

## Graduate Students' Association



### GSA Executive Retreat Meeting Agenda Saturday May 6, 2017 - GSA Commons

**Present:** Z. Ghaith (President), J. Bonkowski (VP Finance & Operations), V. Anderone (VP External), I. Efimoff (Indigenous Liaison), A. Kiani (VP Academic & Student Affairs)

#### **Day 1: May 6, 2017 – Call to Order 5:08 pm**

##### **1. Opening Remarks / Personal Introductions / History**

Informal structure, personal introductions / indications of communication preferences and styles.

Aboriginal Liaison has been renamed Indigenous liaison – Chair of IGSC, creates transparency between the organizations. Indigenous community and well-being important initiatives for the GSA to implement.

New this year – Introduction of the Board, this changes the responsibilities of the Executive to a more managerial role. Full procedures are TBD, by-laws indicate the responsibilities of the Executive and Council members. New challenges will accompany this transition.

The GSA's staff consists of the Office Manager and casual Commons Coordinators (U of S Students). The GSA provides important services to the members (Health / Dental / UPASS), but also act as political advocates for the members. These roles require a delicate balance.

##### **2. Old Business**

###### **2.1. Committee Appointments**

Andersone explains that outgoing VP External communicated she should be on no internal / university committees due to the travelling involved with her role. Ghaith explains that these are recommendations based on portfolios and existing by-laws. Andersone believes she will be able to manage the few committees she has been appointed to.

Time commitment to committees is important, and there is a delegation system should the appointed member be unable to attend. Many of the committees may only meet once per year or during certain months.

Ghaith will communicate commitments to University Council. Send NSID to be added to SharePoint. Representation is important in order to build the GSA's credibility.

## **2.2. In Camera Session**

### **2.3. 2017 Convocation Attendance**

To support the graduate student community and represent the GSA at University events, the Executives (apart from Andersone, who will be attending a CFS conference) will alternately attend Spring Convocation from June 5-8.

## **3. Approval of the retreat agenda**

Informal structure for retreat – flexibility in order of items and discussion. No additions at this time.

**Carried.**

## **4. Session 1 – Team Building (5:00 p.m. -7:00 p.m.)**

### **4.1. Executive Duties**

Two types of duties – By-laws that are expected of us by our Members, and advocated issues that are from our platform and other agendas.

Ghaith informs the Executive that the Board would like a working plan for each Executive's plans for the coming academic year by June 8, 2017 (next Board meeting). Andersone inquires whether this action plan is more suited to a Council accountability, and

thought the Board's purpose was to focus on the corporate / financial side of the Association. Ghaith explains that the Board has two mandates – one of which is to ensure that the executive committee is fulfilling its duty to the Members and contributing to the organization's overall strategic plan.

Action items should be specific and within reason. Timelines should be provided so that progress can be assessed appropriately. The action plans are open to amendment. Andersone expresses concern about how this will affect platform initiative strategy. Ghaith assures her that this is just to increase transparency between management (ie Members of the Executive) and the Board. Kiani also expresses concern regarding accountability – he is unsure if we should be accountable to the Board, rather than to the Council. Ghaith and Bonkowski stress that this initiative is to increase transparency between the governing bodies.

Discussion of separate reports for Council meetings involving both written and oral components for will also ensure Executives are held accountable for their actions for the duration of their term.

#### **4.2. Executive Meetings**

Ghaith explains that during the summer months, Executives will meet once a month, and then twice a month during the regular academic year.

Efimoff says Thursdays would be best for her work schedule. Bonkowski says after 4 works best with her work schedule. Kiani expresses that he has a block schedule that would prevent him from attending during certain times of the month. Efimoff is unsure of how she will be able to manipulate schedule until job begins, flexibility is TBD.

Executive Meetings for the spring/summer terms have been agreed upon as follows:

May 30 – 5:00-7:00 pm

June 27 – 5:00-7:00 pm

July 18 – 5:00-7:00 pm

August 15 – 5:00-7:00 pm (Efimoff will send regrets due to vacation time)

There must also be two (2) Council meetings, one (1) in May/June and one (1) in July/August. Meetings will be at 5 pm in the GSA commons. Dates are as follows:

June 14 – 5:00-7:00 pm (Bonkowski will send regrets as out of country)

August 9 – 5:00-7:00 pm

There will be two presentations at the June Council meeting. One from campus counselling services, and the other from the Dean of Kinesiology regarding athletic fees and the established Memorandum of Understanding. Ghaith will extend invitations to these parties to ensure availability on the agreed up on dates.

#### **4.3. Executive Communication**

Ghaith proposes two types of communication: Formal emails (subject to a 48 hours response period for opinions / decisions – longer than 48 hours indicates consensus with the decision). Ghaith recommends Outlook to organize emails / schedules. Ghaith expresses that informal communication is just as important – will increase camaraderie / bonding. Encourages that members of the Executive view the Commons as a place open to socializing to get to know the Members, Office Manager, and other Executives. Executives may also communicate through FB messenger informally. Kiani expresses need for acceptable times of communication via messenger. Ghaith says the informality of this method doesn't require that type of stipulation. Ghaith reiterates that it is important for Executives to try to frequent the Commons as much as possible. Kiani says that he wants this Executive team to foster a culture of helping one another so that the committee works as a team. Ghaith says it is also important for the Executive team to acknowledge mistakes as soon as possible so that Executives can learn and mitigate these issues appropriately. Formal and informal methods of communication will be essential for success in these instances.

Any communication with the Members is to be facilitated through Bonkowski, this includes emails / social posts, and PAWS bulletin. Communications plan, specifically email lists are an ongoing initiative that will be included in Bonkowski's action plan and involve a number of strategic tactics that are TBD and open to consultation / suggestion.

#### **4.4. Executive Decision Making**

The GSA Executive will follow Robert's Rules of Order for all meetings. Bonkowski will share an abridged version of these procedures that highlights need to know information. Ghaith suggests YouTube for understanding these procedures as well. It is noted that this decision-making process is important for financial decisions. We must also ensure there are procedures in place for unique or concerning instances of decision. These procedures are as follows:

There are five members of the Executive team. If the fifth vote is an abstention it will count against the motion as there is obviously more information required. Majority abstention also indicates a failed motion (1 yes to 4 abstain). In the instance of 2 yes, 3 abstain: Efimoff says this motion should fail, Ghaith and Kiani say it should pass. Bonkowski inquires about communication standards regarding abstain vote. Anderson expresses need for majority but says there are issues where that could be circumvented. Efimoff says that a majority vote could be implemented to ensure democratic practices. As a result of this discussion, 2 yes / 3 abstain motions will carry.

Urgent matters regarding the interests of the Members may require decisions in between Executive meetings. In this case, email voting will take place, and the 48 hour rule will apply. Ghaith says that in these instances, the VP Operations (Bonkowski) will add these motions to the upcoming minutes to ensure transparency with the Members. Bonkowski adds stipulation that emails be subject to "Reply All" communication standards so that all Executives are aware of their colleague's decisions.

Ghaith adds that the corresponding by-laws and portfolios for each Executive will explain what matters of communication are directed to each Executive. (For example, any

academic issues will be forward to Kiani, Indigenous to Efimoff, Financial to Bonkowski, etc.)

**Break: Supper (7:00 p.m. -8:00 p.m.)**

**5. Session 2 – GSA Ongoing Services/initiatives (8:00 – 10:00 p.m.)**

Supervision of the following services are the responsibilities of the Executive committee:

**5.1. ISAC Cards**

Provided through CFS. Students like the discounts, however there are issues in the printing the. Andersone also brings up issue of age limit w/ European redemptions, and suggests notifying members of this stipulation. Ghaith suggests that Andersone work with CFS for a new printing machine to ensure the cards for this academic year are of a higher quality. This service is also offered to undergrad students for a fee (~ \$10). More publication is necessary for the coming year to increase usage for both student communities. Ghaith suggests social media and posters be utilized accordingly. Rohovich (GSA Office Manager) knows how to issue and print these cards, but the overall initiative should be supervised by VP External (Andersone).

**5.2. U-Pass**

Ultimately the UPASS agreement / opt in and out clauses are not within the GSA's control. In 2014, a referendum was passed to eliminate the option of the summer UPASS. Discussions for implementing a summer UPASS beginning in 2018 are presently underway. The GSA will do their best to provide Members with what they want regarding transit. Moving forward there will be surveys and other initiatives to improve the UPASS contract. Ghaith suggests Andersone spearhead initiatives with Kiani's help. Kiani says that they will work collaboratively on this initiative. Efimoff also indicates interest in aiding with these efforts. Ghaith has ideas for survey that will help with negotiation. Ghaith will forward information to Andersone and Kiani, and suggests they begin with designing a survey.

### **5.3. GSA Survey (General) – Item added by Ghaith**

Survey submitted regarding matters pertaining to graduate students (stipend, residence, etc.) Survey was built and submitted to the ethical committee in December. We are still waiting approval for publishing. Kiani says he will continue efforts to publish the survey as he is the new VP Student Affairs. Efimoff says that it is unusual that the survey has not been approved, due to the usual turnover time. Ghaith says Kiani will need to follow up with the ethical committee. Apparently, the issues may be due to a lack of supervisor. Andersone says that this may be resolved by meeting with the ethical committee in person. Andersone has experience with survey development through SSRL, which will help with further development of survey. Efimoff also says she would like to work on this initiative since her portfolio matches the objectives of the initiative. The survey was developed by a committee, it is important to attribute credit to these students. Kiani will contact the ethical committee, and Efimoff and Andersone will work on publishing the survey once this hurdle has been jumped. Andersone inquires if this role involves data analysis. Kiani suggests deciding this in the future. Ghaith will forward survey and committee to Andersone and Efimoff so they are familiar with the contents. Efimoff mentions the idea of academically publishing the results of the survey. Andersone potentially knows some of the committee members who helped develop it. Ghaith says this would be a good addition to the action plans of all those involved for submission to the BNoard.

### **5.4. GSA Commons**

This is Bonkowski's responsibility. Ghaith suggests including A/C installation on radar. Ghaith also suggests looking into new projection and audio visual equipment first and foremost. Bonkowski agrees. \$5000 has been appointed for this budget (tentative). Ghaith suggests fundraising so that the budget allows for high quality of equipment. Efimoff says that mounted projection screens may be more money, so something to consider if this is the route the Executive would like to go. Ghaith says he will work on fundraising efforts. Ghaith also says he will continue efforts regarding the A/C. This is a big project but is incredibly important as it negatively impacts working conditions for Commons employees and patrons. Bonkowski will bring portable A/C for temporary measures.

Ghaith also suggests improving the computers and better coffee. Efimoff says something that is fair trade / ethically sourced would be ideal. Ghaith suggests that Efimoff spearhead efforts to increase Indigenous artwork within the Commons. She will work with Rohovich and Bonkowski. This would seek to increase Indigenous engagement and contribute to aesthetic appeal in the commons.

Positive Space initiative for LGBTQ members: There is an organizational certification process, Bonkowski has been communicating with the Pride Center to arrange for an Executive training session. This will ideally will take place prior to the beginning of the Fall term.

GSA Rentals: Currently \$75/ hour, this is up from \$30/hour. Ratified social clubs are able to utilize the commons for free during working hours, \$50/hour after working hours to cover coordinator fees. Ghaith inquires if the fee should be raised. Efimoff asks what the rates of comparable venues are. Ghaith says that the Commons rate is an average price, and has been a good source of income. Bonkowski would like to research the rates for other similar venues to explore a reasonable rate plan for future years. Efimoff asks if the rates are too high for ratified groups.

Personal use of commons: Last year GSA executives could use the commons twice (2) per year for no charge (only if usage did not require a coordinator). This serves as appreciation for their work. Andersone expresses discomfort, says that members may also be uncomfortable with this privilege. Kiani says that we can be considered staff for this initiative. Ghaith reiterates that this is only free if resources are not used (ie a coordinator). Efimoff says that this is a perk that does not cross ethical lines, so she is okay with the initiative. Ghaith reiterates two times *without* the use of a coordinator. Andersone abstains from this decision. Ghaith asks if this should apply to staff members as well (Manager / Coordinators). Bonkowski suggests one (1) event per year extended to coordinators as an act of goodwill / perk. Efimoff expresses concern regarding regulations of use with coordinators for the state of the Commons. Efimoff asks if this was offered last year.

Bonkowski says she will discuss with Rohovich, Ghaith says he will support their decision.

Andersone says that she has noticed the need for a handbook for a ratified group's use of the Commons. She asks about including that in the planner. Bonkowski suggests that she and Andersone work together to develop new content with this information for the website. Efimoff also mentions that there is no cancellation policy, and that this is required to avoid issues with paying the coordinators who are hired to facilitate these events. Andersone says many people don't know about the Commons. Efimoff says the computers and free coffee could be enticing to increase engagement in the space (student specific).

Ghaith says that no advertisement has been made in the past so that the Commons is not overrun with external events. He says this is important to keep the space primarily for students. Efimoff suggests that certain times be advertised so that it does not interfere with student use. Andersone says it is important that we also advertise bookings so that students know that they are not able to utilize the Commons prior to their arrival at the building.

### **5.5. Health & Dental Plan**

This is where the majority of GSA student fees go. Students pay ~ \$430 for health / dental. StudentCare is the intermediary for this service. Ghaith says the relationship with this organization has been positive so far. Representatives are Colton and another person [Name TBD]. Good engagement and communication. Able to fundraise through this group for events. The actual plan is under Andersone's portfolio. Representatives will be visiting May 17. Ghaith encourages attendance. This will serve as an orientation session. Students are also interested in attending. Ghaith says advertising across campus is also good so that more members can use the Health and Dental plan. A year-round poster is an ideal option for this. The Health and Dental plan also includes travel insurance.

Ghaith emphasizes that a very important topic of discussion on the committee last year was the participation of Post-Doc participants. These members can opt in if and when they see fit. One condition of the Health and Dental committee last year was to decide

what the policy for Post-Doc students is, more specifically, it should be mandatory for all or not available at all. Efimoff says we should communicate with the members of this community for their opinion on the matter. Anderson is concerned about her role in the Health and Dental Plan as it is new territory for her. Efimoff says she will feel more comfortable after the orientation on May 17, as that is its purpose. Ghaith and Efimoff assure Anderson that this will be a team effort. Kiani suggests seeking Rohovich's guidance as well. Ghaith says that Post-Doc decision should be made for this academic year. Health and Dental fees will increase by 5% this year. This is in response to utilization of the plan. Efimoff says that the GSA is charged more for utilization of the campus services which are not part of the membership. Ghaith says we need further understanding about why the usage of Dental plan has increased as opposed to usage of the Health plan which has remained constant. Anderson says the outgoing VP External suggested including all Post Doc Fellows in the plan. Ghaith and Efimoff reiterate the need for consultation with the Post-Doc community so that it is an informed decision.

## **5.6. Social Groups**

Any group of graduate students who want to be ratified can approach the GSA about forming a club. This can be based on academic, personal interest, cultural, etc. If 51% of the group is comprised of graduate students they can be ratified and utilize GSA communication channels and funds. Ratification expires on August 31 every year. This must be renewed every year. It does not cost anything to be ratified. A constitution / voided cheque, etc must be submitted through Fluid Surveys to apply. Ghaith asks Bonkowski if she has access to Fluid Surveys, not yet. Ghaith says Fluid Surveys may not be an option for much longer. Efimoff says the contract has been extended until February 15, 2018. GSA can sponsor events up to \$500 each year. Ratification applications must be included in the agenda. Ghaith says there were 15 ratified clubs previously. Anderson points out that this is not a lot. Ghaith says that the application process is to ensure that the clubs are established with inclusivity in mind. Elements of discrimination are not acceptable. This process will be under Kiani's portfolio with assistance from Bonkowski for access to Fluid Survey.

### **5.7. GSA Academic Council**

Representation of Academic units – this can be an entire college or a single department. These units will apply to be a part of the Council. They will apply by providing a constitution, void cheque, and names of Councilors and alternate Councilor. If the unit is greater than 100 students they will have two (2) votes within the Council. If less than 100 each unit will only have one (1) vote. Ghaith suggests revamping the registration system since it is open for the whole year in order to account for quorum. Ghaith suggests meeting with Council Chair to discuss registration. Bonkowski to send email calling for registration in August and December. Quorum is dynamic due to the year-long application process, and ultimately is dependent on attendance of Councilors. Ghaith says 2016-2017 had minimal issues reaching quorum. Efimoff suggests Kiani be involved. Ghaith says forward directly to GSA Council Chair. Ghaith says the Executive must also sign confidentiality waiver in the cases where sensitive information is present. Andersone says that the ratification process can be redundant and confusing at times and requires improvement. Ghaith agrees taht there is room for improvement. Andersone says she will help Kiani and Bonkowski with a re-vamp of registration process. Andersone also suggests approaching academic councils to introduce the concept of the GSA Council and increase engagement.

**Bonkowski moves to adjourn Day 1 and discuss other items tomorrow morning. Efimoff seconds.**

**Carried.**

**Day 1 Adjournment at 10:08 pm**

**Day 2: May 7, 2017 – Call to Order 8:07 am**

### **5.8. Human Resources – Coordinators + GSA Staff**

These items are Bonkowski's responsibility. There are no current policies in effect. So far management efforts have been successful, but Ghaith would like to see development of a formal evaluation system, and the outgoing VP Operations also recommended the utilization of scheduling software to track hours and shifts. Coordinators are paid the

standard University rate (\$18.51), discussion of raising this rate by CPI (1.4%, new rate would be \$18.77) This change will be pending budgetary approval.

KPMG is performing an audit of the GSA's internal controls, they have recommended that there be checkpoints in submitting employee hours. This can be mitigated by the introduction of scheduling software. Bonkowski will discuss further with Rohovich.

Bonkowski and Rohovich will need to hire coordinators later on in the summer, as one has left and one is potentially leaving. Coordinator positions are advertised through the University system. Recruiting will take place in August – September, this is dependent on Bonkowski and Rohovich's decision.

Ghaith suggests modelling the University's hiring process. Bonkowski indicates that a search committee may overcomplicate the process. Ghaith says it can be considered in order to increase transparency. Bonkowski agrees.

## **5.9. GSA Social Media and Website**

This is Bonkowski's responsibility. Feedback about website – updated news feed / current news with increased visibility would be an improvement. As discussed yesterday, Andersone and Bonkowski will develop a handbook for policies involved with utilizing the Commons for ratified groups.

GSA has Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts. There is also a YouTube channel with the potential for engagement. These channels are used to advertise events / meetings. Ghaith is willing to help with social media initiatives. Ghaith has noted that the Twitter is not as active as it has been in the past, Efimoff says she is active on the account during conferences and is willing to take ownership of this account if Bonkowski sees fit. Ghaith says that Efimoff's participation in the past has been extremely effective. Andersone would also like to gain access to Twitter since she will attend conferences and organize other political events for the members. Ghaith says we must be wary of tweeting overly

political items through the GSA twitter feed. Andersone and Efimoff will take tentative ownership of the Twitter account. Bonkowski is in favor of this.

GSA App requires more advocacy for use. September was a busy time but since the activity has wavered. Ghaith says the best way to increase engagement is through sharing with Graduate Student contacts. Ghaith and Bonkowski will own Facebook. Andersone, Efimoff, and Bonkowski will own Twitter. Bonkowski will own Instagram. Admin rights can also be dependent on upcoming events for each Executive portfolio. Efimoff says it is important to consider bystander rights in taking candid pictures for social media. Ghaith says there is an option for students to opt out if they do not wish to be photographed or have photos publicized through social media.

#### **5.10. Monthly Newsletter**

The newsletter is used to communicate GSA events / workshops / meetings in order to limit the number of emails sent through CGPS. This can be monthly or every two weeks. This would be one email sent to all students. Efimoff says this is a good way to connect with people who did not engage with other platforms and increase awareness.

Ghaith says this should go through Bonkowski. Outgoing VP Ops made call for items at beginning of month. Bonkowski prefers monthly frequency as opposed to twice a month for the sake of time and planning purposes. Call for items will be made in last week of the month. Ghaith says that there is software available for this type of development. Andersone suggests looking for this skill in Coordinators. Efimoff agrees and says that this is an opportunity to utilize coordinators for higher responsibility items like the newsletter. Plan is to release newsletter on the first of the month, if that date falls on the weekend it will be released the first working day of the respective month.

#### **5.11.GSA Bursaries**

Last year the GSA awarded \$60,000 in bursaries. These are need-based financial grants. There are three bursary periods this year – Spring/Summer, Fall, and Winter. This falls under Bonkowski's portfolio with Kiani's assistance with the selection committee. Ghaith

says to call for applications in July. Ghaith says that hard copy applications are also an option for this year's call to applications. Fluid surveys can overcomplicate the process and Ghaith feels that paper applications may be more efficient. Ghaith suggests discussion with Rohovich regarding past procedures for hard copy applications. In summer \$10,000 are awarded. Fall / Winter terms had \$25,000 awarded for each period in 2016-17. Ghaith will spearhead fundraising efforts for the Fall/Winter terms. Calls to apply will be made through official GSA emails and social media channels. Anderson asks why every recipient receives the same amount and ask if certain bursary recipients should receive more. Ghaith says this decision should be left to the Bursary committee. Efimoff says it would be beneficial to explore statistics relating to the matter. Ghaith seeks Kiani's opinion. Kiani says he sees Anderson's point, but there are reasons for giving smaller amounts so that more people may benefit. Kiani feels the rubric for decision may not be sufficient for the selection process. Kiani says he and the outgoing VP Ops had a plan to improve the selection process. Bonkowski will make call for applications on June 1<sup>st</sup>. Ghaith will spearhead fundraising efforts for the Fall / Winter terms.

#### **5.12.GSA Guppies**

As discussed yesterday, Efimoff will own this service. This service is budgeted for and involves participation in Campus Rec programs. Anderson will forward questions and transition information to Efimoff. Efimoff will also reach out to the outgoing VP External to better understand the procedures. Ghaith suggests creating a form / application for this service.

#### **5.13.GSA Health Chat**

Initiative started two years ago, organized by VP Ops last year. Topics relate to mental health. Bonkowski says she would like to continue the initiative but would like help due to her other commitments. Kiani says there is the opportunity for collaboration with his portfolio. Ghaith suggests every second month so that the events focus on quality rather than quantity. Kiani agrees. Anderson says she also has skills that would benefit this type of event and could reach out to certain guest speakers. She is willing to help with workshops. Efimoff suggests building a community around it rather than standalone chats

in order for monthly meetings to be feasible. Efimoff also says that it should be dependent on what's in the news / pertinent to Graduate Students' mental health. Anderson mentions "What's Your Cap?" would be a good initiative. Efimoff says safe sex initiatives would also be a good topic. These events are open to both graduate and undergraduate communities. LGBTQ / Two spirited topics are also of interest for these events to encourage education. Bonkowski says that we should aim for October / December so that the first term has two health chats. Efimoff mentions puppy room. Kiani suggests a planning session. Efimoff also expresses interest in participating and will also own the initiative along with Bonkowski, Kiani, Anderson. Ghaith suggests fundraising efforts, potentially through StudentCare (~\$1000) as there is no exact budget line for this service. This could also help for speakers.

## **6. Session 3 – (May 7<sup>th</sup> 2017) GSA Initiatives for the upcoming year (8:00 -10:00 p.m.)**

### **6.1. GSA Survey – Discussed Day 1. See Section 5.3.**

### **6.2. Orientations**

Orientation is a major task for the VP Student Affairs (Kiani). Ghaith and Kiani have discussed and agree that September 6, 2017 will be the best date at this time. This is the first day of classes. Ghaith says we will need to coordinate with USSU regarding their use of the Bowl. Kiani says after USSU orientation might be best, Ghaith says during could also work. Ghaith suggests that for now the dates to consider will be between September 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. University Orientation takes place September 1<sup>st</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>.

Orientation also involves ordering the planner through the CFS. This is Anderson's responsibility. Last year the VP External ordered 1500, this was excessive. Ghaith suggests 1200 this year. This will require fundraising, ~ \$5000. Ghaith also suggests the inclusion of coupons to entice students. Anderson will approach USSU about working together on coupons for the planners. Kiani will also participate.

Ghaith will fundraise for a coordinator for this event. This will likely be the same coordinator for all of Kiani's portfolio. Estimated start date for this coordinator is August 1, 2017. In the meantime, Kiani will begin planning for Orientation. Ghaith suggests

working closely with Rohovich for this event as she is privy to feedback. One specific point is food, and Kiani is also interested in potentially offering T-shirts. The budget is \$7000. Potential food item for this event is hot-dogs.

### **6.3. Graduate Students Achievement Week**

This involves 3MT and Gala. Dates and guests should be decided as early as possible. Easter is early this year, eliminates the last week of March. Efimoff and Ghaith suggest the first week of April, so the Gala will take place on April 7<sup>th</sup> with Achievement week spanning from April 3-7, 2018. There will be a coordinator for the Gala pending fundraising efforts. This coordinator would be employed from January until April. Efimoff would like to sit on the committee again this year, and suggested more delegation will remove worries about responsibility. Andersone expresses that maybe this role is not suited to the VP External's portfolio, this is an item that can be considered in the future. Ghaith suggests making a recommendation to the Governance committee.

### **6.4. Social Events**

In 2016/17 the executive elected to have one social event a month. Ghaith suggests that due to budgetary concerns there should only be a social event every two months. Efimoff says that not all events require alcohol, this would cut costs significantly and would allow for more engagement. Based on discussion there will be one (1) social event each month from September to April. April will feature two due to Achievement Week/Gala and the Year End Social. Kiani has expressed concern regarding the time involved with planning these initiative, as well as concerns with removing alcohol. Efimoff offers compromise with three events a term. Kiani agrees. Andersone says she is willing to help, as if Efimoff. In total, the GSA will hold six (6) social events for the 2017-18 academic year. Dates to follow.

### **6.5. Workshops**

Health chats constitute a workshop. Workshops occur roughly once a month. Kiani says once a month is too much expense and time-wise. In the past, Executive had held anti-racism/oppression workshops. This was a popular event. Efimoff says that once every two

months seem sufficient. This would mean 4 workshops a year. This allows for more money to build and advertise the workshops appropriately.

### **6.6. Tuition Consultation**

University says they set tuition based on four pillars: Accessibility, Affordability, [TBD]. GSA facilitates a consultation with the Dean of CGPS that serves a platform for discussion on the matter. Last year this took place in October. Last year the GSA wrote a report about this consultation and submitted it to the University board. This report expresses student concerns regarding utilization of the forum's feedback. Ghaith hopes to involve the Provost in discussions this year and have it as early as possible. He will take on the responsibility of contacting essential participants.

### **6.7. Tax Filing**

This service began last year. It provides free tax filing for Grad students. This is through CFS and UFile. This was a popular service with tangible results for participants. This is Bonkowski's responsibility. This will happen February – April (tax season). Bonkowski will coordinate with Anderson for communicating with CFS. Issues with coordination that will need to be improved to maximize the benefits of the service.

### **6.8. GSA App**

This has been discussed in Section 5.9. The Executive will advocate its use among students. This is an effective channel to reach students, so the Executive must use it to the best of their ability. The developer has a relationship with CFS, which covers the cost. Efimoff wonders what the app offers that is different from other social media channels as students do not want to download another app. At this point, there needs to be more input to the app to make it successful. Bonkowski mentions outgoing VP Ops felt promotion during orientation was the best method. Also, there are options for promotion in the GSA planner.

## **6.9. Sustainability**

This is an ad-hoc committee that was formed last year that will become a formal committee at the next Council meeting. This committee hosted a Sustainability Slam, which went very well. Ghaith has delegated sitting on another sustainability committee to Jaylene Murray. Ghaith has communicated with Murray in order to implement more sustainability initiatives and collect funds. Efimoff says the Office of Sustainability is also a good source for swag and funds. Ghaith suggests that Efimoff be responsible for this committee. Bonkowski seconds. Efimoff agrees to take on this role. Bonkowski will forward Efimoff Murray's email information as well as other necessary information. Ghaith will serve as a resource member.

## **6.10. Town Halls**

Town halls are organized on a need-basis. In the past, these have involved issues with tuition, internationalization, etc. This involves engagement with general Members and Council. Andersone expresses concern with attendance of general Members. It is the Executive's responsibility to engage with students in order to increase attendance. Efimoff says that they are very informative and will increase awareness and education on a variety of topics. Ghaith will approach Executives with town hall proposals. This is very dependent on the state of affairs.

## **6.11. RISE conference**

Efimoff and Kiani attended last year with outgoing VP Student Affairs and Finance. This is a CFS conference. Kiani hopes to host the RISE Conference in Saskatoon for the upcoming year. Efimoff and Andersone will serve on the RISE committees as the provincial and federal representatives respectively. Ghaith encourages that Efimoff advocate for the hosting rights for 2018. Key contact is [TBD]. Efimoff is willing to serve as main contact with Kiani's assistance when needed. Some ground work has already been laid for this initiative. Efimoff will connect with Regina's student union in order to coordinate with their GSA as well. Andersone will also serve as an aid for this initiative as per her portfolio and affiliation with CFS. Ghaith would like to know if Saskatoon will be hosting by the end of August.

#### **6.12. Inclusion of Elders and Indigenous Students – Added by Efimoff**

This is in response to historical requests for Elders to participate in GSA events. This is not appropriate unless it is a spiritual / ceremonial event, or something they have already been involved in within the community. It can be viewed as tokenistic to include them without considering these parameters. Efimoff also emphasizes communication be thoughtful and planned when including Indigenous matters at events, rather than on the fly and forgotten. Efimoff will serve as the resource for these decisions moving forward.

#### **7. Break: Tea/Coffee (10:00 a.m.– 10:30 a.m.)**

#### **8. Session 4 – Scheduling (10:30 a.m.– 12:00 p.m.)**

##### **8.1. Board Action Plan**

This has been discussed in Section 4.1. This involves initiatives like Think GRAD, financial issues, etc. Anderson is expressing concern regarding affiliation with Think GRAD. Ghaith says it is the Executive's duty to explore these initiatives and then evaluate whether or not it can be successful. Anderson feels that it will have negative repercussions and would like to discuss council. Efimoff says the information should be presented neutrally and transparently to Council in order to allow for their input. Ghaith reiterates that it is the Executive's responsibility to perform an in-depth analysis in order to present all the facts to Council so they may make an informed decision on whether to continue with the incorporation / affiliation of Think GRAD. Anderson highlights outreach efforts will also need to be included in Action Plans in collaboration with Kiani. Lobbying efforts will always go through Ghaith in order to ensure the credibility and public image of the GSA is maintained.

Bonkowski will create a template for action plans – which will be circulated by end of day May 12.

##### **8.2. Executive Meetings**

Scheduled on Day 1, see section 4.2

### **8.3. Council Meetings**

Scheduled on Day 1, but amendments to be made:

June meeting must be changed due to the availability of the Council Chair.

June 28: 5:00 – 7:00 pm

August meeting will be discussed with Council in order to determine best time. Potential dates include: 8, 9, 10, 16, 17, or anytime between 21-24.

### **8.4. GSA Events**

In order to ensure Commons availability, the following dates have been designated for GSA events:

Orientation – September 6, 2017 (or potentially another date from September 5-8)

Wine & Cheese – Friday September 22, 2017 ~7 pm

Halloween Social – Friday October 27, 2017 ~6pm

Holiday Social – Last day of classes, December 8, 2017 ~7 pm

Wine & Cheese – Friday, January 26, 2018

Valentine's Social – Friday, February 16, 2018

Achievement Week – April 2-6, 2018

Gala – Saturday, April 7, 2018

Year End Social – After AGM, April 2018 [TBD]

Workshops will require some brainstorming / networking so these will be done closer to the dates. Health Chats will be held to this same standard. Aim for November for sure. Introductory in September.

**Day 2 Adjournment at 12:05 pm**