



University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association

Executive Meeting Minutes

November 18, 2019

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

Regrets: None

Absent: None

Guest: Stephane Kiefer, Jensen Cherewyk

1. Call to Order / Opening Remarks

The President called the meeting to order at 5:04 pm. The President thanked the executives for working hard and for being on top of all the things.

2. Approval of the Agenda

The President asked if there were any additions or amendments to the agenda as circulated.

The President added the following items for action/information:

Holiday Hangout

Vice President's Annual Christmas reception,

Holiday Cards for Staff, Gift for CGPS,

Mental health workshop.

The VP Finance and Operations added:

Tox on Tap funding request

Motion: To approve the agenda as amended.

Moved: President; Seconded: VP External.

Vote All in Favour, Motion carried.

3. Items for Action

3.1 Physical Therapy Student Society (PTSS) funding request

The VP Finance and Operations received a funding request from the PTSS (Physical Therapy Student Society) and invited one of the PTSS executives to join the GSA Executive Meeting. Stephane Kiefer, attended on behalf of PTSS. The President welcomed Stephane to the GSA Executive meeting and asked for a brief description of the event. Stephane explained that the Physical Therapy Student Society (PTSS) hosted their annual 2019 Fall Formal at the University of Saskatchewan campus on November 15th, 2019. The event was open to all first and second year Master of Physical Therapy (MPT) students, their guests, and the faculty of the School of Rehabilitation Science, within the College of Medicine. This event fosters relationships between students and their professors, which aids in creating strong connections and communication in the classroom and clinically. It had a strong focus around celebrating the achievements of both the MPT students and professors, as awards were given to those based on their academic and clinical successes, as well as community participation. The overall aim of this event was to express their appreciation for and recognize students who have continually exhibited a strong work ethic and passion for the physical therapy profession both academically and clinically. This will enhance student body morale and promote further involvement, participation, professionalism, and growth within their graduate program. The President thanked Stephane for giving details of the event and opened the floor for questions.

The VP Student Affairs asked how many students attended. Stephane explained 113 students attended in total among which 38 students were graduate students. VP Finance and Operations asked if only students cursing their first and second year were allowed to attend, and what would happen if a student is in their third year. Stephane mentioned that this event was only open to first- and second-year students this year but they will be considering having third year students in next year event. The President asked if the amount of money request to GSA has changed since the event already took place. Stephane replied that although the event took place already, the funding support from GSA would help cover the cost of this event as they used money that was budgeted for other activities. 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. The President indicated that the decision is based on the budget and not on the event and thanked Stephane for providing the proposal and further information. She communicated that the decision will be made and will be communicated via email.

Motion: to approve funding in the amount of \$375 for this event

Moved: VP Finance and Operations; Seconded: VP Student Affairs

Vote All in Favour, Motion carried.

3.2 Tox on Tap funding request

The VP Finance and Operations received a funding request from the Tox on Tap (ToT) social club and invited one of their executives to join the GSA Executive Meeting. Jensen Cherewyk attended on behalf of Tox on Tap. The President welcomed Jensen to the GSA Executive meeting and asked for a brief description of the event. Tox on Tap (ToT) is a toxicology graduate student group that aims to bring together the scientific community and the community as a whole to discuss topics related to toxicology and engage people in subjects such as cannabinoids, environmental spills, pharmaceuticals, water contamination, among others, in a casual setting. ToT is requesting funds for four events that will be held on the current academic year. ToT members organize free Talks every two months (four Talks per year, as summer is quiet). By having these talks in a casual setting, such as a pub, it makes the environment more relaxed for graduate students to learn something new and get away from stress for an evening. The President thanked Jensen for explaining more about the event and opened the floor for questions.

The VP Finance and Operations asked how long the Talks event is, how they choose the venue and how many people usually attend these Talks. Jensen explained that these talks are typically 20 minutes long and around 80 people attend each event; the venue varies but they are trying to have a fixed venue. The VP Finance and Operations asked how they select the speakers for these talks. Jensen explained that there are number of variables that play a role in selecting the speaker. But mostly it comes down to the topic and who is available. The President asked if they have looked for other funding sources. They have asked for funding to GIFS and GIWS and they will be getting

some sort of support from these organization. The VP Student Affairs asked about the frequency of these talks. Jenzen mentioned that they are planning 4 talks per year.

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. The President indicated that the decision is based on the budget and not on the event and thanked Jenzen for providing the proposal and further information. She communicated that the decision will be made and will be communicated via email.

Motion: to request details for each event (for example location/date/budget).

Moved: VP Student Affairs; Seconded: President

Vote All in Favour, Motion carried.

3.3 Search for Associate Dean, Research and Faculty Relation for Edwards School of Business

The President mentioned that the Executive Assistant to the Dean of Edwards School of Business is working on the formation of the search committee for the Associate Dean, Research and Faculty Relation for Edwards School of Business. The GSA appoints a graduate student to represent graduate students in this committee. The President mentioned that it is reasonable to appoint an academic councillor from the Edwards School of Business to sit on this committee. As such, she contacted both academic councillors from the Edwards School of Business and Alexander Mueller has agreed to serve on this committee and represent graduate students.

Motion: to approve graduate student Alexander Mueller to sit on this committee.

Moved: VP Student Affairs; Seconded: President

Vote All in Favour, Motion carried.

3.4 GSA retreat

Pertaining to the conversations in previous executive meetings, the VP Finance and Operations wanted to further discuss the purpose of the retreat and the rationale behind hosting it at

Waskesiu Lake. The President mentioned that the retreat is a way of getting all the staff together to reflect on what has worked and what hasn't worked during the year, build strong connections between the coordinators, staff and Executive as well as discuss both short-term and long-term GSA goals among others. We all agreed on the importance of a retreat but the location for the retreat was discussed. Last year it was hold in Waskesiu Lake but the VP finance and Operations is concerned about expenses and inclusivity. We want to include the GSA chair and Secretary to the retreat but may not be financially possible if we do a retreat far away of Saskatoon. Therefore, the executives decided to change the location and date of the retreat to the GSA commons. The VP Finance and Operations will contact the Office Manager to book the GSA commons on Feb 15-17 and inform the coordinators about this change. To make this more inclusive and bring more perspective, the President also suggested to invite all six GSA Board of Directors to this retreat. All executives were in favour of inviting them.

Motion: to approve the change of location of the February GSA Retreat from Waskesiu Lake to the GSA Commons.

Moved: VP Finance and Operations; Seconded: VP Student Affairs

Vote All in Favour, Motion carried.

3.5 Funding request Deadlines

The VP Finance and Operations mentioned that there should be a deadline to submit receipts for reimbursement for social clubs/academic councils who have successfully hosted an event sponsored by GSA. The VP finance and Operations suggested that they can submit receipts within two weeks after the event is held. All executives agreed with the timeline.

Motion: to approve the timeline of up to two weeks to submit a reimbursement receipt after an event sponsored by GSA is hosted.

Moved: VP Finance and Operations; Seconded: President

Vote All in Favour, Motion carried.

3.6 Holiday Hangout event

The President mentioned that the University closes on December during holidays as such, services on campus are also closed and many students and faculty members are affected from it. There is a need within the university community to have open spaces on campus where everyone can join and participate on activities that promote mental health and well-being. The GSA is supporting a collaborative initiative called Holiday Hangout that will take place at the GSA commons on December 25, 27, 30 and 31. The VP External has volunteered to cover the shift on December 25 and on the remaining days, because all executives will be away, a co-ordinator will be hired but the GSA commons space will be given for free. We will be promoting this event via GSA website, newsletter and social media. The GSA is also sponsoring \$200 to cover expenses of the activities of this initiative.

Motion: to support the holiday hangout in an amount of \$200.

Moved: VP Student Affairs; Seconded: President

Vote All in Favour, Motion carried.

4. Items for Information / Discussion

4.1 GSA Bursaries

The VP Finance and Operations mentioned that the GSA Bursary committee met on Wednesday, November 6, 2019 at 4 PM to evaluate the applications. The GSA received 134 bursaries applications and only a limited number of students received this support due to limited funding available. Both successful and unsuccessful applicants will be contacted by the end of November. The President congratulated the VP Finance and Operations as well as the VP Student Affairs for the work he has done with the bursary selection.

4.2 Canadian Blood Services

The VP External mentioned that the Canadian Blood Services (CBS) contacted her to review the partnership between CBS and the GSA. CBS is a non-profit organization that ensure patients have reliable access to blood and other biological products obtained from and in a safe way. They collect plasma and blood from volunteers from the community including the university community. This university attracts students and professionals from all over the world which enriches our community in different ways, including the blood type variety. We want to continue our partnership with CBS and add more support by facilitating and connecting the campus community with the CBS. In fact, CBS provides free bus service for volunteers and with the renewal of this partnership, the Commons will act as the centre point at the University of Saskatchewan. The VP External will provide a sign-up sheet to Candace where the students who are willing to donate blood, would be able to drop-by and sign-up to take the bus service for free. The current Executive agreed that this partnership can be renewed every year upon agreement of each Executive team.

4.3 Annual Gala

The VP External mentioned that the tickets for the GSA Annual Gala were already printed. She mentioned that the emcee has been defined and contacted. Discussions about hiring a pianist during the interim of the activities were discussed. The VP Finance and Operations suggested to ask the DJ of the event to play soft music during such breaks as this is more financially beneficial. All executives congratulated her for being on top of the Gala event.

4.4 Author rights session (library)

The President mentioned that she had contacted the Associate Dean of Library, Rachel Sarjeant-Jenkins, to discuss the possibility of hosting a workshop on Author Rights and Copyright at the GSA Commons. The President further mentioned that a workshop session will be scheduled for November 27th at 1PM and another one will possible be hosted next winter term. The President will provide more information as it becomes available.

4.5 Co-Curricular Record (CCR) meeting

The President mentioned that a meeting is scheduled with one of the employment Coordinators of Career Development and Employment, on Monday, November 25, 2019 at the GSA Commons at 4PM to gather more information about CCR. All executives are encouraged to participate and bring their question to this meeting.

4.6 Microphone for the ear

VP External and the VP Student Affairs have asked in previous executive meetings if an on-ear microphone can be purchased for events such as Zumba and 3 minute thesis competition that require frequent movements. The VP Finance and Operations discussed this with the Office Manager who showed safety concerns and explained that, for sanitary purposes, microphones should be personal. As such, the VP Finance and Operations was looking for other alternatives and would be discussing further with the Office Manager to see if, unavailable on the GSA commons, clip-on portable microphones will be purchased.

4.7 Vice President's Annual Christmas reception

The President mentioned that all executives have been invited to the Vice President's Annual Christmas reception which is scheduled for Thursday, 12 December 2019 from 6:30 PM to 10:00 PM (CST) to be held on Sheraton Cavalier Saskatoon Hotel. The president encouraged executives who will still be in Saskatoon to attend this reception.

4.8 Holiday Cards for GSA Staff and CGPS partners

As it is usually done every year, we are looking for alternatives to give appreciation to the GSA staff and coordinators for the hard work they have done throughout the year. Therefore, the GSA would be distributing holiday wish card and gift cards to the coordinators and staff of the GSA. Furthermore, the President also suggested to give gifts to CGPS staff to show appreciation for their collaboration and support towards students.

4.9 Mental health workshop

The President mentioned that the GSA in collaboration with PSAC is provide a Mental Health workshop on November 20th, from 3PM to 6PM at GSA commons for graduate students and post-doctoral fellows. All graduate students and executives are encouraged to attend. Free coffee/snacks will be provided.

5. Other Business

6. Confidential Session

7. In Camera Session

8. Adjournment of Meeting

The President asked whether there was any other business arising. There were none.

Motion: To adjourn the meeting

Moved: VP External; Seconded: VP Student Affairs

Vote All in Favour, Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 PM