



**University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association**

**Executive Meeting Minutes**

**Nov 19, 2021**

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:** Rifat Zahan (President), Ehsan Moradi (Vice-President Finance and Operations), Devin Cherneski (Vice-President External Affairs), Mostofa Kamal (Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs)

**Regrets/Absent:** None

**Guests:** Jensen Cherewyk (Toxicology Graduate Student Association president)

## **1. Call to Order / Opening Remarks**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by President Zahan.

## **2. Approval of the Agenda**

President Zahan asked whether there were any amendments to the agenda as circulated. There was no amendment.

*Motion: To approve the agenda with the proposed amendments.*

*Moved: VP Students affair*

*Seconded: VP Finance and Operations*

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

## **3. Approval of the last Executive Meeting Minutes**

President Zahan asked whether there were any amendments to the last meeting minutes as circulated. There was no amendment.

*Motion: To approve the agenda with the proposed amendments.*

*Moved: VP Students Affair*

*Seconded: VP Finance and Operations*

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

## **4. Items for discussion**

### ***4.1 GSA Commons renting***

The President mentioned the International Student and Study Abroad Centre (ISSAC) proposal for renting the GSA commons. She said it would be nice if we could obtain revenue by renting out the GSA commons and it will also help us decide on the re-opening of GSA Commons for GSA's administrative work. Executives agreed to rent GSA Commons to ISSAC if they agree and accept the responsibilities related to the COVID and PRT guidelines.

*Motion: To approve renting out the GSA Commons to ISSAC.*

*Moved: VP Finance and Operations*

*Seconded: VP External affairs*

***Vote: All in Favour,***

***Motion Carried.***

#### ***4.2 Toxicology Graduate Student Association (TGSA) proposal***

The President asked Jensen Cherewyk to start her presentation regarding their proposal to secure some funding from GSA for a social event. Jensen mentioned that they will have a three day Elk Ridge retreat on February 11, 12 and 13th. She said that it is kind of a tradition in the TGSA to hold this event each year. She explained the event.

“It's been going on for many years in the program, and a lot of students look forward to it. And for some of the new students or international students, it's their first opportunity to experience what northern Saskatchewan has to offer as it is very nice up there. Also, it is also an excellent opportunity for everybody to connect, and especially in these times where there are a lot of meetings and this one to help connect you in a one on one and communicate with peers and colleagues and create those special bonds that may lead to you know, academic and professional advancement. And we, as the TGSA, believe that this retreat is very important as a team building experience. This is our budget for the retreat, so I can kind of go through it starting with lodging. So usually what the TGSA has done in the past is that we get one or two cabins in order to house all the graduate students. So we were able to get to four bedroom cabins at \$399.00 per cabin per night. And since we go to Elkridge, on Friday, and we come back Sunday, it's for two nights. And so that total comes to \$1,596.00. This year, the TGSA is providing snacks for all of our graduate students. Snacks could be fruit, sausage, chips, cookies, and veggie trays. Estimated costs approximately \$5 per person with approximately 15 students attending. Overall two day event for total time. And that would give us a total of \$150.00. So the total budget for the TGSA retreat would be approximately \$1,746.00. Graduate students are asked to pay a fee to attend the retreat. Therefore the TGSA is asking the GSA to consider providing the \$500.00, which is the maximum in funding to subsidize the cost. And this would allow the TGSA to lower the cost that graduate students in the program would have to pay to attend this retreat.”

After the TGSA President's presentation the VP Academic and Students Affairs asked if they have a list of items that they will do in their event. The TGSA President explained that there are cross country ski trails, skating ponds, and a tobogganing hill. Also, there is a little mini curling rink that you can go curl on. She also mentioned at nights they get together and play games. Then VP Kamal asked how they would commute to Elk Ridge. The TGSA president explained that they have a carpool plan so they will use one of the members' cars.

After the TGSA President left the meeting the GSA Executives supported the idea since it was good to have a social event for graduate students after a long virtual period as it can be very good for mental health. The VP Academic and Student Affairs mentioned about the number of participants who are 15. The VP External Affairs asked the same question if it is okay to approve a social event found for only 15 students. After discussing the number of participants in the event, all executives agreed to approve the funding for the TGSA so it can encourage other social groups to hold events.

*Motion: To approve \$500 for TGSA social event.*

*Moved: VP External Affairs*

*Seconded: VP Finance and Operations*

***Vote: All in favour***

***Motion Carried.***

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

### ***5.1 Graduate Student Research Conference (GSRC)***

President Zahan requested an update from VP Moradi about the GSRC, which falls under VP Finance and Operations' portfolio. VP Moradi mentioned that he already planned the conference and updated the poster. He asked executives if they had ideas. VP Moradi mentioned if it will be a good idea to consider an award for best research. Other executives suggested having gift cards for the selected research and speakers. Also the President mentioned that the deadlines should be selected carefully since students may need some time to prepare their abstracts. VP Students Affairs also gave advice to VP Moradi according to his experiences. VP Kamal added that we need to categorize the subjects to save a standard for GSA. The GSA President also added that we need a new theme for the research conference that could cover all graduate students research areas. VP Kamal explained that it is better to have more time for each deadline so graduate students could have more time for increasing their submission quality.

### ***5.2 Winter Orientation***

The President asked VP Finance and VP Students Affairs to work with each other and prepare the snack items for the winter orientation. It would be better to have all items ready for packing before January 10th.

### ***5.3 Holiday Hangout***

The President mentioned that she has been trying to contact Peter Hadley to have a meeting with him regarding founding the event. She added that Dr. Martin agreed to prepare cookies for the event. The President explained that she is trying to have better resources for the events by contacting Faith Leaders, CGPS, Student Wellness Centre, and Student Affairs and Outreach.

### ***5.4. GSA Annual Awards Gala***

The President asked VP External Affairs his opinion regarding the GSA Annual Gala since it is under his portfolio. The President explained that this is an important event which many stakeholders will attend from the university and city of Saskatoon so she asked other executives if they are willing to hold any in-person event. President asked the VP external to talk to the last executives and ask them for their experience and propose some date so we can decide the details about the event.

## **6. Closed Session**

## **7 Adjournment of Meeting**

*Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 8:35 PM*

*Moved: VP Finance and Operations*

*Seconded: VP Academic Affairs*

***Vote: All in favour,***

***Motion Carried.***

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM