



We acknowledge that we live and work on Treaty 6 Territory and the homeland of the Métis. We pay our respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of this place and reaffirm our relationship with one another.

GSA Executives Meeting(s) on July 21 at 11:00 AM
Time: 11:00 AM

Attendance: Laila Valila, Hayley Pelletier, VP External, Rupesh Acharya and Sunny Bui
Guests:

All executives approved all of these actions.

Announcements

- We welcomed Hrishikesh Patil, GSA President from the University of Guelph, as a guest observer.
- The meeting began at **11:08 AM** and adjourned at **11:59 AM**.
- The agenda was based on the July 21 Executive Meeting agenda, which included portfolio updates, Welcome Week planning, GSA Commons rental policy, website initiatives, Council Chair process, and upcoming meetings.

Agenda Items

1. Approval of Agenda

a. Agenda approval

- The Executive reviewed and approved the agenda items and order.

2. Approval of Previous Minutes

a. Previous Executive Meeting Minutes

- Meeting minutes from June 26 and July 15 were not ready yet for distribution.

3. Updates by Position

a. President — Updates

Governance and Executive Operations

- Transition matters should all be completed and lingering issues related to the previous Vice-President Finance & Operations transition had been addressed.
- GSA Council Chair and Vice-Chair positions will be posted on the USask jobs website.

- Conflict-of-interest reporting pathway requires further clarification.
- Need to prioritize scheduling the Executive Retreat, either as one full day or two half-days, and emphasized that executives will be expected to attend.

Graduate Student Research Exchange

- Approximately **56 participants**.
- Additional sponsorship is being pursued, with a target of approximately **\$5,000** from the host institution and CGPS to reduce participant costs to approximately **\$100 per person**.
- The Executive discussed participant eligibility and the need to ensure that the process does not disadvantage single students.

Panel Discussion and Jumpstart

- The President needs to complete items for Jumpstart, including sending VP Academic the required NSID and panel discussion questions.

Council and Governance Preparation

- Discussed the upcoming Council Chair election process.

b. Vice-President Finance & Operations — Updates

Financial administration

- Provided an update on financial administration procedures.
- The Executive confirmed that all receipts, reimbursements, and expenditure requests must go through the Vice-President Finance & Operations before proceeding to Brenna or being processed.
- Noted the need for clearer written guidelines on approved uses of discretionary funds.

Office equipment and facilities

- Reported on office furniture and facilities updates, including office chairs and GSA Commons improvements.
- The Executive discussed making GSA spaces more family-friendly, including a family-friendly washroom with a change table.
- A free breast milk storage service for graduate students who are parents was also discussed.
- Executives were asked to provide feedback on office equipment or software subscriptions that may be useful for GSA operations.

Coordinator hiring

- Provided an update on the coordinator hiring process.
- The Executive discussed the need for the coordinator job posting to state clearly that availability during working hours is a requirement.

c. Vice-President Academic & Student Affairs — Updates

Welcome Week planning

- VP Academic provided an update on Welcome Week planning.
- The Executive discussed Welcome Week programming scheduled for **September 2–6, 2026**, including a barbecue lunch, bingo, social night, and related activities.
- The Executive agreed that Welcome Week events and registration should be live by **August 1, 2026**.

- Will prepare and submit the Welcome Week budget to VP Finance for approval.
- Will prepare a cost estimate worksheet for the barbecue by the end of the week.
- Will complete the t-shirt inventory and determine how many additional t-shirts are required for Welcome Week.
- Once estimates are finalized, VP Academic will prepare executive responsibility assignments for Welcome Week events.

Academic advocacy

- VP Academic provided an update regarding the EGCC request for Blender software installation in Engineering computer labs.
- A follow-up email to EGCC/IT is required.

d. Vice-President External Affairs — Updates

External partnerships

- Provided updates regarding the Red Swan Pizza partnership meeting, GSA Library collaboration meeting, Ministry of Education-related engagement, and prior GMTLC meeting minutes.
- Will confirm the Red Swan Pizza partnership meeting for Monday at 2:00 PM and notify relevant attendees.
- Will attend the GSA Library collaboration meeting, expected to be approximately 30–45 minutes.

Communications and digital platforms

- Discussed use of AI-generated content and the need for clarity in content review.
- Reported that website corrections remain pending, including the barbecue rental booking information.
- Will submit a new website correction request for the barbecue rental page.
- Create social media posts for the GSA Council Chair and Vice-Chair job postings.

e. Vice-President Indigenous Engagement — Updates

Indigenous student engagement

- Reported that several Indigenous engagement events had been cancelled during the month due to low participation.
- Proposed collecting Indigenous student email addresses during Welcome Week to support future communication and engagement.
- The Executive discussed setting up a Welcome Week table to collect contact information from Indigenous students.

Welcome Week programming

- Proposed using discretionary funds for a draw incentive to encourage Indigenous students to connect with GSA engagement opportunities.
- Assist with organizing prizes of interest to Indigenous students for the Welcome Week bingo event.
- Coordinate with VP Academic on Indigenous-themed gifts, including possible bead packages, to include as bingo prizes.

- Help advertise the bingo event and related Welcome Week opportunities to Indigenous students and the broader Indigenous community.

4. Major Discussion / Decision Items

a. Welcome Week 2026 Final Planning

- The Executive discussed Welcome Week planning, including event logistics, budget, sponsorship, executive responsibilities, registration, and promotion.
- The Executive confirmed the goal that all Welcome Week events and registration be live by **August 1, 2026**.
- Events discussed included a barbecue lunch, bingo, social night, family-friendly programming, and student group booths.
- President will prepare and share an expectations schedule for executives, including required availability and assigned tasks for each event.
- VP Academic will prepare the Welcome Week budget and cost estimates for approval.

b. GSA Commons Rental Policy Review

- The Executive reviewed a proposal for a long-term rental discount policy for the GSA Commons.
- Discussion included rental discount structure, revenue requirements, space availability, staff requirements, equipment use, insurance, liability, deposits, and cancellation expectations.
- The Executive discussed whether discounts should vary by group type or be applied evenly.
- VP Indigenous supported a uniform discount rate to encourage long-term use of the space.
- The Executive supported a consistent **20% discount** for long-term rentals of **six months or more**

Decision/Outcome:

- VP Finance will draft the GSA Commons long-term rental discount policy, including a 20% discount for rentals of six months or more, applied evenly, with deposit and early termination clause, and circulate it for review.

c. Research Recruitment Section of GSA Website

- VP Finance proposed creating a free research recruitment section on the GSA website to serve as a central hub where graduate students can advertise research studies that require participants.
- The Executive discussed the website structure, eligibility, administration, and potential benefits for graduate researchers.
- Vice-President Finance & Operations would collect research recruitment submissions, complete an initial review or vetting process, and then submit approved listings to Operations Manager for website management and posting.

- The President noted that any Executive member seeking direct editing access to the GSA website would need to complete the required Data Governance and Cascade training to gain access to edit content on the USask server.
- Motion: That the GSA create a free research recruitment section on the GSA website, with the Vice-President Finance & Operations responsible for collecting and reviewing research study listings from graduate students and coordinating with Brenna to manage website updates.
 - Moved by: Vice-President Academic & Student Affairs
 - Seconded by: Vice-President Indigenous Engagement
 - Vote: All in favour.
 - Status: PASSED unanimously.
 - Decision/Outcome:
 - The Executive approved the creation of a free research recruitment section on the GSA website, with the Vice-President Finance & Operations leading the collection and review process and coordinating with Brenna for posting and website maintenance.

d. GSA Council Chair Process

- The Executive reviewed the upcoming Council Chair recruitment and election process.
- President requested to chair the upcoming Council meeting to ensure proper procedure during the election of new Council leadership.
- **Motion: Chairing of Upcoming Council Meeting**
 - **Motion:** That the Executive support Sunny Bui, current GSA President, to chair the upcoming Council meeting for the purpose of ensuring proper procedure during the election of the Council Chair and Vice-Chair and that Sunny will communicate the the Council Chair and plan to submit a motion to have Sunny chair the Council meeting is called to order.
 - **Vote:** Unanimous in favour.
 - **Status:** PASSED.

5. Other Business

a. Chair and Vice Chair Recruitment

- President reported that the Chair and Vice Chair postings had been sent to Operations manager, interviews had not yet started.
- VP Finance noted that the posting should explicitly state availability during working hours as a requirement.
- President will confirm the posting status with Operations Manager.

b. External Meetings and Partnerships

- The Executive noted upcoming meetings with ISSAC, USSU, the University Library, and Red Swan Pizza.
- VP External will confirm relevant meeting details and notify attendees as needed.

c. Zombie Walk / Jumpstart

- The Executive discussed the August 14 Jumpstart/Zombie Walk activity.

- President will reply to VP Academic with the required NSID and panel discussion questions for the Jumpstart initiative.

d. Discretionary Fund

- The Executive discussed the need for clearer guidance regarding approved uses of discretionary funds.
- VP Finance raised concerns that existing guidance is unclear and may create inconsistent application.
- VP Finance will prepare clearer discretionary fund guidelines and circulate them to the Executive.

6. Upcoming Meetings and Dates

- **July 22, 2026** — GSA & ISSAC Meeting
- **July 14–23, 2026** — Coordinator hiring posting period
- **July 30, 2026** — GSA & USSU Meeting
- **July 31, 2026** — USask Library Collaboration Meeting
- **August 2026** — Three Welcome Week preparation meetings
- **August 14, 2026** — Jumpstart / Zombie Walk participation
- **[August 2026]** — GSA Council Meeting
- **September 2–6, 2026** — Welcome Week
- **September 10, 2026** — PEC Meeting -

New Action Items

- **VP Finance** to draft the GSA Commons long-term rental discount policy, including a 20% discount for rentals of six months or more, deposit clauses, and cancellation clauses.
- **VP Finance** to prepare clearer guidelines for approved uses of discretionary funds and circulate them to the Executive.
- **VP Finance** to add a free research recruitment section to the GSA website for graduate students to advertise research studies, in coordination with Brenna.
- **VP Finance** to ensure the coordinator job posting states that availability during working hours is required.
- **VP Indigenous** to set up a Welcome Week table to collect Indigenous student email addresses for future engagement.
- **VP Indigenous** to use discretionary funds for a draw incentive connected to Indigenous student engagement at Welcome Week.
- **VP Indigenous** to assist with Indigenous-focused bingo prizes and advertising to the Indigenous community.
- **VP Indigenous and VP Academic** to coordinate Indigenous-themed gifts, such as bead packages, for bingo prizes.
- **VP External** to confirm the Red Swan Pizza partnership meeting for Monday at 2:00 PM and notify relevant attendees.
- **VP External** to submit a new website correction request for barbecue rental information.

- **VP External** to create social media posts for the GSA Council Chair and Vice-Chair postings.
- **VP External** to attend the GSA Library collaboration meeting.
- **VP External** to participate in three scheduled 90-minute August Welcome Week preparation meetings.
- **VP Academic** to prepare and submit the Welcome Week budget to VP Finance for approval.
- **VP Academic** to ensure all Welcome Week events and registration are live by August 1, 2026.
- **VP Academic** to prepare a barbecue cost estimate worksheet by the end of the week.
- **VP Academic** to complete the t-shirt inventory and determine additional t-shirt needs.
- **VP Academic** to follow up with EGCC/IT regarding Blender software installation in Engineering computer labs.
- **VP Academic** to prepare executive responsibility assignments for Welcome Week once estimates are finalized.
- **President** to resolve the conflict-of-interest reporting pathway with Debby and Brenna.
- **President** to post the GSA Council Chair and Vice-Chair job postings on the USask jobs website.
- **President** to continue pursuing Graduate Student Research Exchange sponsorship, with a target of \$5,000 in additional support.
- **President** to prepare and share a Welcome Week expectations schedule for Executive members.
- **President** to reply to VP Academic with NSID and panel discussion questions for Jumpstart.
- **President** to confirm coordinator hiring posting status with Brenna and follow up with VP Indigenous and the team.
- **President** to prioritize scheduling the Executive Retreat and confirm executive attendance expectations.
- **President and VP External** to plan the Welcome Week social night.

Items for Next Meeting

- Confirmation of Welcome Week registration launch and final event schedule.
- Review of Welcome Week budget, cost estimates, and executive responsibilities.
- Update on GSA Commons long-term rental policy draft.
- Update on discretionary fund guidelines.
- Update on research recruitment website section.
- Update on Council Chair and Vice-Chair job postings.
- Update on Graduate Student Research Exchange sponsorship and participant eligibility.
- Coordinator hiring update.
- Follow-up on Indigenous student engagement email list and Welcome Week table.
- Follow-up on Red Swan Pizza, Library collaboration, ISSAC, and USSU meetings.

Adjournment / Next Meeting

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 11:59 p.m. by VP Academic and seconded by the VP External Affairs.

Next Meeting: TBD

Approved by: President, VP Finance & Operations, VP Academic & Student Affairs, VP Indigenous Engagement (read-only) & VP External Affairs