

Graduate Students' Association



University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Executive Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 23, 2015 - GSA Commons - 5:00PM – 7:00PM

Present: President R. Chakravarty, VP Finance David Bennett, VP Operations and Communications Ziad Ghaith, VP Academic Jebunnessa Chapola, Aboriginal Liaison Dana Carriere, VP Student Affairs Hardi Shahadu

Regrets: VP External N. Terekhova (notified in advance)

1. Call to Order. The meeting is called to order at 4:59PM.
2. Approval of Chair. The President asks if anyone wishes to be chair. Seeing no volunteers the President volunteers. Seconded by VP Ops. All in favour. Motion carries.
3. Approval of Minute Taker. Two nominations on the floor. President nominates the VP Ops. The Aboriginal Liaison nominates the VP Finance. There are no further nominations. The VP Finance is elected minute taker by 3 (VP Student Affairs, Aboriginal Liaison, VP Ops) to 2 (VP Finance and President). 1 Abstention (VP Academic).
4. Approval of the Agenda. The VP Student Affairs moves that the AAPS funding request that was circulated in advance be added as Motion 8. Seconded by the Aboriginal Liaison. All in favour. Motion carries.
5. Approval of the Minutes of GSA Executive Meetings on September 9, 2015. The Aboriginal Liaison notes that they are very good. The VP Student Affairs moves. Seconded by VP Academic. All in favour. Motion carries. The VP Finance reminds people to read the minutes as there are often easter eggs.

6. Items for Actions/Information

6.1. Three Minute Roundtable [D. Carriere]

The Aboriginal Liaison notes that Exec. meetings are often the only time that all GSA execs. see each other and are together. She suggests that we take three minutes each Exec. meeting to update the rest of the team. This way we can keep each other in the loop.

The President observes that this sounds reasonable and he moves that this section be added to all executive agendas going forward. Seconded by the Aboriginal Liaison. All in favour. Motion Carries.

The VP Student Affairs states that we need to provide a one page summaries to the other executives of pertinent meetings/news. These must be circulated before the meeting.

6.2. Provost Search Committee [D. Carriere]

The Aboriginal Liaison has volunteered to sit on this committee. The President moves to approve this appointment. Seconded by the VP Student Affairs. All in favour. Motion carries.

The VP Finance asks what search committees other execs are on. President Chakravarty is on PTAC, VP Finance is on Vice-Provost, Aboriginal Liaison is on Provost and Dean of ESB. The President notes there will be more search committees coming up and he will be seeking volunteers. The VP Student Affairs expresses interest as this opportunity.

The VP Academic asks whether the Provost Search Committee falls under the portfolio of the Aboriginal Liaison. The President replies it does not, at least in the strictest sense.

6.3. Monthly Newsletter [D. Carriere]

The Aboriginal Liaison has sent out an email in advanced and spoken with the Exec via FB Chat. She notes that there are issues with communications. We can't send out a large number of messages via CGSR listserv/email. A newsletter will be a good way to get students involved, particularly those that do not have Facebook accounts. She asks all execs to contribute to it.

The VP Academic asks if the Aboriginal Liaison will compile it. The reply is in the affirmative but with the clarification that only items people send her will be added.

The President notes that he has said he would start this initiative in the past and to that end he has met with AVP Ivan Muzychka (Communications, Advancement, and Community Engagement) in regard to newsletter templates etc.

The VP Finance notes that is important something gets done and sent out instead of just talked about.

VP Ops will assist Aboriginal Liaison with content and the President will manage the layout, design, and distribution. Deadline will be Friday for distribution by Monday if possible.

6.4. The PhD Movie 2 – Updates [D. Bennett]

The VP Finance reminds all present that this event is coming up on Wednesday September 30th in Arts 241 at 6:00PM. Ticket sales have been slower than anticipated and the VP Finance requests that rest of the team utilize their connections to try and sell as many tickets as possible. He thanks the President for the high number of tickets sold along with the Aboriginal Liaison and VP External who have also sold many tickets. Unless Executive members are able to sell five tickets each they will not be given a complimentary ticket.

The VP Finance notes that he will be posting another PAWS bulletin.

The VP Finance notes that utilizing a coordinator would be an unnecessary expenditure and requests one to two volunteers to help him on the night of the event. He notes that he plans to work the door so he will require someone to operate the computer/AV system at the start.

The President volunteers to help with the computer/AV.

6.5. Updates on the 2016-2017 Budget [D. Bennett]

The VP Finance notes that the 2016-17 budget development process has commenced. He notes that this is obviously a major project and he will be working closely with the budget committee. A budget with three interlocking pillars is currently envisioned. First, supporting student success. Second, maximizing revenues. Third, smart/sustainable spending. Each current Executive will be contacted in relatively short order via email to submit any budget asks and requests under their portfolios.

The VP Finance reminds those present that the ultimate decisions aren't up to the Exec. rather they are decided democratically by the budget committee and ultimately the Council. VP Finance notes that he is also meeting with staff from FSD regarding budget development.

The President notes that we need an events line. The VP Finance agrees.

6.6. CFS Meeting - [N. Terekhova]

The President notes that the CFS meeting is happening on Nov. 22nd - 25th. Likely in Ottawa. VP External will go as CFS-SK Rep so we are able to send another rep. The VP Student Affairs is interested in going. The President moves that the VP Student Affairs attend the CFS National Meeting. Seconded by VP Ops. All in favour. Motion carries.

The VP Student Affairs will discuss this further with the VP External.

6.7. GSA office printer usage policy [R. Chakravarty]

The President reminds all that the office printer is not to be used for any personal printing. The VP Finance reminds all that when possible print-outs should be double-sided and that we must be smart with our printing as the printer toner cartridges are expensive and the life of the printer must be maximized.

6.8. Alumni Association-Updates [Z. Ghaith]

VP Ops has arranged a follow-up meeting with the Alumni Association in the first week in October (date TBC). If you cannot attend and there are issues you want raised please email the VP Ops right away. Some attendees from the AA will likely attend via tele-conference.

The VP Student Affairs suggests to review older meeting minutes where some of this was discussed.

The President note that if we are talking about fundraising than the Conference and Gala should be our priorities ahead of other initiatives. The VP Ops notes that this is more to test the waters regarding a more formal proposal.

7. Motions

7.1. Whereas the GSA Bylaws indicate that executive members cannot spend more than ten percent (10%) or five hundred dollars (\$500), whichever amount is larger, of any budget line without a majority vote of the Executive. The intent of this is not entirely clear. For instance budget line 39 (UoS Travel Award Contribution) indicates that \$6000 is required to be mandated towards this fund or line 13 (Presidential Honorarium) is over \$500. Does this mean that the Executive could in essence veto or filibuster approved budget allocations?

All transactions (revenues and expenditures) that have taken place have been reported to the membership and GSA Council. BIRT that they be approved as recorded and the above question be posed to the policy review committee for clarification. [D. Bennett]

Discussion:

VP Finance notes that these are mostly housekeeping motions required for clarity and being open with the membership.

The President notes that in the past when the Policy Review Committee observed that honorariums were all one budget line and certain execs were being paid more than one honorarium at a time this \$500 seemed a reasonable tolerance. With more discrete budget lines it seems less so.

VP Finance notes that the intent and wording could give rise to some confusion. The VP Student Affairs notes that many decisions are made with an intent and the reason why isn't always reflected in the wording. The wording needs to be cleaned up. He notes that we have dealt with our policies in a reactionary manner and that they need to become more forward thinking in the long term.

The President notes that this is just about being transparent (by adding another layer of transparency). The VP Finance will flag any/all transactions that meet the threshold and submit an email digest of them to the rest of the team.

Motion moved by VP Finance. Seconded by the President. All in favour. Motion 7.1 carries.

7.2. Whereas the GSA Guppies / Campus Rec. Intramural Sports initiative contributes to new members becoming involved in the GSA and this initiative helps promote one of our key missions of building a healthy and cohesive graduate student community. BIRT that \$250.00 of unspent funds from budget line 28 (Executive Retreat) be allocated to pay for the registration of 5 (five) campus rec. intramural sports teams for the fall term. BIRFT that up to \$250.00 of unspent funds from budget line 27 (Executive Meeting Refreshments) be allocated to pay for the registration of 5 (five) campus rec. intramural teams for the winter term. BIFRT that these teams must be co-recreational or there must be as equal number of teams per gender as possible and they are open to all GSA members regardless of ability. BIFRT that this motion may be construed as a budget modification so it requires 2/3 approval of the Council and as such this motion be added to the next Council Agenda in deference to due process and openness. [D. Bennett]

Discussion:

The VP Student affairs asks if we need a motion to put this to the Council.

The President indicates we do not but this just shows we are discussing things and thought that this initiative was a good idea.

The VP Finance feels that this is a good usage of funds as it is very bourgeoisie to keep the money for our own perks and way better to support students. The Aboriginal Liaison notes that students are enthusiastic about this and some who were previously registered on different teams contacted us as they wanted to play with fellow graduate students. This initiative benefits students.

The President notes that we should keep some money in the exec. refreshments budget line as we may need food if we have a long meeting.

Moved by VP Finance. Seconded by Aboriginal Liaison. All in favour. Motion 7.2 carries.

8.1 Whereas the U of S AAPS (American Association of Pharmaceutical Sciences) Chapter is hosting an event involving a prominent international pharmacy scientist and graduate students in the College of Pharmacy and Nutrition as well as allied fields will benefit from this important academic and social event. BIRT that the GSA contribute \$450.00 to this event pending ratification as an official group by GSA Council.

APSS Funding Proposal circulated in advance via email.

The VP Ops discloses a conflict of interest. He has a friendship with members of this group but he does note that this is the first time in quite some time a Pharmacy group has moved to become ratified and this is good for the GSA.

President notes that this seems like a high dollar figure. VP Student Affairs states that groups that host events like this are supporting grad students by providing a service in their own right. The President notes that their is insufficient analysis as to justify the ask. The Aboriginal Liaison suggests an amount of \$300 is more reasonable and notes that the GSA budget line must not be exhausted early in the year.

The President moves that the \$450.00 be amended to \$332.25. Seconded by the VP Finance. 5 in favour (VP Ops abstains). Amendment carries.

Amended Motion: Whereas the U of S AAPS Chapter is hosting an event involving a prominent international pharmacy scientist and graduate students in the College of Pharmacy and Nutrition as well as allied fields will benefit from this important academic and social event. BIRT that the GSA contribute \$332.25 to this event pending ratification as an official group by GSA Council.

Moved by the President. Seconded by the VP Finance. 5 in favour (VP Ops abstains). Motion 8 carries.

9. Adjournment. Meeting adjourned at 6:23PM. Prior to adjournment a fruitful discussion was held by all about reaching out to get more people involved in GSA Council. Seeking a more representative GSA with all depts. represented at the GSA.