



**University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association
Executive Meeting Minutes
January 14, 2021**

Present: Humaira Inam (President), Carmen Marquez (VP Academic and Student Affairs), Qasim Gill (VP External), Tina Alexis (VP Indigenous Engagement)

Regrets/Absent: None.

Guest: None.

1. Call to Order / Opening Remarks

The President called the meeting to order at 5:41 PM. The President reminded all the attendees that since our last meeting the VP Finance and Operations had resigned as of December 29th, 2020. She updated the Executives that the GSA Council Chair and Electoral Officer had also resigned as of January 10th, 2021. The President also reminded the Executives that emails should be responded to within 48 hours, and if you are unable to provide an answer to an email within 48 hours, then to reply to the sender acknowledging the receipt of their email.

2. Approval of the Agenda

The President asked whether there were any additions or amendments to the agenda as circulated. Seeing none the President asked for a:

Motion to approve the agenda as circulated was moved by the VP External and seconded by the VP Indigenous Engagement. Vote: Passed.

4 in Favour.

Motion Carried.

3. Approval of the December 3, 2020, Executive Meeting Minutes

The President informed the Executives that the meeting minutes from December 3rd, 2020 had not been finalized and asked for the delay of approval until the next Executive meeting.

Motion to delay the approval of December 3, 2020, Executive Meeting Minutes was moved by the VP Indigenous Engagement and seconded by the VP External. Vote: Passed.

4 in Favour.

Motion Carried.

4. Items for Action

4.1 *Motion to approve the purchase of 350 meals for \$1, 200, and chocolates for \$1, 141.98 for the Holiday Hangout Reinvented 2020 initiative. The motion was moved by VP Academic and Student Affairs and seconded by VP External. Vote: Passed.*

4 in Favour.

Motion Carried.

4.2 *Motion to approve Carmen Marquez, the VP Academic, and Student Affairs, as the third co-signer for cheques pertaining to expenditures until a new VP Finance and Operations has been voted in by Council. The motion was moved by VP External and seconded by VP Indigenous Engagement. Vote: Passed.*

3 in Favour, 1 Abstain.

Motion Carried.

4.3 Motion to approve Mery Mendoza as the graduate student representative for the CGPS Awards Committee for 2021. The motion was moved by the VP Academic and Student Affairs and seconded by VP External. Vote: Passed.

4 in Favour.

Motion Carried.

4.4 Motion to approve Tina Alexis, the VP Indigenous Engagement, as the graduate student representative for the Research Scholarly and Artistic Committee. The motion was moved by VP External and seconded by VP Academic and Student Affairs. Vote: Passed.

3 in Favour, 1 Abstain.

Motion Carried.

4.5 Motion to approve Qasim Gill, the VP External Affairs, as the graduate student representative for the CGPS Earned D. Lit / D. Sc. Committee. The motion was moved by VP Indigenous Engagement and seconded by VP Academic and Student Affairs. Vote: Passed.

3 in Favour, 1 Abstain.

Motion Carried.

4.6 Motion to approve the contribution of \$20 from each Executives' discrepancy fund for 4 Tim Horton gift cards that will be given to our Holiday Hangout 2020 volunteers, for a total of \$100. The motion was moved by the VP Academic and Student Affairs and seconded by VP External. Vote: Passed.

4 in Favour.

Motion Carried.

5. Items for Information / Discussion

5.1 Winter 2021 Events

The President asked the VP Academic and Student Affairs to comment on the events proposed to be hosted this Winter term by the GSA.

The VP Academic informed the Executive team that she will organize an academic misconduct webinar proposed for February 2021, in collaboration with the Gwenna Moss Centre and the University Library. She also mentioned that this term the events proposed will be focused on academic matters and professional skills. This decision was consulted with the rest of the Executives and the Executives unanimously agreed that due to the poor turnout at virtual social events in the fall term, it would be best to turn our focus to initiatives that are important to graduate students at this time. The VP Academic will also be connecting with the Multicultural Student Association in regard to their social events this term to offer support, as we the VP Academic and External were interested in organizing a cultural event this term, but due to time constraints this will not be possible.

The President asked the VP External to provide an update on the events he wanted to organize in this term. The VP External informed that Executives that as discussed previously, he is interested in planning another Financial Literacy seminar and CV/Resume and Cover Letter Writing workshops this term. The VP External proposed that he invites someone from the Career Centre this term as a guest speaker to facilitate the CV/Resume and Cover Letter Writing workshop. In regard to the Financial Literacy seminar, Professor Biran Lane will be invited back to facilitate this event. Both events will be organized virtually this term as well. The VP External has proposed to hold the seminar and workshop in February and March, respectively.

5.2 3MT Competition

The President asked the VP Academic and Student Affairs to provide any update for this year's 3MT competition. The VP Academic confirmed that the event will be hosted on March 26th, 2021 in remote format. She confirmed that the rules and registration forms are ready, and judges are being contacted.

The President shared some input she received last term regarding the recording and submission of the videos for 3MT, which was suggested to be done using Panopto and to

upload participants' videos to YouTube. The President reminded the Executives that the GSA already has a YouTube channel where we could upload such videos. The VP Academic will contact Dean Burshtyn to ask for updates on the possibility of using the University's resources to facilitate the recording and submission of participants' videos.

5.3 Winter 2021 Bursaries

The President provided the update that she will take the responsibility of organizing this term's bursary processes due to the VP Finance and Operations resignation, and until a new VP Finance has been voted in by Council. She provided a timeline for the bursaries; the application forms will be available to be filled online from January 18th until February 25th, 2021. The final decision and notification to successful applicants will take place no later than March 10th, 2021.

5.4 Graduate Research Conference

The President informed the Executive team that the previous VP Finance and Operations had only completed a poster and compiled emails that were never sent, for the Graduate Research Conference. No speakers list had been compiled. She explained that this is problematic because there is not enough time to organize everything for the Graduate Research Conference this, which was to be held on February 10 and 11, 2021 respectively. Additionally, due to the resignation of the VP Finance as well as the GSA Chair, the President has had to take on additional responsibilities in order to ensure that all tasks are completed on time and the GSA continues to run smoothly. The President stated that if we are to organize the Graduate Research Conference this year, then she will need additional help from the Executives as she is unable to do this on her own. President Inam further asked the Executives for this input regarding this situation and their thoughts on how we should proceed. The VP Academic stated that she is preoccupied with organizing the 3MT competition and would not have time to help out either, but she thinks that it is best to postpone the Graduate Research Conference to next year, rather than organize it in a rush just for the sake of holding a conference. The VP External stated that if we did

not hold the Graduate Research Conference then this would be the first time in the GSA that the conference is not taking place, which would in part be a reflection of the Executives. However, he said that he also understood that everyone is under a lot of strain at the moment and it may be difficult to add on more work. The VP External volunteered to help wherever necessary for the Graduate Research Conference. The VP Indigenous stated that she also sees both sides of the argument, however it might be too late in the year to contact speakers and ask them to have 20 minute presentations prepared when the event deadline is so close. The VP Indigenous further mentioned that it would not be wise to hold a conference for the sake of holding a conference, and if we are to organize this event and everything should be done in a timely manner. After some discussion and since some of the Executives were still undecided on this matter, the President said that we would return to this topic of discussion at the next meeting and make a final decision.

5.5 Health Chats

The President asked the VP External to provide an update for this term's health initiatives. The VP External informed the Executive team that he is planning to contact the Student Wellness Centre to collaborate on different events for the winter term focusing on mental health and wellbeing. He indicated that he is still deciding on when the sessions would be held. The Student Wellness Center will be contacted to explore collaborating avenues. The President also asked the VP External whether Yoga Nidra will continue to be offered this term as well. The VP External responded saying that Peer Health is organizing Yoga Nidra this term as well and proposed collaborating with them, so we are not offering duplicate services. The President said this was a good idea and asked the VP External to contact Peer Health for collaboration.

5.6 Ministry of Advanced Education Support for Mental Health.

The VP External brought into the Executive's notice that the Ministry of Advanced Education has some budget available to support post-graduate students for mental health. He will contact them to ask if they can provide more information in regard to their mental health initiatives.

5.7 Canadian Federation of Students (CFS)

The President asked the VP External to comment on any CFS updates. The VP External stated that there are currently no major events coming up, and he is still waiting for the minutes from past meetings. The VP External indicated that CFS is organizing a Federal Lobby Week scheduled for February and if the other Executives are interested in attending lobby week then he can assist them in registering for this event. The VP External indicated that he will be attending Federal Lobby Week.

5.8 Gala 2021

The President asked the VP External to update the Executives on this year's Awards Gala. The VP External informed the Executives that he is still working on the details to deliver this year's gala in a virtual environment. He indicated that awards will be given virtually, and the nomination packages are planned to be released this month (January). Further details will be shared by the VP External in the next Executive meeting.

5.9 Initiatives for Indigenous Students.

The President asked the VP Indigenous Engagement to provide an update on her initiatives for the winter 2021 term. The VP Indigenous indicated that she has looked for input from other students to scout for ideas and will work on a plan to be presented in the next Executive meeting.

5.10 Studentcare.

The President updated the Executives about Studentcare. She indicated that they will be presenting at the next Council meeting to provide statistics for the GSA Health and Dental Plan. She also informed the Executive team that our contract with them is expiring this year, and we will need to decide on how to proceed on this. A future meeting will be organized with the Studentcare to discuss the terms of our new contract and make an informed decision.

5.11 *Mental Health First Aid Training.*

The President reminded the Executives that it is mandatory to complete the Mental Health First Aid Training as per GSA Bylaw 2.1.3.13. However, we are still waiting to get confirmation from Student Affairs and Outreach on when this training will take place.

6. Other Business

The President asked if there was any other business to discuss. There was none.

7. Confidential Session

8. In-Camera Session

9. Adjournment of Meeting

The President asked for the adjournment of the meeting.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 PM was moved by VP Academic and Student Affairs and seconded by the VP External. Vote: Passed.

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