the meeting on Jan 3rd, the executive board proposed presenting four options to the GSA council for a vote:
 - a. 8% increase in insurance cost + Major reduction of benefits
 - b. 16% increase in insurance cost + Significant reduction of benefits
 - c. 24% increase in insurance cost + Reduction of “nonessential” benefits
 - d. 40% increase in insurance cost + No cut in insurance coverage
4. The next GSA council meeting, where a vote on these options would take place, was scheduled for Wednesday, January 22, 2025.
5. Fees to be submitted: **(All Approved)**
 - a. A 40% increase in the Health and Dental Fee was approved by council (final voting results in Council Meeting minutes), but the council recommended splitting the fee into smaller increments.
 - i. Currently, the health and dental fee is split into 4/12 charged in the fall and 8/12 charged in the winter, which has been found burdensome for students in the winter semester.
 - ii. VP Finance inquired re: this to Jennifer Beck, who followed up with Registrarial Services. She confirmed that making this change would require launching a project with the Registrar’s Office. Implementing the change could take up to 18 months and may involve an administration fee. A change could be pursued, but would not be reflected for 1-2 academic years.
 - b. The UPass fee will increase based on the January Consumer Price Index (CPI).
 - c. The Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) fee will increase based on CPI, as confirmed in a letter received on Jan 23.

- d. The GSA Executive Board approved that the GSA fee will not be increased this year. However, it was noted that an increase next year may be necessary to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the GSA.

Other GSA Business

6. The VP Finance and President met with RBC representatives to discuss use of the RBC PayEdge Platform, which would allow for digital payments (e.g., to Studentcare, ratified academic councils) while still requiring dual signing authority. The cost is \$1/transaction, whereas wire transfers at the bank cost \$14 each. VP Finance recommends we adopt this platform. **(Approved)**
7. The VP Finance recommended that Chairs of Committees work to convene necessary committees of council as early as possible this semester, so work can be completed before the end of tenure.
8. The bursary selection committee will be convened in early February to discuss potential revisions to the bursary selection rubric.
9. The GSA Executives received event funding proposals from URSA (ratified club) and PEGASUS (ratified academic council) and approved funding requests.

VP Academic:

1. Asked executives to review the Student-Supervisor Agreement Review Google Forms before circulation.
2. The Executive Board received an update on the Co-Curricular Record (CCR) authorization process. CCR records can only be authorized for the current academic year, and after this year, the CCR program will be dissolved. There was some discussion about whether to pursue completion of program set-up left unfinished by previous OM. Executives agreed this would not be a valuable use of time since the program is being terminated soon anyway.
3. **Proposed Changes to Executive Roles:**
 - a. A proposal was made to split the VP Academic and Student Affairs into two separate roles.
 - b. Additionally, it was proposed to merge the VP Student Affairs role with the current VP External role. (In consultation with current VP External).
 - c. Executives noted that this would require significant restructuring of the bylaws.

4. The Executive Board was asked to approve a proposal to the Governance Committee regarding policy changes, which include:
 1. GSA Leadership Circle
 2. Academic Council and Social Group Policy
 3. Removal of GSA Fall, Winter Orientation, and GALA and merge them into one social event under VP Student Affairs and VP Academic. (In consultation with VP External).

VP Indigenous:

1. sorting out Honorariums and tobacco for Elders and drummers/singers at Gala (not discussed)
2. we may not be able to have dancers at gala
3. Proposed to have an information page about Health and Dental plan on GSA website.
4. Proposed to ask GSA council to approve that anyone running for GSA VPIE should be confirmed as eligible under tapwewin | debwaaywin.
5. **IAW Event Planning**
 - a. Notice given for an IAW event, tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, March 12, from 4:00–5:45 PM.
 - b. Funding Needs:
 - i. \$250 requested for raffle gifts—discussion on whether this should come from discretionary funding or an existing budget line.
 - ii. CGPS is funding soup and bannock catering.
 - c. Budget Code: Jennifer to use 53309 for new initiatives.
6. The GSA President was requested to send an email to the previous office manager, requesting access to the GSA Gmail account and QuickBooks, and issuing a cease and desist to prevent the deletion of files he had sent to himself.

VP External:

1. Moved to approve December 2024 executives' meeting minutes. **(Approved)**
2. **GALA 2025:**
 - a. The deadline for nomination for GSA Awards 2025 was extended till February 10th, 2025. Approval was received from the Awards Committee through email. (All members Approved)
 - b. A total of \$31,500.00 CAD has been raised in addition to \$5,000.00 CAD allocated from the GSA budget for GALA 2025, bringing the total budget

to \$36,500.00 CAD. The updated sponsor list is available on the [GALA 2025 page](#).

- c. The GSA Executive Board decided that awardees at GALA night will be given one minute for an optional speech.
- d. Asked the executives' board to review and approve the GALA 2025 guest list. (**Approved**)
- e. The process of receiving the sponsors' guest list is underway. Additionally, efforts are being made to secure a photographer for GALA night. David Stobbe, who was the photographer for GALA 2024, has been contacted, and a response is pending.

3. GSA Website Backend Cleanup:

In coordination with Prince (current GSA coordinator), all unpublished files were removed from the backend of the GSA website. Prince has downloaded and compiled the deleted files into a zip archive and sent it to all executives via email for future backup.