



University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association

Executive Meeting Minutes

November 5, 2020

Present: Humaira Inam (President), Hadi Ramin (VP Finance and Operations), Qasim Gill (VP External), Carmen Marquez (VP Academic and Student Affairs).

Regrets/Absent: None.

Guests: None.

1. Call to Order / Opening Remarks

The President called the meeting to order at 5:33 PM.

2. Approval of the Agenda

The President asked whether there was anything else to add to the agenda as circulated. Seeing none, she asked for a:

Motion to approve the agenda as circulated. The motion was moved by the VP of Academic and Student Affairs and seconded by the VP External. Vote: Passed.

4 in Favour

Motion Passed.

3. Approval of the October 8 and October 22, 2020, Executive Meetings Minutes

The President asked whether there were any further amendments to October 8 and October 22, 2020 Meeting Minutes.

Motion to approve the October 8 and October 22, 2020, Executive Meeting Minutes was moved by VP Academic and Student Affairs and seconded by the VP Finance. Vote: Passed.

4 in Favour
Motion Carried.

4. Items for action

4.1 Halloween Event Prizes

The President informed the Executives that we need to approve the gift card amount for the Halloween events. She asked for a:

Motion to approve a \$75 gift card for the “Halloween Trivia Night” winner was moved by the VP Finance and seconded by the VP External. Vote: Passed.

4 in Favour
Motion Carried.

Motion to approve \$75 (first place), \$50 (second place), and \$25 (third place) gift card prizes for the “Halloween Face painting/Costume” contest winners was moved by the VP Finance and seconded by the VP External. Vote: Passed.

4 in Favour
Motion Carried.

4.2 Search Committee for the Dean, College of Nursing

The President was contacted by the College of Nursing to assign one graduate student

representative to the search committee for the Dean of the College of Nursing.

Motion to approve Kimberly Burscheid as the graduate student representative to serve on the search committee for the Dean of College of Nursing. The motion was moved by the VP Academic and Student Affairs and seconded by the VP External. Vote: Passed.

4 in Favour
Motion Carried.

4.3 Friends for dinner

The VP Academic and Student Affairs informed the Executives that the GSA will be collaborating with the International Student and Study Abroad Centre (ISSAC), along with other university partners, for the “Friends for Dinner” event taking place in December 2020. Due to COVID-19, this event will be held virtually, and students as well as host families are being asked to register by December 1, 2020. The GSA will be promoting this event on our social media platforms and students can register to participate in this event through the Faith Leaders website. The VP Academic shared the event poster with the Executives and asked for a:

Motion to approve the distribution of the Friends for Dinner poster on all GSA social media was moved by VP External and seconded by VP Finance. Vote: Passed.

4 in Favour
Motion Carried.

5. Items for Information / Discussion

5.1 Proposal for Holiday Hangout 2020

The VP Academic and Student Affairs stated that the President and another graduate student, Naheda Sahtout, are proposing an altered “Holiday Hangout” event this year

due to the ongoing pandemic. This event will include the delivery of meals to graduate students in Saskatoon. The President will be requesting GSA Council for the re-allocation of funds in the budget that can go towards purchasing meals for at least 100 students. Additionally, the President and the VP Academic are requesting the International Student and Study Abroad Centre (ISSAC) for a small amount of funding, which will be used to purchase a dessert and thank you cards that can be added to the meals. The President and the VP Academic are awaiting a response from ISSAC regarding this funding proposal.

5.2 Graduate Research Conference 2021

The President asked the VP Finance to update the Executives on the Graduate Research Conference for 2021. The VP Finance informed the Executive team that he is working on the preparation of the research conference poster. He also mentioned that he is thinking of inviting speakers that are focused on COVID-19 research and recovery plans. The President stated that it would be better not to restrict ourselves to COVID-19 topics, rather we should also invite other speakers who can speak on a wide variety of other topics, not related to COVID-19. The President asked the VP Finance to update the Executive team on the progress of the Graduate Research Conference 2021 at the next Executive meeting. The President also asked the VP Academic and Student Affairs to share all communications and materials from last year's Graduate Research Conference with the VP Finance.

5.3 Halloween Events Update

The President asked the VP Academic and Student Affairs to provide an update on the Halloween events. The VP Academic stated there was only one participant for the "Halloween Trivia Night" event, and this student will receive a \$75 gift card. In regard to the "Halloween Costume/Face Painting" contest, the VP Academic informed the Executives that seven costume/face paint pictures were submitted for this contest. A total of 80 votes were recorded, and the winners were as follows; "Spooky Scary

Skeleton” (32 votes); “For the Horde” (18 votes) and “DON’T call me Nymphadora, call me Tonks” (16 votes). The VP Academic confirmed that she checked whether all voters were graduate students in order to ensure fairness, and she will be sending a thank you email to all participants along with information on their gift card prizes. The President stated that we will be announcing the “Halloween Trivia Night” and “Halloween Costume/Face Paint” contest on our social media platforms.

5.4 Winter Orientation 2021

The President informed the Executives that there is \$3,300 available in the budget for the GSA Winter 2021 Orientation, and we will be hosting it on January 4, 2021. However, we will require approval from the PRT team for this event as we would like to give out swag bags for curbside pickup. She also mentioned that we would be ordering more items to add to the swag bags, and additional food will be purchased. The President also proposed requesting more masks from the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies to include in swag bags as they were quite popular during the fall 2020 orientation. The VP Academic and Student Affairs raised the question of how many swag bags were going to be given out for the winter orientation. The President answered that we are planning to give out 100 swag bags for the winter orientation. The President further asked the VP Academic Affairs to prepare a budget plan for food items that will be included in the swag bags.

5.5 Fall 2020 Bursaries Update

The President asked the VP Finance to provide an update regarding the fall 2020 bursaries. The VP Finance noted that there were 115 applications for the GSA fall bursaries. He then continued that the GSA bursary committee had two meetings to evaluate the applications and discuss the criteria. The committee will meet next week to finalize the fall bursary recipients.

5.6 GSA Gala 2021

The President informed the Executives that we won't be having an in-person Gala next year, and we have postponed GSA gala deposits to 2022 due to the ongoing pandemic. The President proposed hosting a virtual gala where we can still organize awards to students. She further asked the VP External to contact graduate students, Naheda Sahtout, to share ideas about the Gala as she has a lot of experience in hosting this event. The VP External said that he would reach out to Naheda and update the Executives at the next meeting.

5.7 Canadian Federation of Students-National Graduate Caucus

The VP External updated the Executives on the recent National Graduate Caucus (NGC) standalone meeting and said that there were two days of meetings being conducted from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm each day. On the first day, the new executive team of NGC for the next year was selected, and he submitted his vote. There were a lot of other issues and discussion that occurred on both days in which all locals from other Canadian universities discussed the challenges they are facing during the pandemic, as well as different strategies they are utilizing to overcome and navigate challenges. The VP External then continued that he is preparing his notes for the upcoming CFS meeting and will share the agenda with the Executives for input. The VP External also discussed the upcoming Graduate Students' Society of U15 meeting and asked if anyone from the Executive team would like to attend. The President stated that it would be a good idea for all the Executives to attend, so they can get a good idea of the GSS-U15's mission and goals.

5.8 Health Chats Events

The President asked the VP External to provide an update on current health chat events. The VP External informed the Executives that we are still holding the "Yoga Nidra" virtual event every Wednesday, and on average, 5-7 people have been attending this event every week. He continued that the event will end on December 2, 2020. The VP External

also informed the Executives on the upcoming “Resume and Cover Letter Writing Workshop” which will be taking place on November 17, 2020 from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm. He discussed the event’s poster details and his plan to contact the presenter about the event prior to November 17, 2020 so he can inform the presenter on the virtual meeting details. The President asked the VP External to have everything ready by November 10 to ensure that the communication could go out to graduate student regarding the “Resume and Cover Letter Writing Workshop” event as soon as possible. The President asked the Executives input on whether “Yoga Nidra” should continue to be offered for the winter term, and added that it is best to provide this event to students as it is held in the evening and students can attend as a way to relax and de-stress for the day. The VP External also informed the Executive team that he is working on the mental health seminar initiatives for next term.

6. Other Business

The President asked if there was other business to discuss.

The President then said that someone approached her to advertise the "PAWS you stress" event in the GSA newsletter. She explained to the Executives that “PAWS your stress” is an online event where students can sign up to watch and interact with dogs virtually as a way to relax and de-stress. The President asked for a:

Motion to include "PAWS your stress" event information in the next GSA newsletter. The motion was moved by the VP External and seconded by the VP Academic and Student Affairs. Vote: Passed.

***4 in Favour
Motion Carried.***

The President next brought up the importance of attending the “Mental Health First Aid” training that all Executives must take as per GSA bylaw 2.1.3.13. The President stated that has already contacted Student Outreach and Affairs and they have informed her that “Mental Health First Aid” training will be offered virtually to all students starting in December 2020.

7. Confidential Session

8. In-Camera Session

9. Adjournment of Meeting

The President asked for the adjournment of this meeting.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:43 PM was moved by the VP Finance and seconded by the VP Academic and Student Affairs. Vote: Passed.

***4 in Favour
Motion Carried.***