



**University of Saskatchewan  
Graduate Students' Association  
Executive Meeting (5 PM – 7 PM)  
August 23, 2018**

**Present:** Naheda Sahtout (President), Jesus Corona Gomez (VP Finance and Operations), Edgar Martinez-Soberanes (VP Student Affairs), Somtochukwu Ufondu (VP External),

**Regrets / Absent:** Marie-Eve Presber (Indigenous Liaison)

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

The President called the meeting to order at 5:12pm.

**2. Approval of the Agenda**

The President asked if there were any additions or amendments to the agenda as circulated. VP Student Affairs added items for information; ThinkGrad (5.3) and Orientation Update (5.4).

*Motion to approve the agenda as amended moved by VP Finance and Operations and seconded by VP External.*

*Motion carried.*

**3. Approval of the July 19, 2018 Executive Meeting Minutes**

The President asked whether there were any further amendments to the July 19, 2018 Executive Meeting Minutes.

*Motion to approve the July 19, 2018 Executive Meeting Minutes moved by VP Student Affairs and seconded by VP Finance and Operations.*

*Motion carried.*

**4. Items for Action**

**4.1. Fall Executive Meeting Dates**

As per our governing documents, Executives must meet at least twice a month in the months of September to April.

*Motion to approve the following as the meeting dates for the GSA Executive Meetings for the fall 2018 term moved by President and seconded by VP External.*

*Motion carried.*

September 13  
September 27  
October 11  
October 25

November 8  
November 22  
December 6  
December 20

#### **4.2. GSA Gardening Plot**

The President mentioned that a garden plot was installed outside of the GSA last year, as part of a new initiative by one of the Executive members. It was indicated that it is very difficult for the Office Manager to garden during office hours, and none of the Executives seemed to have time to garden. The President indicates that SENSSA has shown interest in using the plot for gardening purposes. It was mentioned that it would seem reasonable to allow them to use the plot, keeping in mind that in the future this agreement can be re-evaluated by future Executives.

*Motion to allow SENSSA to use the GSA garden plot moved by VP Student Affairs and seconded by VP Finance and Operations.*

***Motion carried.***

#### **4.3. Search Committee**

The VP Finance and Operations received correspondence on July 25<sup>th</sup> from the Office of the Vice-President Research indicating that the University is resuming the Search Committee for the Associate Vice-President Research position. As with all senior admin search committees, the composition, as approved by the University Board of Governors, must include a graduate student appointed by the GSA. The President reached out to Zoe Gillespie, a College of Medicine Graduate Student Society Academic Council Representative to see whether she would be interested in sitting on this search committee. Ms. Gillespie has indicated that she is indeed interested; therefore:

*Motion to approve Zoe Gillespie to serve as the GSA representative on the Search Committee for the Associate Vice-President Research moved by the President and seconded by the VP Student Affairs.*

***Motion carried.***

#### **4.5. Cheque Remittance**

Whereas GSA Bylaws 5.4.3 restricts expenditure amounts above \$500, of any budget line, with the exception of salaries and Executive honorariums, without a majority vote of the Executive. BIRT that the following expenditure be authorized:

- Payment to One Brand Partner in the Sum of \$1917.47 issued on August 14, 2018 for orientation swag.

*Motion to approve the above expenditure moved by the VP Finance and Operations and seconded by the President.*

*Motion carried.*

## **5. Items for Information / Discussion**

### **5.1. LGBTQ2+ Museum Sponsorship**

The President indicated that the GSA was invited to participate as a sponsor to building the LGBTQ2 Museum in Ottawa for a 3 years commitment of at least \$500 / year. The VP Finance and Operations asked what the benefit would be for GSA members. VP Student Affairs mentioned that the only benefit they could provide would be to have free access to the museum although it would be difficult for graduate students to have access to it due to the location. The VP Student Affairs mentioned that it could be a good idea to direct them to other associations such as the USSU Pride Center. The VP External mentioned that this might not be part of the general interest of the GSA members and few people might travel to Ottawa to visit the museum. The President indicated that the GSA supports any individual/group initiative that would create a positive and inclusive space for all our members at the U of S. The President indicated that since this required budgetary allocations, this will be brought up in GSA Council, likely in September, for a discussion and a decision from Council.

### **5.2. GSA-St John Ambulance Partnership**

VP External talked to Patty Booth, the manager of St. John Ambulance, Saskatoon. Currently, they have a 10% discount in place for students already. VP External requested an extra discount based on a partnership, Patty Booth mentioned that the partnership with the GSA might be possible, and would include a 20% discount for students, if the GSA can guarantee at least 200 participants in a year. The President mentioned that we need to be very cautious about such partnerships because future Executives might not want to follow this initiative. The VP External mentioned that it would have to be renewed every year. It was suggested that it be made clear what could happen if we don't have the 200 people, and whether the partnership could be renewed every year. It was also mentioned that in order to meet the 200 participants' requirement per year, we would have to hold 10 sessions of a minimum of 20 attendees, which may not be feasible. VP Student Affairs mentioned that the difference in the price is not enough to attract people. The President recommends looking into whether First Aid courses are already offered on campus and to what extent student's register for these courses.

## **5.1 ThinkGrad**

The VP Student Affairs mentioned that other universities have an Ombudsman and a special office for student advocacy. It would be beneficial for us to have someone professional to consult and to assist us during hearings and delicate issues, and this would be of great benefit to the students on campus. The VP Student Affairs provided insight into some of the highlights:

- It is important to work in cooperation with University Administration to create policies and options for paid leaves of absence.
- If you go on leave, regardless the reason, as an international student it is very unlikely that a postgraduate work permit will be granted.
- Students in Manitoba don't pay tuition in the summer unless they will graduate in summer, they just pay the student fees.
- In order to increase GSA's recognition at the U of Calgary, they sometimes offer rewards at the end of emails trying to encourage members to read their emails. Thus, the association can track the number of students actually reading emails.
- U of Calgary GSA has partnerships and affiliations with other companies and they use that to help students by sharing promotions.
- In other GSAs, they hold informal sessions with Council member in order to create a stronger and closer relationship, these sessions usually are done in a lounge with coffee.

## **5.2 GSA Orientation update**

The VP Students Affairs mentioned that the company who was supposed to provide the audio had cancel. Thus VP Student Affairs will contact the same person who provided the speakers last year, he mentioned they charged around \$500. Other details regarding Orientation have been foreseen. The President will provide contact information to VP Student Affairs for the MC.

## **6. Other Business**

The President reminded everyone of some important dates:

- Sept 4<sup>th</sup> from 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM – University Welcome (register)
- Sept 4<sup>th</sup> from 12:30 PM – 3 PM – VP Student Affairs and VP Finance and Operations will participate in the Campus Expo
- Sept 5<sup>th</sup> from 7:45 AM – 9 AM – President's Executive Committee Breakfast
- Sept 11<sup>th</sup> from 12 PM to 2:30 PM University Council Orientation (register)
- Sept 18<sup>th</sup> Internal Building Reconciliation Forum 8:30 AM to 6 PM (register)
- The GSA President will be away from August 30<sup>th</sup> to Sep 18<sup>th</sup>, but will still be in access to emails.

## **7. Confidential Session**

## **8. In Camera Session**

## **9. Adjournment of Meeting**

The President asked whether there was any other business arising.

Seeing none, the meeting was adjourned at 6:30 PM.