



University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association

GSA Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

June 2, 2022 – ZOOM

5:00 PM – 7:00 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: Mostofa Kamal (President), Ehsan Moradi (Vice-President Finance and Operations), Sristy Sumana Nath (Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs), Ozra Mohammadi (Vice-President External Affairs).

Regrets/Absent: None

Guests: N/a

1. Call to Order / Opening Remarks

The meeting was called to order at 5:10 PM by GSA *President Mostofa Kamal* followed by a Land acknowledgment. The agenda items for the meeting were compiled after starting the meeting. The GSA president mentioned that following the GSA Bylaws 2022 [2.5.1.11], the VP of External Affairs need to act as recording secretary for the executive meeting.

2. Items for discussion

2.1 Convocation Ceremony:

The executives attending list changed as follows:

Convocation Day	Morning Session (attendee) Start at 9:00 am	Afternoon Session (attendee) Start at 2:00 pm
Monday, June 6, 2022	None	Mostofa Kamal (President)
Tuesday, June 7, 2022	Sristy Sumona Nath (VP Academic and Student Affairs, GSA)	Ozra Mohammadi (VP External Affairs, GSA)
Wednesday, June 8, 2022	Sristy Sumona Nath (VP Academic and Student Affairs, GSA)	Ozra Mohammadi (VP External Affairs, GSA)
Thursday, June 9, 2022	Ozra Mohammadi (VP External Affairs, GSA)	Ehsan Moradi (VP Finance and Operations, GSA)
Friday, June 10, 2022	Mostofa Kamal (President, GSA)	None

2.2. GSA 2022-2023 Handbook (message from the president)

President Mostofa will provide it by June 9, 2022.

2.3. Swag bag items for Fall/Winter Orientation 2022-2023:

The GSA executive agreed to order swag bag items for both fall and winter terms in one purchase order so that items can be purchased at a discounted price. Since budget codes for fall and winter orientation are different, it is recommended to maintain separate purchase receipts for different terms, such as one receipt for fall and one for winter term. Executives have received concern regarding swag bag item's distributed in earlier orientation programs because of their shorter lifetime or durability. Thus, the current executives agreed to purchase items of better quality that will last longer. The committee also decided that the number of swag bag items for the fall and winter term will be less considering better quality items. The VP of Finance informed that the 2022-2023 budget allows the GSA the spend a maximum of \$6,200 for the Fall 2022 orientation program. The GSA executives recommended the VP of Academic and Student Affairs spend up to \$5000 on

the Swag bag items and keep \$1,200 for the orientation day event. The executives asked the VP of Academic and Student Affairs to make a draft list of recommended items for the fall and winter orientation program and share it with the GSA executives for further discussion and approval. Since better quality items are considered for the upcoming orientation program, the GSA can afford a limited number of swag bag items in the forthcoming orientation program. Hence, the GSA executives agreed to distribute the swag bag items only among the new students. The GSA will create a registration form for incoming students for swag bag item distribution. The GSA executives also agreed to order a t-shirt for the executives and volunteer for the orientation program.

2.4. Melisa Kyrejto, Academic Affairs Specialist, requested more volunteers for the Academic misconduct hearing board:

The Academic Misconduct hearing board consists of either a GSA executive or a graduate student nominated by the GSA. Generally, the VP of Academic and Student Affairs sits on the Academic Misconduct hearing board. However, because of the busy schedule of the VP of Academic and Student Affairs and occasional conflict of interest (e.g., a student from the same department, personal relationship with accused students, etc.), the hearing board requested more graduate student members so that a substitute of VP Academic and Student Affairs can be found easily. President Mostofa suggested Khaled Zoroufchi Benis, a Ph.D. student in the Department of Chemical Engineering, because of his extensive volunteering and leadership experience with the GSA for the last few years. VP Ozra recommended another graduate student named Bernd from the Chemistry department for the Academic Misconduct hearing board.

2.5. GSA Fall Orientation:

The GSA executives decided to organize the Fall 2022 orientation in person on September 8, 2022, from 10 am to 12 pm at the GSA commons. The VP Academic and Student Affairs will serve as the Emcee of the orientation event, while all other GSA executives will give an introductory speech at the event. Sristy will prepare an orientation presentation that will cover GSA's annual activities, including Holiday Hangout, Three Minute Thesis (3MT) Competition, Annual Tax Clinic, GSA Need-based bursaries, etc. The GSA executives recommended the VP Sristy to consult with the immediate past GSA President, Rifat Zahan while preparing for the. VP Academic and Student Affairs will share the orientation presentation with the other GSA executives for review and approval by the GSA President. The executive committee decided to serve pizza following the

orientation program. VP Sristry will work with the GSA Office Manager to for ordering of the food.

2.6. Organizing a Science Communication Workshop:

The GSA President proposed to organize a day-long Science Communication Workshop for the University of Saskatchewan graduate students in Fall 2022. This workshop aims to train graduate students in better strategies and efficient skills for communicating their research to a broader audience apart from peer-reviewed scientific journals such as blogs, newspaper op-eds, town halls, policymakers, etc. President Mostofa proposed to organize this workshop in the fall so that graduate students can apply the knowledge gained from this workshop in the 2023 3MT competition. The GSA President expressed his desire to identify another University of Saskatchewan graduate student from the 2023 3MT competition so that the champion would maximize the chance of winning the western regional 3MT competition following the success of the University of Saskatchewan's candidate at the Western Regional Competition in 2022. President Mostofa reminded that Antonia Powell, a Master of Science in Applied Microbiology graduate student, who won the western regional Three Minute (3MT®) Thesis Competition 2022 among 16 other graduate students represented by 16 universities from Western Canada. The GSA President will discuss this proposed workshop with the Dean of the College of Graduate and Post-Doctoral Studies (CGPS) and will request financial support to organize this workshop. President Mostofa will prepare a detailed proposal for the proposed workshop and share it with the other GSA executives in the coming months.

2.7. Spring/Summer bursary dates:

The GSA will provide 25 regular need-based bursaries during the Spring and Summer 2022 terms from its regular bursary budget and matched funding from the CGPS. At the 2022 Annual General Meeting (AGM) of GSA, the council approved to draw 40K CAD additional funding from GSA to provide additional need-based bursaries (which will be equally divided into three terms) during the 2022-2023 fiscal year. The GSA executives decided to award ten additional need-based bursaries from the above approved GSA funding. Therefore, during the Spring and Summer of 2022, the GSA will award 35 need-based bursaries. The GSA bursary committee will follow the below schedule to distribute the Spring and Summer 2022 bursaries:

Bursary Application Open: June 8, 2022

Bursary Application Close: June 29, 2022

Bursary Results Announcement: July 4, 2022

2.8.Meeting Date for University of Saskatchewan Faculty Association (USFA):

Professor Nadim Jamali from the Department of Computer Sciences has been elected by the USFA to represent the faculty members at the University of Saskatchewan Board of Governors. Professor Jamali sent an email to the GSA executives expressing his interest in having a formal meeting to hear from the newly elected GSA executives about their list of priorities and advocacies for graduate students during their tenure. Professor Jamali expressed his interest in becoming a supporting person for the GSA and wants to work together to ensure the University of Saskatchewan's academic and leadership excellence. The GSA President informed the GSA executives about the critical role Professor Jamali can play at different governing bodies at the University of Saskatchewan in supporting GSA advocacy works. Upon discussion, the GSA executives were scheduled to meet Professor Jamali on June 10, 2022, at 8:45 am.

2.9.Meeting Date for Health and Dental Plan Coordinator

The GSA President informed the GSA executives about a potential orientation meeting with the Studentcare representative, Mr. Robyn Paches, who oversees the GSA Health and Dental Plan on behalf of the GSA at USask. The GSA President reminded the GSA executives that one of the priorities of the current GSA executive committee is to extend the existing health and dental coverage for graduate students and advocate for broadening of the health practitioners' network. Thus, the proposed meeting is very important where the presence of all executives is required so that detailed discussion can be done with the Studentcare representative. There will be two meetings with the Studentcare representative: the first meeting will be attended by all GSA executives, and the second meeting will be attended by the GSA President and the VP Finance and Operations. The GSA executives mentioned they are available for the meeting on June 20, 22, and 23, 2022. The GSA President will finalize the meeting date upon consulting with the Studentcare representative and will notify the final date and time to the GSA executives.

5. Items for Decision

5.1. Approval of the May 8 GSA executive monthly meeting minutes:

President Mostofa asked, if there were any amendments in the executive meeting minutes as circulated. There were none.

Mover: Sristy

Seconder: Ehsan

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

5.2. Approval of the GSA executive committee 2022-4-20 retreat meeting minutes:

President Mostofa asked, if there were any amendments in the executive meeting minutes as circulated. There were none.

Mover: Mostofa

Seconder: Sristy

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

6. Adjournment of Meeting – President Mostofa motioned to adjourn the executive meeting in June 2022.

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 7:23 PM

Moved: VP Finance and Operations

Seconded: VP External Affairs

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