



University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association  
Executive Meeting Agenda  
January 28, 2021 – Online: Microsoft Teams  
5:30 PM – 7:30 PM

The GSA operates on Treaty 6 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis Nation. We pay our respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of our gathering place and reaffirm our relationship with one another.

**Present:** Humaira Inam (President), Mery Mendoza (VP Finance and Operations), Carmen Marquez (VP Academic and Student Affairs), Qasim Gill (VP External Affairs), Tina Alexis (VP Indigenous Engagement).

**Regrets/Absent:** None.

**Guest:** Alizadeh Sadroud, Hamed, EGCC VP Finance, and Minaei Shahab, EGCC President.

### 1. Call to Order / Opening Remarks

The President called the meeting to order at 5:37 PM and thanked the executives for their continuous hard work during these challenging times. The President also welcomed the newly elected VP Finance and operations to the GSA Executive team.

### 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 item for information:

#### ***5.6 GSA committees***

*Motion: To approve the agenda as amended.*

Moved: VP External Affairs

Seconded: VP Indigenous Engagement.

Vote: Passed.

*All in Favour,  
Motion carried.*

### **3. Approval of January 14, 2021, Executive Meeting Minutes**

The President asked whether there were any further amendments to the January 14th Executive Meeting Minutes.

*Motion: To approve the January 14th, 2021 Executive Meeting Minutes*

Moved: VP External Affairs

Seconded: VP Academic and Student Affairs

Vote: VP Finance and Operations (1) abstained.

*4 in Favour, 1 Abstain,  
Motion carried.*

### **4. Items for Action**

#### ***4.1 Funding Proposal from the Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – asking for \$1,050 in funding.***

The GSA has received a funding request from EGCC and representatives from this council were invited to participate in a GSA Executive Meeting. Hamed and Shahab attended on behalf of EGCC. The President welcomed both to the meeting and asked for a brief description of their events.

Hamed explained that the EGCC represents over 400 graduate students and in order to engage and provide a platform to network and share their research, they are organizing two events. The first event is a photo contest, which is already happening with a deadline of a week (the first week of February 2021). The aim of this event is to encourage students from all backgrounds and interests to get involved with the community by

taking photos. Students can submit a photo in three different categories, “Research during Pandemic”, “My Research”, and “Campus and City Life”. The winners will receive prize monies and will be asked for permission to use their artwork on the website and EGCC brochures.

The second event is the three-minute thesis competition from the College of Engineering (E3MT), and it will be held in late February 2021. The first time this E3MT event was held was in February 2020 and had financial support from the GSA, and it was very successful as some students were able to find funding for their projects from leaders within the industry. The aim for this year is to provide an opportunity for engineering graduate students to present their research work and refine the quality of their presentation as well as engage themselves within the academic community. This competition will also help the EGCC to move forward in enhancing the sense of community among engineering graduate students. This is an event for the six departments within the College of Engineering, therefore the focus is to prepare students for the GSA and the regional 3MT competitions. For this year, the EGCC has already received \$ 2500 from external sources, but with the condition to use this money towards prizes only. EGCC explained that further support is still needed for their events. They are requesting a total of \$1050; \$250 for the photo contest event, and \$800 for the E3MT event from the GSA.

The President thanked both invitees for giving details of the event and opened the floor for questions.

The VP External Affairs sought clarification on details of the E3MT, whether or not it was similar to the one that the GSA holds every year, the clarification was given by Hamed.

The VP Finance and Operations asked about the number of students expected in the 3MT thesis competition, if they have requested funding from the Dean’s office from the College of Engineering and whether or not they have the resources to cover expenses for the photo contest since this event is already happening. Shahab mentioned that they are optimistic and expect more than 50 graduate students to present their work, the college is not supporting these events and also explained that they have reserve funds to cover expenses for the photo contest. The President asked about the rationality to provide

\$100 for each judge, and sought clarification on the meaning of “door-to-door gift”, how would they do a draw to ensure fairness? As well as if they have considered students who are not in Saskatoon. How are they going to get their gift bags? Hamed explained that they have highly qualified judges for the E3MT, and they want to make sure students’ network and make connections with those judges which is why they want to give the judges good recognition as they are bringing financial contribution when funding projects. To ensure fairness, they may be using a scan code from their college, however they will further discuss this and make sure that the first E3MT winner is not included in the draw to ensure that the person who wins E3MT does not get selected for the door gift. 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 both EGCC representatives for providing the proposal and further information. She informed them that a decision will be made and communicated through email within a week.

*Motion: to approve funding in the amount of \$550 for EGCC for their E3MT competition and photo-contest.*

Moved: VP Academic and Student Affairs.

Seconded: VP External Affairs.

*Vote: Passed.*

*All in Favour,  
Motion Carried.*

#### ***4.2 Payment of \$1,175 towards the professional recording of participant videos for the 3MT 2021 competition.***

The VP Academic and Student Affairs explained that students will be provided with a professional recording to work on their 3MT presentation this year. The President and VP

Academic and Student Affairs will be away on March 26, 2021, and details of the program need to be finalized before signing a contract for this event.

*Motion: to table the item to the next GSA Executive meeting*

*Moved: VP External Affairs.*

*Seconded: VP Indigenous Engagement.*

*Vote: Passed.*

*All in Favour,  
Motion Carried.*

#### **4.3 Graduate Research Conference (GRC) 2021**

The GRC 2021 has been cancelled due to change over in the GSA Executive and time constraints. The previous VP Finance and Operations resigned from their position and there was a transition of a month until the new VP Finance was elected.

*Motion: to not hold the GRC 2021 due to the explanation provided above.*

*Moved: VP Academic and Student Affairs.*

*Seconded: VP Indigenous Engagement.*

*Vote: Passed.*

*All in Favour,  
Motion Carried.*

#### **4.4 Fee Approval for 2021-2022 academic year: CFS fee increase based on CPI as per our agreement.**

The GSA at the University of Saskatchewan is a voting member of the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS). As such, the GSA membership is required to pay fees set by the CFS. Every year the CFS increases fees which are based on CPI. This year it was informed that the fees will be increased by 1.008 % for GSA members.

The Canadian Federation of Students has indicated the new fee for the 2021/2022 academic year is as follows:

- The current CFS fee is \$6.35/term.
- The new CFS fee will be \$6.44/term.

The CFS fee is charged to graduate students, as per our contract with CFS, in the fall and winter terms. This increase accounts for increases in the inflation rate, as communicated by CFS.

*Motion: to approve the increase to the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) fees from \$6.35/ term to \$6.44/term. (To send to Council for approval)*

*Moved: VP External Affairs.*

*Seconded: VP Academic and Student Affairs.*

*Vote: Passed.*

*All in Favour,  
Motion Carried.*

***4.5 Fee Approval for 2021-2022 academic year: Sask-Transit fee increase based on CPI “1-3%” as per our agreement. Prior to an update to CPI release.***

As per our contract with Saskatoon Transit, the UPASS fee is to increase in proportion to the January 2021 Saskatoon CPI.

The Saskatoon January CPI will be released on February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021 by the Saskatchewan Bureau of Statistics. However, the GSA has to send a fee proposal with the changes of this fee to the Fee Review Committee prior to that date. Based on previous statistics, a consideration of a 1 to 3% increase was evaluated, and it will be adjusted upon the release of CPI.

The old UPASS fee is \$114.16 from which \$111.16 is remitted to Saskatoon Transit and \$3 is collected as administrative fees, of which a portion goes to the University and a portion goes to the USSU for UPASS activation.

Considering that CPI will increase on a range of 1-3% increment, the new fee would be \$115.27 to \$ 117.49:

- For 1%: The new UPASS fee will be \$115.27 ( $111.16 \times 1\% = 112.27 + \$3 = 115.27$ )
- For 3%: The new UPASS fee will be \$118.30 ( $111.16 \times 3\% = 114.49 + \$3 = 117.49$ )

The UPASS fee is charged to graduate students in the fall and winter terms. There are opt-out criteria outlined in our contract with Saskatoon Transit. Graduate students who fulfill the opt-out criteria may apply for a refund following the timelines and procedures.

*Motion: to increase the UPASS fees from \$111.87/term up to \$117.49/term, which will be adjusted accordingly. (To send to Council for approval).*

*Moved: VP Academic and Student Affairs.*

*Seconded: VP Finance and Operations.*

*Vote: Passed.*

*All in Favour.*

*Motion Carried.*

#### **4.6 Fee Approval for 2021-2022 academic year: GSA membership fee**

The GSA membership fee is charged to all graduate students. This fee will remain unchanged for the 2021-2022 academic year.

***(To send to the Council for information)***

*Motion: to not change the GSA fee*

*Moved: VP External Affairs*

*Seconded: VP Academic and Student Affairs*

*Vote: Passed*

*All in Favour,  
Motion Carried.*

#### ***4.7 Fee Approval for 2021-2022 academic year: Health and Dental fees***

The Dental and Health services are provided to all graduate students from the University of Saskatchewan on behalf of the GSA. Students can opt-in and opt-out from this plan following the eligibility criteria within the timeline proposed. This fee will remain unchanged for the 2021-2022 academic year.

*Motion: to not change the Health and Dental fees for the 2021-2022 academic year  
(To send to the council for information)*

*Moved: VP External Affairs.*

*Seconded: VP Academic and Student Affairs.*

*Vote: Passed.*

*All in Favour,  
Motion Carried.*

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

### ***5.1 Plagiarism Seminar***

The VP Academic and Student Affairs contacted a speaker for this event. Possible dates are the last week of February 2021. A representative from the Gwenna Moss Teaching and Learning Centre may be invited. Further information will be unfolded as the event gets closer.

### ***5.2. Initiatives for Indigenous Students***

The VP Indigenous engagement will contact her Indigenous cohorts to set up a meeting. She will attend Indigenous events, such as the Indigenous Graduate Student



Working Group on February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021, and brainstorm about possible events and goals for the term. Possible events for Indigenous students can include, seminars, workshops, panel conversations, educational presentations about communities and the importance of land acknowledgements and what they mean, etc. Further information will be released by the next meeting on February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

### ***5.3 Health Chat Events***

The VP External informed the executives that he has finalized a few events.

The first event he finalized is the “Sleep Workshop” with the collaboration of the Student Wellness Center. The event is happening on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021 at 3 PM. The posters and online WebEx link have been shared accordingly. The second event is the “Financial Literacy Seminar” which has been finalized as well and will be taking place on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021 at 4 PM. The poster has been finalized and as soon as the WebEx link is available the event will soon be on our social media.

The third event is a “Resume & Cover Letter Writing Workshop” in collaboration with the Student Employment and Career Centre. The date of the event has been finalized and happening on March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 4 PM. The poster and WebEx link will soon be finalized and shared. The fourth and the last event will be a Mental Health Seminar with the collaboration of the Student Wellness Center, the details of the events will be shared soon.

### ***5.4 Past and Present Executives on GSA Website***

The VP External Affairs proposed to include the names of past executives on the GSA website. A conversation about confidentiality and other conflicts was discussed and the Executives agreed upon not adding past names to the website. It was also suggested that a collection of names could be done to keep them internally in a spreadsheet at the GSA Commons.

### 5.5 GSA Standing Committees

The President suggested that the Executives start their meetings with their GSA committee members ASAP and send their minutes to the GSA Chair to be included in the agenda for the GSA Council meetings. The President expects an update of each committee in the next GSA Executive meeting.

Mery is chairing the Bursary Committee meeting. Tina and Qasim to attend and chair the Sustainability Committee and Diversity Committee meetings. Executives will provide an update at the next GSA Executive meeting scheduled for February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

### 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 7:22 PM.*

Moved: VP Academic and Student Affairs.

Seconded: VP External Affairs.

Vote: Passed.

*All in Favour,  
Motion carried.*