

University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association



GSA Executive Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 13, 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), D. Carriere (Aboriginal Liason)

Regrets: J. Chapola (VP Academic).

On Leave: R. Chakravarty (President - Not present)

1. **Call to Order.** The VP Ops acting as the interim President calls the meeting to order at 5:04 PM. Quorum is achieved. No members sent regrets in advance.
2. **Approval of Chair.** The VP External nominates the VP Ops to chair the meeting. Seconded by Aboriginal Liason. Motion passes. The VP Ops will chair the meeting.
3. **Approval of Minutes Taker.** The Aboriginal Liason nominates the VP Finance. Seconded by VP External. All in favour. VP Finance will take the minutes.
4. **Approval of the Agenda.** The VP Ops notes that the agenda has been circulated in advance. VP Student Affairs seeks to move the Three Minute Reports in advance of the approval of previous minutes. The VP Student Affairs then withdraws that motion. The VP Ops seeks to add item 6.5. Discussion on President's Breakfast on January 19th, 2016. Seconded by VP Fin. All in favour of adding this item. Item 6.5 is added. Aboriginal Liason seeks to add item 6.6 Upcoming Events. Seconded by VP Ops. All in favour of adding this item. Item 6.6 is added. The Agenda as a whole is moved by Aboriginal Liason and the VP Ops. All favour. Agenda is adopted.

5. Approval of the Minutes of GSA Executive Meetings:

5.1. Minutes of GSA Executive Meetings on December 17, 2015. The VP Ops notes that these minutes have been uploaded and circulated in advance. VP Ops asks if there are any comments or corrections None were raised. VP Ops moves to approve the minutes as circulated. Seconded by VP Fin. Four in favour. One Abstention. VP Student Affairs notes that he is abstaining because he has not had a chance to catch up on the minutes. Aboriginal Liason notes that certain parts of the in camera minutes are visible on the website. VP Ops notes that the reference is there but not the actual comments of any in camera discussions. VP Student Affairs and Aboriginal Liason note that should be clarified. VP Ops notes that he will update these minutes with the above the corrections if the group is in favour. Four in favour. One Abstention. Motion carries.

5.2. Minutes of GSA Executive Meetings on December 8, 2015

These minutes are in camera. The VP Ops notes that they have been circulated and he will collect them at the end of the meeting. VP Student Affairs notes that we needed to defer because the minutes weren't ready and the President was in attendance. He suggests that we continue to defer until the President has returned. VP Student Affairs moves to defer. VP Ops seconds. All in favour. This approval is deferred until the next Executive Meeting. VP Ops circulates the minutes from December 8th in hard copy.

5.3. Minutes of GSA Executive Meetings on December 9, 2015. VP Finance brought his corrections and comments in the form of actual minutes. VP Student Affairs notes that the VP Finance sent him corrections and he adopted those that he felt were accurate. VP Finance notes that he circulated corrections and that he brought them to discuss. It was suggested that we can discuss these together or we can give them to VP SA to make the updates. VP Finance suggests we take ten minutes to get this done. VP Finance also notes that he wasn't included on the email in the minutes that were sent out originally and that the Aboriginal Liason forwarded them to him and he feels that this was intentional in nature. The VP Student Affairs notes that he is a human being and that this was simply an oversight. VP Finance reiterates that it felt intentional to him.

VP Ops suggests that we each take a minute to read over the minute and note any corrections, changes or omissions that need to be discussed. A heated discussion of the minutes took place where various corrections or omissions were raised. Each individual point that was raised was met with acrimony including people not remembering properly “in their hearts.” VP Ops notes he printed out the original minutes and not any updated version that the VP Student Affairs may have completed. VP Finance moves that VP Student Affairs will provide the VP Ops with these updated minutes and he will give us hard copy of the updated minutes of the meeting on December 9th and we will work through that copy for any corrections, changes or omissions for the next meeting. Seconded by VP Ops. All in favour. Motion carries.

5.4. Minutes of GSA Executive Meetings on December 10, 2015

VP Ops circulated these minutes and asked us to bring that back. VP Student Affairs notes that he doesn't recognize those minutes or that particular meeting and will not take part in any discussions. No omissions, changes, or corrections were raised. Motion to adopt the minutes moved by the VP Ops. Seconded by the VP External. Four in favour. VP Student Affairs Abstains.

6. Items for Actions/Information

VP Ops moves to table the Three Minute Reports to the end. Seconded by Aboriginal Liason. All in favour. Three Minute Reports are tabled to the end.

6.2 Update on GSA Gala

[N. Terekhova]

The GSA Gala Coordinator Mohammed Rafati joins us to provide an update on the Gala. He wants to discuss the awards with us. We currently have eight categories of awards. He removed some of the previous award categories of GSA Executive and the GSA Partnership Awards. VP Finance notes this is too bad as he was planning on nominating Moh for the previous Executive Award. The Gala Coordinator also updated the terminology on some of the awards noting that it doesn't have to be a member of the GSA Council to receive the award for student leadership. VP Student Affairs notes that these are GSA Awards and for recognizing outstanding student

leadership and they will speak more to the values of the GSA and will encourage more to take up student leadership. It could be for councillor and or for a non-councillor. VP Student Affairs notes that former Chairperson Mark Kroeker was a great guy who deepened democracy in the GSA who passed away and we should name an award after him. VP Finance supports that idea but suggests to run this idea by his parents and family. VP Student Affairs suggests that the wording for the Interdisciplinary Research Excellence be updated. VP Student Affairs suggests that we need to give other students and give new students an opportunity to be involved. The Gala Coordinator also discusses sponsorship levels and finding sponsors just for specific aspects of the gala. VP Student Affairs will provide the sponsorship letter that he used for the Orientation. VP Student Affairs suggests asking banks for sponsorship. He notes he asked banks to sponsor the Orientation but he mentions it was late when he asked them. VP Finance will provide Moh a list of political figures that should be invited to the gala. Gala Coordinator shared the poster designs and it was noted that they were very good.

VP Student Affairs notes that Dean Baxter-Jones suggested we have the event on the University Campus. Gala Coordinator notes that the capacity in any on campus locations isn't high enough and he communicated this to University Administration. VP Finance commented that GC was doing a good job.

Noting the time the VP Finance moves to extend the meeting until 7:30PM. Seconded by the VP External. Three in favour. One abstention. The Meeting is extended until 7:30PM.

6.3 National Graduate Caucus

[N. Terekhova]

The VP External moves to table this item until the next Executive Meeting. Second by Aboriginal Liason. All in favour.

6.4 Commons Renewals and Repairs

[D. Bennett]

VP Finance notes that there is a budget item for the repair and the renewal of the GSA Commons. He further notes that one item that people have suggested is the installation of a diaper changing table in the main bathroom. Facilities Maintenance Division provided the GSA with a no-cost and no-obligation estimate for such a feature. He notes that this estimate was excessive in his opinion. He raises the possibility of proceeding anyways, presenting the matter

to the Council, or asking the University Administration to put some pressure on FMD to lower the cost as part of an initiative of making the University and GSA more family friendly. This option was supported by all who made any comments. The VP Finance notes at the next opportunity he will raise this issue with Administration.

6.5 Breakfast with Senior Leadership

[Z. Ghaith]

VP Ops notes that this meeting will occur on January 19th we need to send in our agenda items for this Breakfast meeting. VP External suggests that we discuss fee differentials. All were supportive of this. VP Ops will let President's Chief of Staff know about this. VP Finance reminded all to please arrive on time.

6.6 Upcoming Events

[D. Carriere]

The Aboriginal Liason suggests we send out another newsletter soon and also that the Winter Photo Contest is ongoing. She notes that we need to get gift cards for that event as well. VP Ops will send out a call for items for the Newsletter with 5:00PM on the January 20th. It was also noted that we still haven't planned a Winter Welcome Social/Party. The date of January 29th is agreed to as the night for this event. VP Finance notes that our budget allocates \$500 for a Winter Orientation but that line is controlled by the VP Student Affairs so he would have to agree to use it for this 'Winter Welcome Back Social' or that we would have to use a different funding source or we could simply ask the Council to reallocate the funds from that budget line to pay for this event. If those funds are not used they simply revert back to general revenues for the following budget cycle.

6.1. Three Minutes Reports

[Execs]

VP Student Affairs: He notes there was a University Orientation on Jan. 4th. There were 39 new students who registered as CGSR. The fall orientation was planned with distribution of informational and promotional material in bags. He planned to redistribute those items in the winter orientation. He notes that he had to repackage the bags and couldn't find all the items that were needed. Along with the Orientation Coordinator they took 35 bags to the Orientation but some were left over after. The event was coordinated by ISAAC. He worked with CGSR and represented the GSA at this event.

The Orientation and Events Coordinator Rita was there throughout to assist the VP Student Affairs. He has some bags in his work office and we will bring them back to the GSA soon. He is also working on helping with students who are having issues with residence regarding notices and regulations. He escalated the issue on the student's behalf and tried to find a positive solution or payment plan.

VP External: Notes that she is preparing for the upcoming health chat entitled "Food and Mood." Also, she has been working on the ISIC Card Initiative and we have received a new batch of blank cards. She will arrange a schedule for this.

VP Finance: Notes that he has seen almost everyone repeatedly but again wishes a Happy New Year. He notes that since the previous Executive Meeting he attended the Vice-President's Christmas Party which was obviously a lovely occasion, but more importantly it was a chance to to work on doing some fundraising a chance to keep working on trying to restore the image of the GSA from any hits it has taken over the past. Speaking of Christmas and holidays he notes that he has heard lots of positive feedback from the cards that we sent out although some people asked why our smiles weren't bigger. He notes that it will help when we go knocking on doors for some financial support for our events they will know our faces. The feedback about the donations for Syrian refugees has also been great. This is a wonderful initiative.

He attended the GSA Governance Committee Meeting which had a good discussion and lots of good ideas were shared. He has also been working on our draft operating budget for the next year as the Budget Committee will have a meeting this month. The call for members for the student advocacy steering committee just went out at 3:10PM ago already the response has been huge with many people volunteering by 4PM when he checked his email.

The Provost's Advisory Committee on Gender and Sexual Diversity met on Monday. There just isn't the capacity to arrange for a special Positive Spaces Seminar for the the few GSA execs and staff that would come so he invites all to attend one of the sessions that they have planned on Friday January 22nd at 2:30PM or Friday Feb 26 also at 2:30PM. You can register on the Gwenna Moss Centre Registration website. He can provide the link after to any who are interested. VP External and others expressed interest in this.

The other tasks he has been working on are finishing the term one UPASS reconciliation, tracking down some old CFS payment information for a project for the VP External to help CFS-Sask and also supplying the updated information on Clubs (which he has) and Councils (which he doesn't have that information) to our Insurance Provider and making sure all those invoices are properly organized. The last thing, he notes that we received a certificate of achievement from the Worker's Compensation Board for having a zero injury year. The certificate is nice but what matters most is that because we had zero claims we pay a lesser premium. So he offers his congratulations to Sherri and Ziad for ensuring a safe workplace! VP External and the Aboriginal Liason were appreciative of their efforts.

Aboriginal Liason: Notes that she has registered six teams for GSA Guppies. Gordon Oakes Redbear Student Centre opening is coming up and all GSA Execs have been invited. She will be giving opening remarks at some of these upcoming events. She notes that IGSC has an office in that building on the second floor. IGSC has many events coming up including Graduate Information Night and Aboriginal Achievement Week.

VP Ops: He notes that we are running low on time but he has sent in the proposal for GSA Week to the President and University Administration. He is also busy with his day-to-day tasks of meeting the staff daily and managing the Commons. The GSA Facebook page is continuing to grow and he hopes to have 600 by the end of term. In addition to managing the photo-contest he is busy fulfilling the duties of the President who is on leave until Jan. 15th.

7. **Adjournment.** Meeting is adjourned at 7:28PM. All in favour.