



University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association
Executive Meeting Agenda
March 11, 2021 – WebEx

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), and Tina Alexis (VP Indigenous Engagement)

Regrets/Absent: None

Guest: None

1. Call to Order/Opening Remarks

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

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:

a. Deputy Provost Search Committee (Action - approved via email)

Motion: To approve the agenda as amended.

Moved: VP Academic and Student Affairs.

Seconded: VP External Affairs.

Vote: All in Favour,

Motion carried.

3. Approval of the February 25, 2021 Executive Meeting Minutes

The President asked whether there were any further amendments to the February 25, 2021 Executive Meeting Minutes.

Motion: To approve the February 25, 2021 Executive Meeting Minutes.

Moved: VP Indigenous Engagement.

Seconded: VP Academic and Student Affairs.

***Vote: All in Favour,
Motion carried.***

4. Items for Action

4.1 Motion to reschedule the April 1, 2021 GSA Executive meeting

After discussion, the Executives proposed to change the scheduled GSA Executive meeting from April 1, 2021 to April 22, 2021.

Motion: To approve the proposed change

Moved: VP External Affairs.

Seconded: VP Academic and Student Affairs.

***Vote: All in Favour,
Motion carried.***

4.2 Deputy Provost Search Committee

A graduate student representative is needed to sit on the Deputy Provost Search Committee. The GSA executives appointed Mery Mendoza to serve on this committee.

Motion: to approve Mery Mendoza as the graduate student representative on the Deputy Provost Search Committee.

Moved: VP Academic and Student Affairs.

Seconded: VP Indigenous Engagement.

1 Abstain (VP Finance) (4) votes in Favour,

Motion carried (approved via email).

4.3 Cheque Remittance

Whereas GSA bylaws 5.4.4 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:

1. *Payment of \$49,799.68 for the Winter Term U-Pass Remittance (SaskTransit).*
2. *Payment in the amount of \$ \$18,846.73 for the Winter 2021 Remittance (CFS).*

Motion: To approve the expenditures outlined in this section above

Moved: VP Academic and Student Affairs.

Seconded: VP External Affairs.

Vote: All in Favour

Motion carried.

5. Items for Information / Discussion

5.1 Proof of Indigenous Ancestry

A discussion on proof of ancestry was brought up by the VP Indigenous Engagement. The VP Indigenous proposed that graduate students who wish to join the GSA Executive team as the VP Indigenous Engagement representative, should provide proof of Indigenous ancestry, and this can be done with a Treaty card. However, the President pointed out that this may not be inclusive to all our Indigenous students because not everyone may have proof of Indigenous status, the President also added that this is usually a barrier in health care as well for Indigenous people. Additionally, the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies does not ask for proof of Indigenous ancestry, so it calls into questions as to

whether it is appropriate for GSA to ask for something like this. The VP Indigenous Engagement had requested for this change to be made to the bylaws. The President informed the VP Indigenous Engagement that she would need to present this proposed amendment to the Governance Committee, and they will vote on this decision. The President invited the VP Indigenous Engagement to attend the next Governance Committee meeting on March 22, 2021 at 5:00 PM.

5.2 Land Acknowledgement Seminar

The VP Indigenous Engagement organized this event for March 30, 2021 at 9:00 AM (CST) via WebEx and has invited Dr. Stryker Calvez from the Indigenous Engagement Initiative. All graduate students are invited to participate.

5.3 Scholarly workshop

The VP Indigenous Engagement is organizing this event for March 31, 2021 at 9:00 AM via WebEx and has invited DeDe Dawson from the University Library.

5.4 GSA-USSU Agreement

The University of Saskatchewan Students' Union and the Graduate Students' Association entered into an Agreement effective May 1st, 2021- April 30, 2024. The U-Pass Agreement is to facilitate the administration of the GSA U-Pass by the USSU. The U-Pass is a universal bus pass offered by the Graduate Students' Association to members. It allows members of the GSA unlimited travel on all Saskatoon Transit for a fee that is automatically assessed for the fall and winter terms. This Agreement is intended to outline the major administrative understandings and distribution responsibilities of the USSU and the GSA.

5.5 AES Policy Working Group Meeting

The President informed the Executives that she attended a meeting where she provided input for the AES policy that is currently under review. She has forwarded the AES policy to all Executives for their feedback and will be informing GSA Council to provide feedback

as well. Our GSA Academic Councillor will also be attending the policy review sessions in mid-March where graduate students will have the opportunity to provide input.

5.6 Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Workshop Update

The VP Academic and Student Affairs informed the Executive team there were no participants at this workshop, and we had to let the guest speaker leave. However, as this is a critical topic for graduate students, the VP Academic and the President proposed holding this workshop again right before the fall term and making this suggestion to the new Executive team that will be voted in. The Executives discussed how we can improve these sessions, increase promotion, change the time, focus on new/incoming graduate students, and have registration in place. We will continue looking for ways to engage our students in these events.

5.7 GSA Annual Awards Update

The Executive team decided to extend the deadline for the GSA Annual Awards to March 22, 2021 at 5:00 PM as very few applications had been received. The VP External Affairs mentioned that 18 applications were received on the last day of the old submission deadline (March 1, 2020), and we hope to receive more applications close to the extended deadline.

5.8 Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) Update

The VP External Affairs updated the Executive team about National Lobby Week held by the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS). During Lobby Week, CFS and its national office team worked hard and advocated for students in front of members of parliament and senators on behalf of graduate students from across Canada. The VP External said that it was overall a resounding success because there were a few submissions to the parliamentary budget officer, and further work is being done on actions to ensure direct support for students and graduates is reflected in the upcoming budget. The CFS

executives and all the representatives of students focused on the following points with members and senators during lobby work:

1. That the federal government moves to immediately invest in emergency measures and utilize the remainder of more than \$9 billion committed to post-secondary students.
2. That the federal government commit to, and execute within a timely manner, quantitative and qualitative studies that will highlight the short and projected long-term intersectional impacts of COVID-19.
3. That the federal government commits to developing a cost framework that ensures both the immediate and long-term universal funding of post-secondary education, by alleviating financial barriers, immense debt loads, poverty, and precarity, as well as deteriorating mental health now, going forward.
4. That the federal government moves to strike a post-secondary education committee that is made of elected officials, the provinces, and non-partisan experts that will develop a shared vision for a renewed post-secondary education system.
5. That the federal government moves to immediately extend the loan freeze moratorium as an emergency measure on student loan repayment until December 2021.

5.9 Resume & Cover Letter Writing Workshop Update

This event was already held on March 10, 2021, at 4PM via WebEx where Dawne Warner from Student Employment and Career Centre spoke on resume building, cover letters, and other skills. The VP External stated that the event was well received by graduate students; more than 11 students participated. He proposed that the next GSA Executive team will be recommended to provide this workshop for graduate students during the fall term. The presentation slides were uploaded to the GSA website, and a follow-up networking session will take place on March 17, 2021.

5.10 ThinkGrad Update

The President attended the second ThinkGrad meeting on March 2, 2021. ThinkGrad wants to invite students from the other graduate student societies to expand their membership and are reviewing their bylaws. ThinkGrad is also looking for executive positions of secretary, president, and treasurer, and any graduate student can apply for these positions. New information will be released in future meetings.

5.11 *GSA Winter 2021 Bursaries*

The VP Finance informed the Executives that the Bursary Committee had successfully selected 24 graduate students for the winter term 2021 need-based bursaries. All applicants have been contacted and those who were selected will further touch base to pick up their cheques. We thank the College of Graduate and Post-doctoral Studies for their support.

5.12 *Tax Information Session*

The VP Finance and Operations stated that the GSA in partnership with the Canada Revenue Agency's Saskatchewan Outreach team, will be hosting two virtual tax and benefit information sessions on March 30 and April 7, 2021 at 4:30 PM. These sessions will provide a general overview of the benefits and credits the Canada Revenue Agency administers, including the Canada Child Benefit (CCB), GST/HST Credit, Climate Action Incentive. The VP Finance further stated that we will provide some resources for students to help them file their taxes and there will also be time for questions and answers after each session.

6. Other Business

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 6:53 PM.

Moved: VP Academic and Student Affairs.

Seconded: VP Indigenous Engagement.

Vote: All in Favour,

Motion carried.