



University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association

Executive Meeting Minutes

June 12, 2019

Present: Mery Mendoza (President), Mohammad Wajih Alam (VP Finance and Operations), Alejandra Fonseca (VP Student Affairs), Chiamaka Ezekwesili (VP External).

Regrets/Absent: None

Guest: Amara Zuhaib

1. Call to Order / Opening Remarks

The President called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

The president thanked all executives for being active and committed to their roles. She also indicated that it is important for all the executives to continue with the same enthusiasm and dedication throughout the year as it was seen in the first one and half months.

2. Approval of the Agenda

The president asked if there were any additions or amendments to the agenda as circulated. The VP Student Affairs asked to discuss orientation. Following this request, Section 5.3 is renamed as Orientation details to reflect the same.

Motion to approve the Agenda as amended moved by the VP Student Affairs and seconded by the VP External. Vote: Passed

Motion carried.

3. Approval of the May 15, 2019 Executive Meeting Minutes

The President asked whether there were any further amendments to the May 15 Executive Meeting Minutes.

Motion to approve the May 15, 2019 Executive Minutes moved by the President and seconded by the VP Finance and Operations. Vote: Passed

Motion carried.

4. Items for Action

4.1 Funding Request Pakistani Student Association (attached)

The President mentioned that we had a funding request from the Pakistani Student Association (PKSA). This type of funding request is usually added on the agenda and discussed in the Executive meetings. Since the event was scheduled on June 9th and the next executive meeting was scheduled on June 12th, the executives decided to have a meeting on May 28th, 2019 to accommodate the request. The VP Finance and Operations received a clear description and budget from PKSA about the event. The President welcomed Amara to the Executive meeting and asked her to briefly describe the event. Amara mentioned that about 2000 people are expected to attend this event and they plan to setup a booth, sell food and give goodies. She added that the profit will be donated to the food bank and some of the money raised will be used later for the upcoming Eid Festival.

The President asked if other executives had any questions. The VP External asked what the festival was about and how the graduate students were going to get benefitted. Amara added that it is a traditional festival of welcoming spring mainly celebrated in Pakistan and India. There is no space to fly kites in Saskatoon and this event will welcome people from both on and off campus and introduce them to the culture while having fun. The VP Student Affairs asked how the PKSA planned on using funds if the GSA decides to provide funding for this event. Amara replied that the PKSA will use it to sell food and the profit will be donated to the food bank. The VP Finance and Operations asked if their event is on campus or off campus.

Amara replied that the event is off-campus. The VP Finance and Operations asked how the graduate students would benefit from the event as it was not clear. Amara added that the PKSA will be promoting on behalf of students and let general people know that graduate students are at the University.

The President mentioned that when the GSA sponsors an event, the GSA logo is expected to be on the posters and an announcement should be made at the event. Amara agrees to add the GSA logo (found on the website) on posters and advertising material. The President indicated that the decision is based on the budget and not on the event. The President thanked Amara for providing the proposal and further information. She communicated that the decision will be made and will be communicated via email.

The president mentioned that the executives were very happy that the PKSA is participating in such a big event that welcomes such a diverse group off-campus. According to the GSA policies, events off campus should be specifically for graduate students, such as conferences, etc. Since this event is being held off campus, there is not direct benefit to our graduate students, therefore, the GSA would not be able to provide funds to support the event. On behalf of the GSA executives, the PKSA is encouraged to apply for funding for any future events that the PKSA may be organizing that benefits our graduate students.

The President moved not to proceed with the funding of this event based on the above criteria. This motion was seconded by the VP finance and operations. Vote: Passed.

4 in favour

Motion carried

4.2 GSA newsletter

The President mentioned that it is the first time that the GSA has been given an opportunity to communicate with graduate students directly via email. She mentioned that being specific in email communication is important. It was mentioned that the VP Student Affairs is working on the template which will be used for email communication. In general, it was agreed that

the emails will be sent twice per month in Fall and Winter terms and once per month in Spring/ and Summer terms and in December or as need arises.

The VP Finance and Operations moved to approve GSA newsletter. Seconded by the President.

Vote: Passed

Motion carried.

4.3 Barbeque tool kit

President mentioned that Office Manager (Candace) informed that the BBQ tool kit (Wire Bristles) needs to be replaced as it has worn out.

Motion to approve the purchase of Wire Bristles. Moved by VP Student Affairs and seconded by the VP External. Vote: Passed

Motion carried.

4.4 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 expenditures be authorized:

- Payment to StudentCare in the Sum of \$81,318.14 issued on May 29, 2019 for health and dental services to graduate students.
- Payment to Chip Bookkeeping Services Inc. in the sum of \$897.64 issued on May 15, 2019 for bookkeeping services.
- Payment to Nepalese Student Association in the Sum of \$500.00 in support of Nepalese Nite 2019 event.

The VP Finance and Operations moved to approve the above expenditures. Seconded by the President. Vote: Passed

Motion carried.

5. Items for Information / Discussion

5.1 Committees, meetings, events and attendance

The President mentioned that it is important to represent the GSA in all committees, meetings and events. She further emphasized that it is important to be present if the executives have committed to attend any event/meetings. In a scenario where an executive is approached by two meetings, it is important to honor the commitment given to the first meeting so that transparency and trust is maintained. In unforeseen circumstances, it is important to send regrets and communicate with other executives so that an alternative solution can be sought, if needed.

5.2 Social media

The President mentioned that the GSA uses Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and website to communicate with the graduate students. The GSA promotes our events, shares content, and has a big network at both the national and international level which highly benefits graduate students. The office manager handles Twitter, VP Student Affairs handles Facebook, and VP External handles Instagram. It is important to remain on top of them. The next step would be to work on automating tasks so that the posts can be disseminated across all platforms simultaneously. The President mentioned that this will be mentioned again in future meetings. The next meeting is scheduled on Monday June 17th, 2019 at GSA commons at 12:00 PM.

5.3 Orientation Details

The VP Student Affairs mentioned that the Bowl is booked on September 5th which was the originally scheduled date for Fall Orientation of Graduate Students. To handle this inconvenience, she is communicating with USSU in order to book the bowl and come up with a new date. The VP Students Affairs presented a quote on the different possibilities of swags and the President mentioned that this would be discussed further on the next meeting on Monday June 17th, 2019.

5.4 2019 Spring/Summer Bursary Update

The VP Finance and Operations mentioned that the Call for Applications is now open for Spring/Summer term bursary and that the GSA Bursary Selection Committee is being contacted but he has not hear back from them yet. The GSA Bursary Selection Committee will select 10 beneficiaries for the need-based bursary. Once the committee meets and assesses the applications, the recipients will be contacted.

5.5 GSA presence in Nepalese Nite 2019

The executives were invited to join the Nepalese Nite 2019. The VP Finance and Operations went to the event on behalf of GSA. He mentioned that it was a fun event which involved people from both on and off campus. Although the program was focused on introducing Nepal and Nepali culture, he mentioned that the audience was thoroughly involved and enjoyed the event. He was happy to see the engagement of graduate students in the program. He also mentioned that some participants from other organizations were present as well. The President thanked the VP Finance and Operations for attending the event on behalf of the GSA and she further emphasized that it is important to show the presence of GSA in such events to show support.

6. Other Business

7. Confidential Session

8. In Camera Session

9. Adjournment of Meeting

The President asked whether there was any other business arising.

Since there were none, the VP finance and operations moved to adjourn the meeting and the president seconded. Vote: Passed. The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 PM.