



**University of Saskatchewan  
Graduate Students' Association  
Executive Committee  
Retreat Agenda (12 PM – 9 PM)  
May 13, 2018**

**Present:** Naheda Sahtout (President), Jesus Corona Gomez (VP Finance and Operations), Edgar Martinez-Soberanes (VP Student Affairs), Somtochukwu Ufondu (VP External), Marie-Eve Presber (Indigenous Liaison), Candace Suessmilch (Office Manager)

**Regrets:** none

**Absent:** none

**SESSION ONE: 12 PM – 3 PM**

**1. Call to Order / Opening Remarks**

The President calls the meeting to order at 12:10 PM.

The President wishes to thank everyone for committing to the GSA and for representing graduate students in the University, in the community and across Canada. It is wonderful to see dedicated individuals on this year's Executive team and looks forward to a remarkable year ahead.

The President indicates that the purpose of today's meeting is to set the goals for the year ahead. It is an informal meeting and it is expected that should anyone have any questions to please raise them when appropriate. The President hopes that a discussion will ensue instead of it being a monologue.

**2. Signing of Confidentiality Agreement**

The President indicates that in our position as Executives, we will have access to information that must remain confidential. Not only does this include confidentiality of others information but also confidentiality of discussions that occur within the Executive during meetings. This agreement was created last year and as per our Bylaws it is required that each Executive sign this confidentiality agreement within the first month of their term.

**3. Executive Introductions / Structure of the GSA**

The President asks each individual to introduce themselves, their background and their motivation for standing for election in the GSA and for representing graduate students.

The President then explained the structure of the GSA, but also urged the Executives to look through the Constitution, Bylaws and Policies.

- The Executive committee consists of the President, Vice-Presidents and Indigenous Liaison. The Executive is accountable to Council and the Regular Membership.

- The President and Vice-Presidents constitute the Board of Directors. It is necessary to have a Board so as to maintain Not-for-Profit status.

VP External asked a clarification with regards to what the change in the governance structure was. It was explained that there was confusion with regards to the exact roles of the Board, Executives and Council that created tension last year. The Governance Committee discussed this extensively last year and recommended to the general membership at the Annual General Membership the change in the governance structure to ensure that best practices are being met and that the best interest of the Association is kept in mind.

- There exists a Council, which consists of;
  - o The Executive
  - o A representative from each Academic Council and a representative from IGSC
- Executive meetings occur once / month from May to August and twice / month from September to April.
- Council meetings occur once / bi-monthly from May to August and once / month from September to April.
- There is an Annual General meeting sometime between Septembers to April.
- The Office staffs consist of the Office Manager and the Commons Coordinators,

VP External asked about the position of Council Chair. It was explained that a Call for Council Chair occurs at the beginning of September. The Chair must not be an Executive or a member of Council but must be a member of the GSA. The Chair oversees the Council meetings and also acts the Chief Electoral Officer for GSA Elections.

The President explained that as per our Policies, Executives must not miss more than 3 Executive meetings in total, and 2 consecutive meetings. It is acceptable if Executives need to teleconference / phone-in to meetings in order to ensure their attendance.

#### **4. Committee Appointments**

The President indicates that a graduate student representative sits on University Council committees, CGPS committees as well as other committees that are directly related to the student experience or academic life at the University of Saskatchewan. As per our Bylaws, the Executive must identify and determine who will sit on these committees. The President had circulated the committee list with recommended assignments. Most assignments were not based on any standards but were based on experience, background, interest, portfolios as well as individual's schedules and commitments outside the GSA. The fact that a certain Executive had previously sat on a committee does not insinuate that the same Executive sits on the committee this year, with the exception of some committees.

The Indigenous Liaison indicated that in the past the Indigenous Liaison sat on TLARC and understands that non-participation might be an issue. She feels that an Indigenous voice might be valuable on this committee. VP Student Affairs indicated that he had attended the TLARC meeting but also recognizes that APC and TLARC are quite similar and that an Indigenous voice is needed for both meetings. VP Student Affairs inquires which committee the Indigenous Liaison feels that she would be able to provide more insight into and the Indigenous Liaison

indicates that as per the mandate, she feels that she would be able to provide more in TLARC. VP External, after questioning the mandate of each Committee, also indicates that perhaps an Indigenous voice would be more valuable in TLARC. Edgar indicates that this is fine.

There was an in-depth discussion about the Governance Committee and the representative graduate student that would sit on this Committee. The President explained that currently the student representative is a non-voting participant and student status on this committee is again up for discussion for the following year. The President explained that it is important that the individual to sit on this committee have an in-depth knowledge of the University's policies and be able to participate in the discussions. There was a general consensus that it was important that the individual for this Committee have a strong understanding to University policies so as to be of benefit to graduate students.

VP Finance and Operations asked whether guest graduate students can come to meetings. The President and others explained that this is not possible, unless the Chair of the Committee is aware of this and requests it. There are many circumstances in which guests come to meetings to talk about specific topics but then leave after the discussion of that topic. These should be discussed with the Committee Chair and there needs to be justification as to why the guest is being requested.

The President indicates that it is crucial to commit to the committees that you will be appointed to and attend all meetings. This builds the credibility of the GSA and indicates that graduate students are involved and valuable members of the University community. Most University Council committees meet once a month, as do most CGPS committees. Some of the other committees do not meet as often or meet only during certain parts of the year. Committee terms of reference can be found on the University website. It is important to discuss with the chair of your committee whether a delegation system is possible. For example, if you were unable to attend, could another Executive attend in your place? Some committees may not permit this so it is important to verify this at the beginning of September. Indigenous Liaison indicated that she is here to help the team and if anyone feels that these committees are overwhelming that she is willing to assist.

Indigenous Liaison inquires as to the composition of the Student Forum Executive and Student Forum. The President explained that it is important to have the Indigenous Liaison sit on the Executive so that an Indigenous voice is shared. The President also explained that while two individuals are put forth as names to the Student Forum, generally the invitation to attend Student Forum allows for several students to attend to provide insight into the topics of discussion.

VP External asks about whether there would be conflicts of times for committee meetings. The President explains that generally this is not the case, and she has not seen this as an issue as of yet. Indigenous Liaison asks about her current participation in the GSA Code of Ethics Committee, seeing as she is now the Indigenous Liaison. The President explained that since she has informed the Committee that there may be a perceived conflict of interest, it is the Committees decision to see whether this conflict of interest would hinder the proceedings of any hearings.

***Motion: To approve the committee assignments. Moved by The President. Seconded by Indigenous Liaison. Motion carried.***

The President will communicate these assignments to the necessary administration and individuals will be notified of meeting dates and meeting documents once they are added to the committee.

The President also indicates that as per our Policies, Executives sit on certain GSA Standing committees by virtue of their position. These will reconvene starting in the fall term and so further discussions on this will occur at a later time.

## **5. 2018 Convocation Attendance**

The President has received an invitation for the GSA Executives to participate as members of the Chancellor's Platform Party at the 2018 spring convocations. This is a standing tradition for student leaders, and as members of the Platform Party, we sit on stage during convocations. The dates for the ceremonies are as follows. The President notes that there are fall convocation ceremonies as well, so in the end, the number of times each of us participates will balance out. Sometimes it is easier that individuals participate in the ceremonies of one day. All ceremonies are held at TCU place.

June 4 @ 9 AM: VP Student Affairs

June 4 @ 2 PM: VP Student Affairs

June 5 @ 9 AM: VP Finance and Operations

June 5 @ 2 PM: VP Finance and Operations

June 6 @ 9 AM: Indigenous Liaison

June 6 @ 2 PM: Indigenous Liaison

June 7 @ 9 AM: VP External

June 7 @ 2 PM: VP External

The President will forward to the Executives the email invitation so that they can RSVP.

## **6. Approval of the Agenda**

The President asked whether there were any amendments to the agenda.

***Motion: To approve the agenda as circulated. Moved by VP Student Affairs. Seconded by Indigenous Liaison. Motion carried.***

## **7. Team Building**

The President indicates that it is important to outline the roles and responsibilities of Executives at this retreat so that each individual can plan for the year ahead.

### ***7.1. Executive Duties and Responsibilities***

Each Executive has two types of duties; those governed by our Bylaws and those we chose to pursue during our tenure.

The President informs the Executives that at each Council meeting, each Executive is expected to write a report (previous reports are available online as examples) that will be included in the agenda package, as well as do a no more than 3 minute verbal report. These reports ensure that

Council can keep up with our doings and as we are accountable to Council, it is important that Council is well informed.

If individuals are unable to attend Council meetings, due to conference travel, they should provide the President with a statement that she can then read to Council on their behalf. They should also inform the Chair of their absence.

As per our Bylaws, Executives must;

- Be familiar with the governing documents, the Non-Profit Corporations Act, the U of S Act, Roberts Rules of Orders and other documents;
- Determine which individual will go to CFS and ThinkGrad conferences;
- Act as ambassadors of the Association within the University and in the community;
- Assist each other to ensure that the well-being of the Association is maintained.
- Be professional, respectful, courteous and responsible in everything that you do and when presenting yourself.
- Ensure continuity of roles and seek assistance from other Executives when feeling overburdened.

It is crucial to foster a culture of teamwork. It is also important to acknowledge mistakes as soon as they happen so that the Executive team can learn and mitigate through these mistakes appropriately. The President indicates the importance for each of us to accept positive and constructive feedback from each other as this allows us to learn and grow as individuals.

Indigenous Liaison indicates that as part of Indigenous culture, it is important to be supportive and have a willingness to talk with each other and share our burdens. We are ultimately a family and are here to work together and help each other.

Any communication with the members will be facilitated by VP External through CGPS. VP External will work with the President to ensure emails through CGPS follow the memorandum of agreement. As per earlier discussions between the President and VP External, VP External has delegated facebook posts to the President and twitter posting to Office Manager, who will ensure posts on facebook are tagged to twitter. For facebook / twitter, content should be related to the services / events offered by the GSA or Academic Councils / Social Clubs or opportunities that would benefit graduate students, such as scholarships or workshop opportunities. Any Executive is welcome to email the President with content to post on facebook.

Office Manager requests that Executives provide her a schedule of when the Executives will be available in the GSA Office so that she is able to direct the students as see fit. Executives agreed that Office Manager can text them when a student is requesting to meet with them.

## ***7.2. Executive / Council Meetings***

As per our Bylaws, Executives must meet at least once / month in May – August and twice / month in September – April. The President proposes that Executive meetings occur on Thursdays from 5 – 7 PM. Executives agreed that Thursdays are suitable. Dates for Executive Meetings for May – August are;

- May 24
- June 28
- July 19

- August 23

Fall Executive meetings can be decided in the August Executive meeting. Executives were in agreement with the scheduled meeting times.

As per our Bylaws, Council must meet at least once from May-June, once from July-August. The President proposes that Council meetings continue occurring on Tuesday from 5 – 7 PM.

Proposed dates for Council meetings are;

- |                |               |                       |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| - June 19      | - November 13 | - March 12            |
| - August 14    | - December 11 | - April 9             |
| - September 25 | - January 15  | - April 16 (tentative |
| - October 16   | - February 12 | AGM)                  |

The President will communicate with the Chair with regards to the June and August Council meetings and Executives agreed that the fall / winter meetings can be confirmed at the August Executive meeting.

### **7.3. Executive Communication**

The President indicates that generally emails should be responded to within 48 hours.

The President proposes two methods of communication between Executives;

- Formal: through emails
  - o Emails should generally be replied to within 48 hours
  - o If an opinion or decision needs to be made, if no response is received within 48 hours then that implies consensus with the decision
  - o If an urgent decision needs to be made, then the subject of the email should indicate the timeline and URGENT.
- Informal: through the facebook group chat
  - o Just as important for bonding between Executives
  - o For informal questions or discussions that do not require decisions to be made

The President indicates that it is important for Executives to visit the Commons to;

- Socialize with Members
- Get to know the Executive and Office Staff

Executives were in favour of the email communication and understood the need to visit the Commons.

### **7.4. Executive Decision Making**

The President indicates that the Executives will follow Roberts Rules of Orders for all meetings. The President will share a video after the retreat for a brief introduction to these rules. The decision making process is a vital component of financial decisions, Executive decisions and unique instances that come to the Executives attention. Executives need to make a decision on the following items:

- There are 5 Executive members; quorum is majority, so 3 members at least. **All agreed.**
- Majority vote (3 yes, 2 no / abstentions) will be required to carry a decision. **All agreed.**

- 2 yes's and 3 abstentions – this decision should carry as there will be circumstances when individuals must abstain due to conflict of interest. ***Agreed unless abstention is not due to conflict of interest and that further information is required by the Executives for a decision to be made***
- Majority abstention (1 yes, 4 abstentions) indicates a failed vote. ***All agreed.***
- 2 yes, 2 no, 1 abstention indicates a failed vote. ***All agreed.***

VP Student Affairs indicates that in the case where individuals feel that they cannot make an informed decision, is it acceptable to ask for more information and to table the decision until later (or as the time fits)? The President and Indigenous Liaison indicate that this is certainly acceptable. All information required for a decision to be made will be sent to Executives in a timely manner before a decision needs to be made.

Urgent matters requiring an Executive decision may need to be made prior to an Executive meeting, at which case it will be made via email. The 48 hour rule shall apply. Email voting will take place and the VP Finance and Operations will include these motions and votes to the upcoming minutes to ensure transparency for members. The President indicates that any emails requiring a decision via the Executive should include a 'Reply All' in the subject so that all decisions are apparent to everyone.

The President indicates that your Executive portfolio, as per the Bylaws and Policies, will dictate what communication is forwarded to you. For example, any issue pertaining to an Indigenous student will be forwarded to the Indigenous Liaison. Any financial issues will be forwarded to the VP Finance and Operations, any academic issues to the VP Student Affairs... etc. If the Executive seeks input from another Executive, they can choose to forward the communication as they see appropriate.

## **SESSION TWO: 3 PM – 5 PM**

### **8. GSA Services**

Executives will be responsible to ensuring the following services are continuously offered and maintained.

#### **8.1. GSA Commons**

The VP Finance and Operations and the Office Manager are responsible to ensuring the proper maintenance of the Commons. The Commons is now equipped with a projector system. Extra tables have been budgeted for this year as an extra added value cost to renting the Commons. Coffee / Tea / Hot Chocolate are available for graduate students during office hours, and not during events. Coffee is available at an extra cost for events. Also, as per the recommendations of the Sustainability Committee last year, the Commons is now equipped with reusable cups and plates that will be used for GSA Events and meetings. The Commons also has a single stream-lined recycling bin. The President also indicates that Iloradanon Efimoff has also solicited Indigenous artwork that will be delivered to the Commons sometime in the next few months. This will hopefully reiterate the importance of the Indigenous community and contribute to providing a more aesthetically appealing area.

The President plans to work on identifying fundraising sources for A/C in the Commons to ensure that our graduate students have a comfortable working environment and welcomes any suggestions.

The President indicates that rental of the GSA Commons is a source of revenue that the Association relies on and allocates budgeting for every year. The President encourages Executives to look at the website so that they are aware of the rules and regulations to bookings.

- Free for GSA ratified groups during office hours
- \$50 / hour for GSA ratified groups after office hours, during weekends and holidays
- \$75 / hour for GSA non-ratified groups
- Other costs include coffee, BBQ's and tables (once they are purchased)

The President describes personal use of the GSA Commons. Based on previous years, Executives could use the space twice (2) year for no charge, for their department or social group or for a personal event ONLY if usage did not require a coordinator. This promotes appreciation for the Executives work and as long as no Coordinators are required, would not add an extra cost to the Association.

***Executives approve that Executives are able to use the Commons for 2 events at no cost, only if no Coordinator is required.***

The President indicates the importance of a balance between having events in the Commons and leaving the space event-free. The space is intended for graduate students and therefore it is important that events are not constantly hindering students from using the space as space for studying, using the computers or socializing.

## **8.2. ISIC Cards**

As part of our affiliation with the Canadian Federation of Students, our members are eligible to obtain an ISIC card for free. These can be obtained online and members will receive occasional reminders about this through Emails and social media.

## **8.3. UPASS**

The UPASS offers huge savings for our members as it is a discounted price for the use of Saskatoon Transit. The pass is currently only offered in the fall and winter terms. Our agreement with Saskatoon transit dictates the opt-out eligibilities. USSU currently administers the UPASS for our members at a cost of \$1.50 / sticker, as per an agreement. This is ideal for the GSA as we do not have the staff / resources to administer the UPASS to our members.

In 2014, a referendum did not pass and this eliminated the spring / summer UPASS. Surveys and discussions have indicated a split vote regarding the want for the spring / summer UPASS. The President will reach out again this year to Saskatoon Transit to see if they will offer other options.

## **8.4. Health and Dental Plan**

Students pay about \$459 for health and dental, through Studentcare. The President indicates that the VP External, also as the chair of the Health and Dental Committee, acts as the Liaison



between the Association and Studentcare. Colten Yamagishi and Kristen Foster are the Studentcare representatives and have been very engaged and communicative with the GSA. The Executives will generally participate in an orientation session with them and Studentcare generally attends one of the earlier Council meetings to present on the services provided under the plan. Studentcare has also been a strong supporter of many of our events and their generosity is appreciated.

One of the important ongoing discussions is the participation of Postdocs in the Health and Dental Plan. Currently Postdocs are in negotiations with the University and the President has a meeting set-up with the Society for Postdocs Executives. Postdocs can opt-in to the Plan and this has an effect to the price of the plan due to usage. Depending on the conversations and the negotiations, there shall be consultations with the Postdoctoral society to ensure that a consensus is reached with regards to opt-in to the Plan. The President indicates that she has experience with the Plan and the logistics and is available for assistance if the need arises, although indicates that Colten is very responsive to emails.

#### ***8.4. GSA Survey***

The GSA Survey was distributed in April / May to graduate students. This in-depth survey covers various matters pertaining to graduate students. The survey will close soon and the President, upon final amendment to the Ethics, will be able to compile the data and publish the results. This survey was created by a group of dedicated individuals that will be acknowledged upon publication. The results will be shared with Council and the Executives and this will be used as a tool for advocacy for graduate students.

#### ***8.5. Social Groups***

Any group of graduate students who wish to be ratified under the GSA may do so under the guidelines provided in our Policies. The VP Student Affairs is responsible for processing Social Club ratification forms. These can be academic, cultural or social clubs that follow specific guidelines, as outlined in our Policies. Ratification is required every September and is approved by Council. Groups must fill out the forms found on the website and once ratified are able to use the Commons as ratified groups and apply for funding. Social club funding is budgeted for and groups can apply for a maximum of \$500 / academic year.

#### ***8.6. GSA Council***

The Council is a compilation of representatives from each Academic Unit, a single department or a College. Each Unit reapplies to be part of the Council before the September Council meeting. Ratification forms are directed towards the President. Depending on the number of graduate students within the Unit, one or two representatives may be present on the Council. The forms are available online and a call for Academic Councillors will be sent out early September through the Chair and through Email notifications to all graduate students. It is important this year to try and reach departments / colleges that have not been involved.

#### ***8.7. Human Resources and Commons Operations***

The Vice-President Finance and Operations and the Office Manager are responsible for this. Certain policies have been developed last year to ensure transparency and accountability.

Coordinators are paid the PSAC rate and this is currently \$19.64 and will be increased to \$20.04 on September 1, 2018, to keep consistent with the agreement.

Office Manager and VP Finance and Operations will be hiring 2 coordinators towards the end of summer for the new academic year. Coordinator positions will be advertised through SECC and recruiting will likely take place in late August.

#### ***8.8. GSA Social Media, App and Website***

The President has worked on the website over the last few months and still has a few more things that need to be updated. The President welcomes suggestions on how content can be improved. The President will work with Candace to ensure the sustainability and continuity of updating the website even after her term as President is done.

The GSA has facebook and twitter. These are used as a means of communicating with our members. This generally falls under the VP External portfolio. VP External has delegated social media responsibilities to the President / Office Manager. The President indicates that while it is important to post on social media, we must not over-post and we must post only content relevant to the GSA and its initiatives as well as initiatives that will benefit graduate students.

The GSA also has an app which requires more commitment from somebody to continually being updated. It is important for updates in the app for all initiatives that the GSA is doing. The President asks if someone would like to take ownership of the app to ensure it is constantly updated. VP Student Affairs and VP External expressed interest. The President will ask Ghaith to discuss the APP and how it can be updated.

#### ***8.9. GSA Bursaries***

These are needs-based bursaries whereby applications are offered 3 times a year; June / October / February. This falls under the VP Finance and Operation's portfolio with the VP Student Affairs assisting in the Selections Committee. The President indicates that hard-copy applications have been effective this last year, in ensuring that documents are complete and there is no missing information. In summer 2018, \$10,000 will be distributed (so 10 bursary applications). Calls for applications will be made through social media / PAWS / emails. A call should be made on June 1<sup>st</sup>.

The President will spearhead funding efforts for the fall and winter bursaries, as well as other initiatives for the year through CGPS. The President will guide VP External VP External when it comes time to fundraise for the Conference / 3MT and Gala, as fundraising efforts are now under the VP External's portfolio.

#### ***8.10. GSA Guppies***

This service is under the VP External's portfolio and allows for graduate students to participate in campus rec programs during the year. This is budgeted for and it is an opportunity for the GSA to promote health and wellbeing for graduate students. The budget allows for a maximum of two teams each term.

VP Student Affairs inquires as to whether the team needed to be 100 % graduate students. The President indicates that the majority should be graduate students but that others can join. The GSA pays for the cost of the team but not any other costs.

### **SESSION THREE: 6 PM – 9 PM**

#### **9. GSA Initiatives for the 2018 / 2019 Academic Year**

While these initiatives fall under the portfolio of VP Student Affairs / VP External, they will require all Executives to pitch in and offer their assistance.

##### ***9.1. Fall / Winter Orientation***

Orientations are key events and are organized by the VP Student Affairs. VP Student Affairs has had experience organizing these events as he was the Coordinator last year and the President is pleased to see that he has already started organizing for the Fall Orientation. The date that has been set aside for the Fall Orientation is September 5, 2018. The President asks VP Student Affairs to coordinate with the USSU.

There will be swag at the Orientation as well as handbooks. VP Student Affairs has been working with Office Manager for the swag. The President and Office Manager have completed the handbooks and they are currently under review by CFS. The President reminds the Executives that the Orientation will require everyone to be there in attendance.

The Winter Orientation has been scheduled for January 9, 2019 and VP Student Affairs will discuss this further closer to the date. This Orientation targets students who start in the winter term and was quite successful last year.

VP Student Affairs mentioned there will be the need of volunteers for these events specially for Orientations, he asked the Executives to invite friends to participate as volunteers. Additionally, VP Student Affairs considered to use surveys to see who is interested to be volunteer before and by August interested people will be contacted.

VP Student Affairs asks Indigenous Liaison whether it would be possible to coordinate activities for Indigenous graduate students. Indigenous Liaison indicates that she will discuss this with IGSC to see what the best approach would be to incorporate Indigenous graduate students within the orientation. VP Student Affairs indicates that it is an important addition to the orientation and would like to see it happen.

The President informs the Executives that she will be away from August 30 – September 18 but trusts that the team will do a wonderful job. The President will prepare a message for VP Finance and Operations to say during the fall orientation on her behalf.

##### ***9.2. Social Events***

As part of ensuring that we build a cohesive graduate student community, a series of social events will be organized throughout the year. There are budgetary constraints and it is important to ensure that these events are inclusive to all members. All Executives should be present at the

socials and help the VP Student Affairs. VP Student Affairs has already indicated that these events will occur as follows;

- Fall Wine and Cheese Social: Friday September 28th, 2018
- Halloween Party: Friday October 26th, 2018
- Holiday Party: Friday December 7th, 2018
- Winter Wine and Cheese Social: Friday January 25th, 2019

VP Student Affairs indicated that in June, the World Cup can be projected onto the screens and the projector but no sound will be played. This allows individuals who wish to study at the Commons can still do so. This will be streamed from an app so it doesn't cost the GSA any money. This also will respect both individuals who don't want to watch the games.

VP Student Affairs indicated that there are perhaps other initiatives that can be done to make use of the space and to create an inclusive environment for graduate students. Indigenous Liaison indicated that perhaps we could do a movie night or film festival, with minimal charge. The President added that there will be a kids corner soon. The President also emphasizes that we need to respect copyright law for such events. All Executives agreed that such initiatives would be inclusive for graduate students across campus and would promote the Commons.

### ***9.3. Workshops / Health Chats***

The VP Student Affairs will coordinate a series of workshops for graduate students on topics that are of importance to graduate students.

Health Chats was an initiative that was started two years ago by Executives as a means of promoting personal wellness for graduate students. The VP External is responsible for coordinating a series of Health Chats. Last year, those that were organized were well attended. These events are open to the general University community. This has been budgeted for as the intention is to continue these initiatives to provide an avenue for graduate students alternative means of personal wellness. The President urges VP External to think about these initiatives this summer and think of hosting at least 5 – 6 for the year, starting in September.

### ***9.4. Graduate Student Research Conference***

VP Student Affairs hopes to host the conference this year on February 27 – 28. Last year, due to last minute scheduling, the conference did not happen. However, the President believes that with planning graduate students would participate in the conference as it is an excellent opportunity for them to participate in communicating their research.

### ***9.5 Three-Minute Thesis Competition***

The 3MT Competition is a popular event that the GSA hosts in collaboration with CGPS. This year, the competition has been scheduled for March 27, 2019. VP Student Affairs is responsible for the organization of this competition.

### ***9.6 Annual Awards Gala***

This event honours students and faculty for their commitment and dedication to research, scholarly and artistic pursuits, leadership and community engagement. This year, the Gala has been scheduled for April 6, 2019. VP External is responsible for organizing the Gala in its

entirety. The president indicates that she has experience in the organization of the gala and is available for any help.

### **9.7. Tax Filing**

Being part of CFS, our members are entitled to use the free tax filing system called UFILE. This is a popular service that allows our members to save money. Two years ago, the Executives first offered to assist our members with using this service and it has since then been popular. The VP Finance and Operations is responsible for hosting the “Tax Filing Clinic” during the April month for our members.

### **9.8. Conferences**

As part of our affiliations with CFS and ThinkGrad, we attend conferences. For the 2018/2019 academic year, these include the following;

- Circle of First Nations, Inuit and Metis, CFS (attended by Indigenous Liaison)
- Semi-General Meeting, CFS
- Studentcare Meeting
- ThinkGRAD August Meeting
- National-General Meeting, CFS
- National Graduate Caucus, CFS
- ThinkGRAD April Meeting

The VP External usually attends these meetings, as per their role and unless otherwise indicated, and because of budgetary constraints the President recommends that only one individual be sent to these meetings so that we can ensure maximum participation. If the VP External is unavailable, then another Executive can choose to go to the meeting instead. There may be other conferences that are advertised through CFS; however, these will be contingent on fundraising efforts. The President indicated that Executives will discuss at Executive meetings each of the conferences as they arise and delegate an individual to attend.

### **10. Understanding of the Budget**

The President went over the approved Budget in brief but asks Executives to ask the VP Finance and Operations should they have any questions.

***Executives agreed that discretionary funds are to be used for circumstances that are for the betterment of graduate students and the GSA and NOT be used for personal expenditures.***

### **11. Closing Remarks**

The President is pleased to hear the discussions that took place today and acknowledges the diplomatic nature and respect that was prevalent. She looks forward to the year ahead and encourages Executives to seek input from each other. Ultimately, our goal is to enhance the experience of graduate students at the University of Saskatchewan.

### **12. Adjournment of Meeting**

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 PM.

## Appendix 1: University Committee Assignments

Name of Committee	Name of Representative(s)
<b>Presidents Executive Committee</b>	Naheda Sahtout, Jesus Corona Gomez, Edgar Martinez-Soberanes, Somtochukwu Ufondu, Marie-Eve Presber
<b>University Senate</b>	Naheda Sahtout
<b>University Council</b>	Edgar Martinez-Soberanes
<b>Academic Programs Committee</b>	Marie-Eve Presber
<b>Teaching, Learning and Academic Resource Committee</b>	Edgar Martinez-Soberanes
<b>International Activities Committee</b>	Somtochukwu Ufondu
<b>Planning and Priorities Committee</b>	Naheda Sahtout
<b>Research, Scholarly and Artistic Work Committee</b>	Jesus Corona Gomez
<b>Scholarships and Awards Committee</b>	Jesus Corona Gomez
<b>Governance Committee</b>	Ziad Ghaith
<b>CGPS Faculty Council</b>	Naheda Sahtout, Jesus Corona Gomez, Edgar Martinez-Soberanes, Somtochukwu Ufondu, Marie-Eve Presber, Ziad Ghaith, Scott Adams
<b>CGPS Graduate and Postdoctoral Council</b>	Naheda Sahtout, Jesus Corona Gomez, Edgar Martinez-Soberanes, Somtochukwu Ufondu, Marie-Eve Presber, Ziad Ghaith, Scott Adams
<b>CGPS Executive Committee</b>	Naheda Sahtout
<b>CGPS Awards Committee</b>	Jesus Corona Gomez
<b>CGPS Graduate Programs Committee</b>	Edgar Martinez-Soberanes
<b>CGPS Graduate Academic Affairs Committee</b>	Naheda Sahtout
<b>CGPS Equity and International Committee</b>	Somtochukwu Ufondu
<b>CGPS Interdisciplinary Committee</b>	Somtochukwu Ufondu
<b>CGPS Earned D. Litt / D. Sc. Committee</b>	Edgar Martinez-Soberanes
<b>Fee Review Committee</b>	Naheda Sahtout
<b>Copyright Advisory Committee</b>	Jesus Corona Gomez
<b>Co-Curricular Records Advisory Committee</b>	Naheda Sahtout
<b>Recreation and Athletics Advisory Committee</b>	Naheda Sahtout
<b>Faith Leadership Council</b>	Naheda Sahtout
<b>Student Forum Executive</b>	Edgar Martinez-Soberanes Marie-Eve Presber
<b>Student Forum</b> <i>To be approved at September GSA Council Meeting</i>	Viktoria Hinz Carmen Marquez Mellidez
<b>Facilities Planning Working Group – University Library Transformation Project</b>	Edgar Martinez-Soberanes

<b>Steering Committee – University Library Transformation Project</b>	Edgar Martinez-Soberanes
<b>Alumni Legacy Project – Steering Committee</b>	Naheda Sahtout
<b>Financial Appeals Review Committee</b>	Naheda Sahtout
<b>Parking and Transportation Advisory Committee</b>	Edgar Martinez-Soberanes
<b>Provost’s Advisory Committee on Gender and Sexual Diversity</b>	Marie-Eve Presber

## **Appendix 2: GSA Standing Committee Assignments**

<b>Name of GSA Standing Committee</b>	<b>Name of Representative(s)</b>
<b>Budget and Finance</b>	VP Finance and Operations President
<b>Bursary Selection Committee</b>	VP Finance and Operations VP Student Affairs
<b>Elections and Referenda Committee</b>	n/a
<b>Governance Committee</b>	VP External VP Finance and Operations
<b>Code of Ethics and Discipline Committee</b>	n/a
<b>Health and Dental Committee</b>	VP External VP Finance and Operations
<b>Awards Selection Committee</b>	VP External President
<b>Sustainability Committee</b>	Indigenous Liaison VP External
<b>Diversity Committee</b>	VP External Indigenous Liaison