



**University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association
GSA Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
March 1, 2022 - Zoom**

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), Mostofa Kamal (Vice-President Academic and Student Affairs), Devin Cherneski (Vice-President External Affairs).

Regrets/Absent: None

Guests: N/A

1. Call to Order / Opening Remarks

The meeting was called to order at 6:09 PM by GSA *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 current agenda

Moved: VP Academic and Student Affairs

Seconded: VP External Affairs

***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 executive meeting minutes as circulated. VP External Affairs indicated draft minutes were distributed to the executive for proofreading. Minutes were from February 14, 2022.

Motion: To approve executive meeting minutes from February 14th, 2022.

Moved: VP Academic and Student Affairs

Seconded: VP External Affairs

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

4. Items for action

4.1 To approve and finalize the 2022-23 U-Pass fees increase of **\$4.27** from \$115.38 to \$119.65 through the January 2022 - Saskatchewan Consumer Price Index of 3.8%.

Motion: To approve 2022 GSA U-Pass fees increase of \$4.27 from \$115.38 to \$119.65 through the Consumer Price index of 3.8%.

Moved: VP Finance and Operations

Seconded: VP Academic and Student Affairs

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

4.2 GSA Office Manager's Salary – There were some discussions about changes in the salary of GSA's Office Manager. According to the contract, GSA Office Manager's salary will be increased

through the Saskatchewan Consumer Price Index based on the last month of the employee's contract.

Motion: To approve the GSA's office Managers Salary increase as per the Saskatchewan's CPI-based annual index.

Moved: VP Finance & Operations

Seconded: VP Academic and Student Affairs

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

5. Items for Discussion

5.1 Monthly budget update – The VP of Finance and Operations forwarded an updated GSA budget spreadsheet for the executive members to review.

5.2 Black History Month – The VP of External Affairs indicated that the Usask Black History Month (BHM) was a success overall. In February, interviews and profiles were conducted with graduate students. They can be found at [Black History Month - University Library | University of Saskatchewan \(usask.ca\)](https://www.usask.ca/black-history-month/).

The GSA President also had an opportunity to moderate questions-answers session, and final remarks during a BHM fireside conversation. The topic of discussion was making inclusive excellence actual. The event was with Dr. Airini (Provost and VP Academic), Dr. Patricia McDougall (Deputy Provost) and Dr. Erique Lukong (Professor of Biochemistry). There was an urge from Dr. Lukong during the meeting that university should have department-level data to see the percentage of students with Black origin are studying at the USask. The GSA President promised to bring this up in the President's Executive Committee (PEC) meeting and request university to gather such data. A big thanks was provided to all the volunteers, GSA Executives, and graduate students that committed time and effort for making the series of events successful.

5.3 Annual Awards Gala – The VP of External Affairs stated 11 nomination packages were received. The GSA Awards Committee has extended the deadline until Saturday, March 19th. The executive discussed the possibility of having an in-person event for the winners of the Annual Awards at the GSA Commons, with approximately 40-50 people. The Annual Awards Committee will be meeting on Tuesday, March 8th to discuss plans.

5.4 3MT Thesis Competition – The VP of Academic and Student Affairs indicated that an event for the 3MT competition is already planned for March 25, 2022, Friday according to the Executive Retreat meeting and registration will go until March 19. VP Kamal also said that plans would be in place soon with advertising, including posters that will go out on March 2. The executives discussed Flyer designs; the VP of Academic and Student Affairs will design a plan, add a logo, and have it ready to go. He will also invite three or more judges with diverse academic portfolios

and experience for the 3MT thesis competition. The VP of Academic and Student Affairs and President quoted a couple of names for prospective judges that were noted

5.5 Graduate Student Research Conference update – The VP of Finance and Operations indicated three submissions for the GSA Graduate Student Research Conference, so far, as the deadline has already passed. The next step is to upload the submission and share them through the GSA website, YouTube channels, and GSA Newsletter.

5.6 CFS Lobbying week – President Zahan, VP External Affairs, and members for the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS), attended a meeting with Member of Parliament (MP) Corey Tochor and his assistance from the Conservative Party of Canada (Saskatoon constituency). Topics of discussion include education affordability, tuition, cost of living, and mental health service increase. The GSA President requested MP Tochor to forward the students’ requests to his standing committees and Government critic roles. Unfortunately, MP Tochor did not make any promise regarding such requests. GSA President Zahan has also had the opportunity to attend other Federal Constituency ridings, including the NDP party of Canada from British Columbia (MP Lisa Marie Baron) and Manitoba (MP Leah Ghazan). These Member of Parliaments were receptive to the GSA and CFS’s policy suggestions and supported free education. The Two MPs also promised to take these requests forward to their standing committees, critic roles, want to strongly advocate for students in their caucuses.

5.7 How to use U-File for Graduate Students – VP Moradi and VP Kamal are working on arranging events to help graduate students to file their own income taxes. Demonstration on U-File, which is free for all graduate students at USask will be demonstrated.

5.8 International Mother Language Day – The GSA Executives were invited to attend International Mother Language Day organized by Bangladesh Community Association of Saskatchewan (BCAS). The President gave a five-minutes speech. to promote the importance of awareness regarding multilingualism, cultural diversity, and multiculturalism. The President indicated that the event went very well overall.

5.9 Upcoming executive meetings scheduled as follows:

- Wednesday, March 16th, 2022, @ 5:30 pm (in-person GSA Commons)
- Wednesday, March 30th, 2022, @ 6:00 pm (Zoom)
- Tuesday, April 12th, 2022, @ 5:30 pm (Zoom)
- Tuesday, April 26th, 2022, @ 6:00 pm (Zoom)

6. Closed Session

7 Adjournment of Meeting – President Zahan motioned to adjourn the executive meeting on March 1, 2022.

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 7:44 PM

Moved: VP Academic and Student Affairs
Seconded: VP External Affairs

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:44 PM.