

**Graduate Students' Association
Executive Meeting Minutes**



**University of Saskatchewan
Graduate Students' Association
Executive Meeting Agenda
September 29th 2014 GSA Commons
6:22 PM — 9:25PM**

1.0 Call to order: 6:22 pm.

2.0 Gala

2.1 A list of last year's award recipients, the previous funding request letter, report, and budget would help draft this year's Gala Award letter. Minutes from the April AGM and March Council meeting may also have some information that would give more information on the Gala. Contacting with staff person from the Alumni Association will also help organizing this year's Gala.

2.2 Last year, budget was prepared early, and the venue was booked on 1st Oct with a \$2,000 down payment.

2.3 A Gala Committee needs to be set up as soon as possible.

2.4 The GSA will be meeting with senior administration and attending the Alumni Award Event on October 23 at Louis, which would provide us opportunities seeking sponsorship.

3.0 Being a team

3.1 The theme is discussed because less communication was caused due to less frequent meetings were held during summer.

3.2 The Executive is a team.

3.3 We share the same goal. The failure of one executive will be perceived as the failure of the whole team. Therefore, executives should be accountable and responsible as an individual as well as a team.

- 3.3.1 There should also be autonomy at some level in each executive's office.
- 3.3.2 Within different roles, the responsibility is different. Each executive should know clearly which executive is responsible of what in the GSA as per the Constitution and Policies, and have a knowledge of who is doing what. This requires executives to be familiar with the Constitution and Policies, and keep updated in who is doing what.
- 3.3.3 We give the benefit of the doubt to the team. When doubt arises, email the President directly for clarification, and/or bring to the executive meeting.
- 3.3.4 We agree to disagree, and respect each other's roles.

3.4 Transparency

- 3.4.1 Transparency means activities are answerable to people both within and outside the team. This requires better judgement.
- 3.4.2 Keeping the team informed is transparency, and it ties with who makes the decision. Executives should be able to report what they are doing and understand what other executives are doing.
- 3.4.3 The executives represent the GSA. The executives should move away from "I" and use "we" more often, because the executives do not speak just on behalf of themselves.
- 3.4.4 The executives shall not provide information over and above the Constitution. Comments on individual details destroy transparency. Some information is to be kept confidential and not released.

3.5 Accountability

- 3.5.1 Accountability is more than personal accountability. It requires understanding of our rules and businesses based on the Constitution and Policies.
- 3.5.2 The decision of one executive is not the decision of the team. Autonomy is given to the executive responsible for making the decisions.
- 3.5.3 All of us have some independence. Each executive shall inform all other execs when making decisions. Meet with president if clarification

is needed. Simply encouraging communication is not accountability, because accountability is not just keeping others informed—that is transparency. Accountability encourages inquiries for questions.

3.6 Decision making

3.6.1 The decision making process in the GSA is subject to our Constitution and policies. We all have different roles to play. But decisions made in the GSA are collective.

3.6.2 The executives must understand, follow, and respect our Constitution and Policies, and agree on what is not described in Constitution and Policies. When clarification is needed, bring it to the President or to the executive meeting for discussion.

3.6.3 When Constitution and Policies don't have guidance, it is the duty of the President to provide guidance as the general manager of the GSA, which is in accordance with the Constitution.

3.6.4 Each executive has his/her role and responsibility described in the Constitution and Policies. The decision making process requires independence and responsibility.

3.6.5 As long as we understand that the team members are providing feedback, and are working for the best interest of the students, everything is okay. We should give independence to the executive responsible to do the task, and allow some mistakes to happen.

3.6.6 When going to meetings outside of the GSA, executives shall only talk about things we agreed on.

3.6.7 Financial expenditure must follow budget lines and roles in the Constitution. Things of an unusual nature and new things shall be decided by executives.

3.7 Meeting with the MNP Accounting Firm

3.7.1 The idea of hiring an accountant is raised to meet the basic needs of the GSA in finance and auditing, and the GSA needs professional consultation for a better understanding of our Constitution and Policy in terms financial decision making.

3.7.2 The first meeting will be free, and the GSA President and VP Finance will be meeting with MNP Accounting Firm for financial consultation. Still waiting for confirmation.

3.8 All governing bodies need to perform their duties within the scope of the GSA Constitution and Policies.

3.8.1 Sometimes the requests of council are out of scope as per the Constitution.

3.8.2 Should the executives have comments for the policies, forward them to VP External for policy review.

4.0 Ashton Reimer – Libel

WHEREAS the Twitter messages sent by Ashton Reimer is not proper behaviour from a councillor who has due responsibilities, and

WHEREAS it is the responsibility of the executives to protect the reputation of the GSA,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Executive report this to the Chair and let the Chair decide future steps towards this.

- Moved by the President, seconded by VP Operations.
- 4 in favour, 3 against. Motion is adopted.

5.0 Addressing the confusion raised at Council

5.1 The first motion regarding the U-Pass budget line relocation was neither increasing nor changing budget. It was only a reflection of better accounting practice.

5.2 The executive travel expense is in VP Finance's report, and the executive has not gone over budget.

5.3 The June minutes already have a record that the discretionary fund would be used for the GU15 meeting. Therefore, we are within the budget.

5.4 The decision to put U-Pass out from the office was also previously discussed, and it could be found in the minutes.

6.0 Academic Freedom Events

The Academic Freedom Events will be on at 5:00 pm on September 30 at the GSA Commons and at 3:00 pm on October 1 at Arts 241.

7.0 U-Pass Contract

- 7.1 The U-Pass contract is delayed because of the transit lockout.
- 7.2 The GSA only has PR leverage instead of legal.
- 7.3 The VP External should agree with the VP Student Affairs on who should be signing the contract. The second signatory should be a person in charge of finance at the GSA, namely VP Finance is suggested to be co-signing.
- 7.4 A Town Hall meeting regarding the U-Pass will take place at 12 pm to 1 pm on October 8 at the GSA Commons. Students are invited to have a discussion of the current situation and the U-Pass.

8.0 Sisters in Spirit Vigil Event

- 8.1 Due to time and event conflict with community events, the time will change to 6 to 8 pm on the same date. Posters of the original time has been circulated in offices and emails. A notice of the change in time will be sent out through VP Operations.

8.2 Motion: Use of Discretionary Fund for the Sisters in Spirit Vigil Event

**WHEREAS AIGSC only provided endorsement, not money sponsorship for the Sisters in Spirit Vigil event, in that the event is not an AIGSC event,
BE IT RESOLVED THAT the event will be funded from the discretionary fund.**

- Moved by Aboriginal Liaison, Seconded by VP Finance.
- A unanimous decision was reached. Motion is adopted.

9.0 GSA VP Student Affairs Blog

- 9.1 The idea is raised by VP Student Affairs to bring more information to graduate students.
- 9.2 The blog would launch before the GSA Oohlala App arrives.

10.0 Adjournment: 9:25 PM.