

University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association



GSA Executive Meeting Minutes Tuesday, February 10, 2016 - GSA Commons 5:00PM – 7:00PM

Present: Z.Ghaith (VP Operations and Communications), D. Bennett (VP Finance), N. Terekhova (VP External), H. Shahadu (VP Student Affairs)
Regrets: D. Carriere (Aboriginal Liason), J. Chapola (VP Academic).

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 5:14 PM
2. **Approval of Chair:** The President asks if anyone wishes to be chair. Seeing no volunteers President Chakravarty volunteers to chair the meeting. Moved by VP Operations. Seconded by VP External. All in favor. The President will chair this meeting.
3. **Approval of Minute Taker.** The President nominates VP Operations to take minutes, seconded by VP Finance. All in favor. VP Ops will take minutes
4. **Approval of the Agenda :** VP External and the President move a motion to add Orientation handbooks, and Distinguished Research Award and New Researcher Award seconded by VP Operations All in favor. Motion Carries to approve the agenda as amended.
5. **Approval of the Minutes of GSA Executive Meetings:**
 - 5.1. **Minutes of GSA Executive Meetings on January 26, 2016.** Moved by the President
Seconded by VP Operations All in favor. Motion carries.
6. **Items for Actions/Information**
 - 6.1. **Three minutes reports** [Execs]

VP Finance: The main area that I have been working on for the past two weeks is the budget. There is an almost complete draft operating budget for the next financial year. It needs information in two more areas before finalization. The Finance and Budget Committee will be meeting tomorrow and depending on the outcome of said meeting, we'll likely submit the budget fifteen days in advance for a vote at the March council meeting. I have been in touch with our auditor and they will be attending our AGM in April. There are a few issues and clarifications that need clarification with the auditors. I will ensure a discussion takes place with the Finance and Budget committee before reporting to council. The Student Advocacy Steering Committee has commenced with meeting and it has some

really great volunteers and ideas. This committee has elected its chair according to the applicable rules and they are aiming to submit a proposal at the AGM. Council passed a motion to create this committee so I'm hopeful that all the people appointed by the Motion will participate and be involved. I have attended the GSA Health Chat (which my team won!), it was a great event. I attended the Winter Orientation Social and although I was busy serving, cleaning, and helping tend bar. I did manage to get out and do a bit of Bollywood dancing all in all it was a really fun event. The feedback was positive. Good job Rajat.. It was great to be able to represent the GSA at the grand opening of the Gordon Oakes Redbear Student Centre. Dana was part of the platform party and Natalia and I were there and we were able to take part in the Round Dance. This event was attended by many dignitaries and leaders from across the University and Province including the National Chief Perry Bellegarde of the Assembly of First Nations, the Treaty Commissioner, many Chiefs from across the Province, family members of the late Gordon Oakes, Cam Broten (leader of the NDP), many other MLAs, as well as the Mayor. This was obviously a momentous occasion so I was honored to have been in attendance. I believe it would have been much more impactful if the entire team had been able to attend. The last information to share is regarding Gender and Sexual Diversity. Information from the Pride Centre and Women's Centre as part of the USSU, mentioned at the Provost's Advisory Committee. They will be hosting Sex Week from Feb. 29th to March 4th and includes different events and workshops focusing on healthy sexual practices, consent, and sexual positivity. The week concludes with the Sexhibition Drag Show on March 4th at 7:30 PM at Louis which will be a celebration of safe, consensual sex and diverse sexualities. Tickets will be available in the tunnel during Sex Week or on Ticketfly. They've already started a good advertising push and these events are open to all members of the campus community including Graduate students.

VP Operations and Communications: The VP Operations attended all the GSA Events, and all of his assigned committees. He helped the conference, Gala, and 3MT coordinators to publicize the graduate achievement week. VP Operations met with 3 departments throughout campus to encourage sponsorship of the graduate achievement week. He has secure funding. He encouraged all other exec to talk in person with colleges and

departments to acquire funding or sponsorship as this event is a GSA event and it is the responsibility of every executive member of the GSA to help out.

VP Operations announced the Winter Bursary, the applications deadline is the 29th of February. VP Operations recommends the GSA executives to talk to students in their own departments, who may be in need, and encourage students to apply.

VP Operations took part of the Student Advocacy Steering Committee, the committee members have great ideas.

VP External: She attended the CFS national Meeting. She participated in thinking about your drinking. She plans to organize two workshops about professional skills certificate in cooperation with GMCTE. VP External attended Global Connection meeting organized by ISIC center. VP external is continuing to issue ISIC cards.

VP Student Affairs: He attended a meeting about child care. VP Student Affairs informed the executives that the university proposes to increase the rent rates, he had an opportunity to meet with some staff to discuss this issue.

VP Student Affairs discussed the proposed allocation in the Williams Building.

GSA President: Organized the GSA Winter welcome social – was impressed by the participation of close to 100 attendees. Wine and samosas were a hit. The tuition consultation has been going slowly and smoothly – Kinesiology and Physics has been covered – the goal is to reach close to 300 students. Also working on a campaign to get more students engaged in GSA Elections and voting.

6.2. Provincial Election Candidates Meet and Greet at the GSA Commons [D. Bennett]

The provincial election will take place in April. VP Finance suggested to organize Meet and Greet with all parties and invite them to meet with the graduate students. GSA President thinks this a good idea to engage graduate students in discussions with the election candidates. GSA President suggested to have this event in the second week of March. VP Operations noted that once we decide about this event, it will be the responsibility of the GSA to engage the graduate students in the event. VP Finance, VP

Operations, and GSA President will help in organizing this event. GSA President moved a motion to approve 300 dollars for this event, seconded by VP Finance. All in favor. Motion Carries.

6.3. Indigenous content in U of S Programs

[H. Shahadu]

The GSA President mentioned that the University Council passed a motion to indigenize the U of S programs, this will be applicable on undergrad and grad programs. The Dean of CGSR met with the GSA President and asked for some suggestions how the university can add the indigenous content in grad programs. The GSA President believes that the GSA should have a clear process on how to include the indigenous content in grad programs. VP Finance mentioned that the GSA is behind in this issue and we should think seriously about how to implement this in the best of graduate students. VP External asked what the university specifically means by indigenizing the content of the U of S Programs, she noted that this is very unclear and vague. VP Operations thinks that it would be hard to include the indigenous content because every program is different, he recommended that this should be included in the CGSR ethics course or to possibly develop an online course, which should be required by all graduate students. VP Student Affairs suggested to meet with USSU executive to receive more details about this issue, as they are responsible for initiating this discussion last year. GSA President, VP Student Affairs, VP Academic, VP Finance, and Aboriginal Liaison will meet and prepare terms of reference.

6.4. Sponsorship request

[Z. Ghaith]

VP Operations informed the executives that Seager Wheeler (McEown Park) will organize a Multicultural Night program at Seager Wheeler (McEown Park) on Feb 28, 2016. They sent a request to the GSA to help out by giving some gifts. VP Finance mentioned that he doesn't think that GSA should not sponsor, although generally we only sponsor the ratified GSA groups. GSA President mentioned that he doesn't see any problem in giving out some gifts, as part of these gifts will ultimately go to graduate students, and it is good event to promote the GSA. VP Operation and External agreed with the president. VP Operations asked VP Finance to take care of this. VP External agreed.

6.5. GSA Winter Bursary

[Z. Ghaith]

VP Operations announced the Winter Bursary, the applications deadline is 29th of February. VP Operations informed the executive committee that CGSR is going to give out 20 bursaries this term, he asked the GSA exec to help out and to encourage graduate students to apply.

6.6. Graduate Achievement Week updates

[Z. Ghaith]

VP Operations and Communications informed the exec committee that the University replied to the GSA proposal, the university will give 2500 dollars to support the conference. He added that this will make it hard for GSA to run the conference as it will be a very tight budget. He encouraged the execs to help out in raising money for the conference, adding that he can donate his discretionary fund for the conference this year as this is an important event for the GSA. VP Operation also noted that the GSA should advise the upcoming elected exec not to ask CGSR for as many coordinators as it seems that CGSR will then cut funding for some of GSA events.

6.7. GSA Gala Updates

[N. Terekhova]

VP External noted that she is a little bit worried about University Administration attendance at GSA events this year. She received some regrets. VP Student Affairs mentioned that Gala Coordinator sent out an email advising GSA execs to better communicate with the University Administration. VP Student Affairs thinks that this is beyond Gala coordinator responsibility. VP Operations noted that GSA exec should try to be strategic in communicating with the University Admin to ensure and represent student interest.

VP Finance suggested that every executive should try to sell Gala tickets to receive a free ticket. GSA President moved a motion: For every 10 tickets the exec sell they will receive 1 free ticket to a maximum of 3 tickets, VP External Seconded this motion. In favour 3, opposed 1. Motion Carries.

6.8. Racialized and indigenous Student summit

[N. Terekhova]

VP External asked who will represent the GSA in Racialized and indigenous Student summit in Toronto. She informed GSA exec that CFS will cover the cost for one representative. VP Academic sent an email expressing her interest in attending this summit. VP Student Affairs thinks that he should represent the GSA, and he expressed a strong interest in that, he added that he is the alternative representative of CFS so he is substitute to VP External. VP External mentioned that this summit has nothing to do with CFS meetings. VP Finance supports sending VP Academic to this summit as she is passionate about these events. VP External asked about the possibility of sending out 2 exec to this summit. VP Operations asked what the marginal benefit is of sending out 2 executive, he added that this is poor use of GSA money.

GSA President moved a motion to extend the meeting for 15 minutes, seconded by VP Finance, all in favor, motion carries.

GSA President expressed his interest in attending this summit. VP External moved a motion to vote on sending 2 representatives, seconded by VP Finance. In favor 4, VP External moved to vote on sending VP Academic to this summit, seconded by GSA President. All in favor, motion carries.

GSA President mentioned that he put his name in not to complicate the decision, but because he feels he would benefit from this summit as he has been active around the campus for long time and it is part of his interest. VP Student Affairs thinks that he is active in student advocacy, adding that international students are not well presented in general, and he was one of the first student to raise this issue, he thinks he is the appropriate person to represent the GSA in this summit.

VP Finance moved to extend the meeting for 10 minutes, seconded by GSA President. In favor 4, opposed 1. Motion carries.

VP Finance asked VP Student Affairs why he didn't attend the student forum and why he didn't attend the advocacy committee meeting, all of importance if he really cared about student interests. VP Student Affairs mentioned that he feels that there isn't genuine intention behind the current advocacy committee thus his reason for not attending.

GSA President expressed his interest again in participating in this summit, mentioning that he was GSA VP Student Affairs last year, and he demonstrated his interest in serving the students. VP Student Affairs asked the President, if the GSA is not going to cover your travel expenses, are you going to pay that from your discretionary fund, the President answered no. VP Student Affairs added I am willing to do that, and this shows the difference between us in terms of interests.

VP Finance moved to take a vote via secret ballot, seconded by VP External, all in favor, motion carries.

Voting results: Rajat 2 votes. Hardi 1 vote, 2 abstained. GSA President and VP Academic will represent the GSA in Racialized and indigenous Student summit

7. Adjournment meeting adjourned 7:32.