Graduate Students' Association

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
March 30th, 2026 / 5-7pm
Hybrid Meeting

Attendance: Lindsay Carlson, Mandela Alema, Palash Roy & Sunny Bui

Guests: Clement Abdallah

Absent: Laila Valila

All executives approved all of these actions.

Prior to the meeting, it had been requested that each executive prepare ideas and select dates for events within their portfolio that they are planning, so that GSA can proceed with a complete event programming schedule.

Agenda Items

1. **Concerns Regarding the GSA Elections Procedures**
   a. **Chair availability and conflict disclosure**
      a. The GSA Elections Chair was not immediately available to begin the discussion.
      b. Executives were briefed on concerns brought forward regarding the elections, and the VP External disclosed a conflict of interest as a candidate in the future election.

b. **Points of clarification for the Elections Chair (requested by the President)**

   c. Nomination extensions (how many, which positions, and whether there were zero nominees at each extension).
   d. Background checks (whether conducted for all nominees; scope/methodology; whether the affidavit of good conduct requirement was communicated).

e. Volunteer experience verification for any Presidential nominee relying on Bylaw 4.8.3.4.5 (including whether VP External Affairs was contacted to confirm volunteer experience).
f. Registration confirmation letters under Bylaw 4.8.3.3.3 (received for all nominees and confirmation that each candidate can serve the full fiscal year term).
g. Ratification prerequisites under Bylaw 4.8.6.1 (whether all four prerequisites were satisfied for every nominee).

c. **Chair joins and discussion framing**

h. The President began the clarification discussion; the VP External recommended not proceeding without the Chair present to hear and respond to the questions. The President agreed to follow up with the Chair by email regarding attendance and moved forward with updates in the interim.
i. The Chair joined after updates were provided by the President and VP External.
j. The President reiterated the purpose of the discussion as ensuring appropriate procedures are followed to uphold election credibility and fiduciary responsibilities, particularly in light of past elections.
k. The Elections Chair indicated willingness to respond via bylaw pathways, questioned the purpose of the discussion at the executive meeting, and raised the VP External's conflict of interest.
l. The President reiterated that the intent was to ensure proper procedure to protect the credibility of the election and avoid downstream impacts on current/future executives.

d. **Motion re: conflict of interest (VP External)**
i. **Motion:** To remove the VP External Affairs from the meeting (physically and virtually) for this agenda item due to conflict of interest.

m. **Moved:** President
n. **Second:** None (VP Finance expressed confidence in the VP External's ability to remain objective; VP Student Affairs did not comment or vote).
o. **Result:** VP External remained in the meeting and indicated they would refrain from commenting and proceed cautiously if prompted.

e. **Independence of Elections Committee and scope of executive questions**

p. VP Student Affairs raised concerns about the purpose of the Elections Chair attending the executive meeting and noted the Elections Committee operates independently from the executive.
q. The President reiterated the intent as fiduciary responsibility and clarification of due process, while VP Student Affairs noted that asking questions about procedure could be interpreted as interfering with the elections process.
r. The Chair did not directly respond to several questions and questioned the executive's mandate to require responses in that setting.

f. **Motion re: response timeline**
i. **Motion:** The Elections Chair will respond to the President's concerns within 48 hours of the initial message sent via email.

s. **Moved:** President
t. **Second:** VP Finance

g. **Closing notes for this agenda item**

u. Executives reiterated the intent is to uphold professionalism and election credibility; moving forward, the VP External will be included on a need-to-know basis for election concerns due to the disclosed conflict of interest, and will refrain from commenting where necessary while acting in good faith.
v. The Executive thanked the Elections Chair and the Chair left the meeting.

2. **Updates**

a. **President**

i. **Senate end-of-year report**

a. The President noted the report will be compiled by April 1st and presented at the next Senate committee meeting on April 25th.

ii. **Eid partnership request (tie-break vote)**

b. Lindsay Carlson voted in favour (noting she had been absent for the previous related executive meeting).

b. **Vice-President Finance & Operations**
i. **Prior event funding applications (Plant Science GSA and WildEcol)**

c. Confirmed approved and completed.

ii. **Event funding applications (new)**

d. JSGS BHM Fund approved, contingent upon receiving the receipt for pizza.
e. Iranian Student Association request (Persian New Year, March 20) discussed; approved contingent upon remaining funds being available to disburse, with discussion regarding expectations for future ratified groups.

iii. **Commons vacuum purchase**

f. Procurement status pending; awaiting an update from the Operations Manager.

iv. **Input on budget for upcoming year**

g. Discussed requesting an increase from CGPS to bursaries offered next year and noted the historical matching amounts and timing of the last increase.
h. Discussed Operations Manager salary increase; VP Finance to follow up with executives via email to decide the rate, noting minimum inflation as necessary to remain competitive.

c. **Vice-President Academic & Student Affairs**
i. **Recognition of Black Graduate Parents**

i. Social media content completed; three individuals identified with two selected.

ii. **Black Graduate Student Association ratification / correspondence**

j. The President requested prompt follow-up regarding correspondence from the Provost and VP Academic on the Black graduate student representative, noting Mandela indicated he is not running next year.

d. **Vice-President External Affairs**

i. **Red Swan Pizza sponsorship distribution**

k. The President requested the VP External set up a meeting to clarify how the Executive can best support the outreach process.

ii. **GSA Awards**

l. All categories reached a minimum of four nomination packages, except Research Excellence in Indigenous Research.

iii. **GSA Gala**

m. Revised budget submission noted as in progress; VP External indicated work is proceeding within budget. Sponsorship outreach and ticketing/registration timelines were also updated.

iv. **Student Experience Survey**

n. Development status discussed, including integration of the transit questions and the Indigenous engagement question.

e. **Vice-President Indigenous Engagement**

i. **Gala preparations**

o. Update provided on planning status for Indigenous components (vendors/participants and coordination).

ii. **Survey input**

p. Confirmed need for culturally safe wording for the Indigenous engagement question without university verification requirements.

iii. **CFS Conference**

q. Update noted.

3. **GSA Awards & Gala (Additional Planning Items)**
   a. The Awards Committee extended timelines to March 27th (mid-week).
   b. Program outline submitted.
   c. VP Student and Academic Affairs asked to send correspondence to councillors to invite them.
4. **PEC Meeting Agenda (April 23rd)**
   a. Executives were asked to put forward points addressing main concerns of graduate students.
5. **Governance Meetings (Transition Planning)**
   a. VP External to schedule meetings with incoming/outgoing executive prior to the AGM; three meetings in April noted for executives.
6. **Upcoming Events / Meetings**

    a. March 25th: Council Meeting
    b. March 26th: Executive Meeting
    c. March 29th: GSA Awards Committee Meeting #2
    d. April 2nd: USask General Academic Assembly
    e. April 23rd: PEC/GSA Year-end meeting
    f. April 30th: GSA Annual General Meeting (Sunny Bui absent)
7. **Additional Notes**
    a. President away April 10–18.
    b. VP External away after April 27.

New Action Items

- **President** to follow up with the Elections Chair by email regarding the requested clarifications and the response timeline.
- **Elections Chair** to respond to the President's concerns within 48 hours of the initial email message.
- **VP Finance & Operations** to follow up by email with executives regarding the Operations Manager salary increase rate.
- **Mandela Alema** to respond promptly regarding correspondence from the Provost and VP Academic concerning the Black graduate student representative.
- **VP External Affairs** to set up a meeting to clarify the best approach to Red Swan Pizza outreach support.
- **VP Student and Academic Affairs** to send correspondence to councillors regarding invitations (as requested).
- **All executives** to submit PEC agenda points addressing key graduate student concerns for the April 23 PEC/GSA year-end meeting.
- **VP External Affairs** to schedule transition-related governance meetings prior to AGM (three meetings in April noted).

Items for Next Meeting

- Confirmation of Elections Chair's written response and any required follow-up pathway.
- Update on Operations Manager salary increase decision (post email follow-up).
- Progress check on Gala budget, sponsorship outreach, and councillor invitation correspondence.

Adjournment / Next Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 7:07 (**Lindsay Carlson/Palash Roy).** The next meeting will be held at later date.

Approved by: President, VP Finance & Operations & VP External Affairs