



University of Saskatchewan Graduate Students' Association

Annual General Meeting & Course Council Meeting

April 22, 2010 4:30 pm at the GSA Commons

Minutes

Present:

Marcy Addo, Kirsten Allen, Cletus Asuquo, Paul Bretscher, Omeasoo Butt, Andrew Cameron, Edgar David, Aman Deep, Andre Doucette, Dennis Duro, Devin Ens, Nicholas Fraser, Amy Gallen, Meghan Goertzen, Chad Hammond, Allison Henderson, Amelia Horseburg, Amanda Hunter, Tyler Judd, Shazia Khan, Brian Laird, Laura Larsen, Manas Mambetsadykov, Maria Mampe, Wendie Marks, Eduardo Mendez, Arron Metcalfe, Johannus Meuzel, Emily Morris, Ata-ul Munim, Matthew Munson, Fidel Obu, Jacob Ouellet, Jessica Patrucco, Daniel Petri, Spike Posnikoff, Dave Smith, Serene Smyth, Heather Touet, Emma Turner

1 Call to Order

4:29 pm

2 Approval of Agenda

Motion: Be it resolved that the circulated agenda be approved, pending the additions of 6. ratification of election results, 7. floor vote for President and 8. floor vote for Vice President Student Affairs.

Dennis Duro / Laura Larson, Carried unanimously

3 Approval of Minutes

Motion: Be it resolved that the minutes dated March 18 be adopted as circulated.

Omeasoo Butt / Devin Ens, Carried unanimously.

4 GSA Executive Reports (see the attached documents)

- 4.1 President
- 4.2 VP Operations and Administration
- 4.3 VP Academic
- 4.4 VP Student Affairs
- 4.5 VP External
- 4.6 VP Finance
- 4.7 VP Aboriginal
- 4.8 Administrative Assistant
- 4.9 GSA Commons

5 Transit Motion

Be It Resolved That the GSA will create a transportation committee of council, mandated with the creation of a U of S Staff/Faculty/GSA Bus Pass Program, which will report back to council regularly on the progress of this work. The committee will be constrained by the following parameters:

- *It will not commit any funds to subsidize the program.*
- *It will guarantee a reasonable level of graduate student buy-in annually.*
- *It will commit to a trial period for a program within reason to establish program parameters and buy-in.*
- *It will only accept an opt-in program;*
 - *Unless an opt-out program is a 100% opt-out program only constrained by a reasonable time limit.*
- *Any unforeseen details will be brought to the committee for consideration, and brought to council if appropriate.*
- *A final agreement, if struck, will be brought to Course Council for approval;*
 - *In the case where a referendum is required the committee will take the appropriate steps.*

Amanda Hunter, Emma Turner

Q. How do we think that we are going to be able to get an opt in only pass when that wasn't an option for the undergraduate buss pass, especially given the smaller group that we are bargaining for.

A. There has been a culture shift within the city administration. The university has more clout with city.

Q. Do we know what the cost would be?

A. This is not decided.

The city's ecopass requires that the employer contribute 20% of the cost. This is not likely for the university, though the University has openly commitment to sustainability.

Q. What are the stats on the health and dental plan? This is similar in that it is an opt out plan. How many of the students that stay enrolled in the health plan but don't use it?

A. Not sure. The difference between the health and dental plan and this is that you must provide proof of other health insurance to opt out.

Carried with the abstention of Daniel Petri.

6 Ratification of election results

Motion: Be it resolved that the results from the election for the GSA executive held on April 19 and 20, 2010 via PAWS be accepted.

The graduate student body elected the following to the GSA executive:

Vice President Operations and Administration: Alison Ward

Vice President Finance: Mohamed Mohamed

Vice President Academic: Cletus Asuquo

Vice President External: Eamon McDermott

Amanda Hunter, Devin Ens. Carried unanimously.

7 Floor vote for President

Motion: Be it resolved that Omeasoo Butt and Shazia Khan are nominated for position of president.

Nicholas Fraser, Laura Larson

Omeasoo Butt addressed council with her goals if she were to be elected as president.

Shazia Khan addressed council with her goals if she were to be elected as president.

Both candidates were asked to leave the room for discussion and voting.

Discussion:

Devin Ens: Should we allow course council to over ride the vote of the student body by allowing Shazia Khan to re-run for president, having already lost a confidence vote.

Andrew Cameron: There are concerns about course council ratifying the election results without allowing the full five day appeal process.

Q. There is clearly some tension between the current executive. What has happened and why has this not been discussed with course council?

Nicholas Fraser: There had been issues in the summer of 2009. The executive had chosen to deal with the issues internally, but the details have to remain confidential as they were resolved in meetings that were in-camera.

Brian Laird: Everyone should feel free to vote without fear of repercussions.

Voting: 20 in favor of Omeasoo Butt, 2 in favor of Shazia Khan, 4 abstentions

8 Floor vote of Vice President Student Affairs

The person who had shown interest was no longer present. A floor vote will be called at the next course council meeting.

9 Constitution and Policy Manuals

Motion: BIRT that the GSA adopt the revised constitution and policy manuals as they appear with the revisions presented at the April 22, 2010 Annual General Meeting.

20 in favor, 1 abstention.

The revised documents can be found on the GSA website at:

<http://gsa.usask.ca/main/about-gsa/constitutional-review/>

10 Announcements

10.1 GSA BBQ will be held Friday, April 23 at noon at the GSA Commons.

10.2 IGSC AGM date will be distributed through GSA Channels.

11 Adjournment

7:22

Amy Gallen



Graduate Students' Association

President's Report

2009 - 2010

The Graduate Students' Association has had an exciting year of growth, prosperity, and change that has seen the GSA move from being located in the Memorial Union Building, to a 'temporary trailer', and then into our new home in the Graduate Students' Association Commons. To some extent this has interrupted the ability of the organization to address some of the ongoing issues that the GSA works on. The downside of this type of interruption was that there was no central hub within the GSA to provide a stable and secure place to create a strong, cohesive, and coherent GSA message. But regardless of the unique challenges faced this year I believe the organization is emerging at the end of this year stronger with a more succinct sense of direction and legitimacy.

The executive made a commitment to itself at the beginning of the year – if you commit to a meeting, a task, or a project follow through. If you cannot do it then do not commit to it, and if you are unable to attend then send your regrets. This seems like a simple commitment and one that follows a modicum of common sense however the response that the GSA has received by following this has been incredible. As a result all levels of administration have commented on and recognized the GSA presence and participation in decision-making on campus. As a result, this executive has been well informed of activities on campus and had a lasting effect on tangible decisions that affect us all daily.

I cannot praise this year's executive enough for the work that they have been doing. Some of it is behind the scene participation that there is no way to recognize or acknowledge. Reading through reports, providing perspective on projects, participating in formal meetings – some interesting and some that put you to sleep in moments – and having informal chats, and packing then unpacking then repacking then moving again. Some of it has had very real impact such as bringing substandard pay rates for teaching assistants to the attention of the administration and providing that data to support it. Hiring three employees and managing a staff of four while creating policies, processes, and procedures for running a building and taking that responsibility on without question or complaint. Working toward a constitution that strengthens the organization in legitimacy, accountability, and operationally while developing a broad understanding of the issues relating to outside organizations such as the CFS enabling that information to be transferred to the next executive. Ensuring the books are balanced and creating a financial plan that supports the organization in the present and into the future. Joining the executive at the end of the year and re-envisioning and developing a vision of the GSA that includes a legitimate Indigenous voice in our operations and our engagements with the University. And finally, fostering an environment that meets the non-academic needs of our members through social activities.

The capacity of the GSA has been growing, and will continue to grow into the years to come. An active, accountable, informed, and engaged GSA can and does make a difference to the lives of graduate students. Having mutually respectful relationships with the university about issues that we can at times hold fundamentally opposite positions has been integral to the success of this year's executive. Having the voice, the ear, and the support of course council has made this year a pleasure. Thank you for the opportunity to represent the GSA as the President.

Nicholas Fraser
GSA President, 2009/2010

President Committees and Activities 2009/2010

- GSA Liaison to provide responses and input into capital and infrastructure projects.
- GSA Liaison and participant in the Integrated Planning Review Process and implementation of the 20 commitments.
- 24-Hour Arts Campaign.
- 2009 Orientation.
- Engaging an Aboriginal Liaison (Aboriginal Students Rep).
- Annual Giving Campaign.
- Arts and Science By-laws Committee.
- Advocacy (academic and non-academic).
- Campus Advisory Board for Institutional Systems (CABIS).
- Canadian Federation of Students.
- Canadian Association of Graduate Studies Annual Conference (Halifax).
- College of Graduate Studies and Research Executive Council.
- College Quarter Steering Committee.
 - Undergraduate Residence.
 - Graduate House Residence.
 - College Quarter Master Plan.
- Course Council.
- Degree Works.
- Dispute Resolution Team.
- Events:
 - Ethnomixicology.
 - Orientation BBQ.
 - Grand Opening Wine and Cheese.
- GSA Executive Meetings:
 - Provide feedback and assistance as requested/required.
- GSA Banner Development.
- GSA Commons Planning Committee.
- GSA Commons Steering Committee.
- GSA Commons Finance and Fundraising Committee.
- GSA Constitutional Revisions.
- GSA Pamphlet Creation.
- Presidents Committee on Integrated Planning (PCIP).
- Marquis Hall Renewal and Food Service Committee.
- On Campus News Editorial Board.
- Planning and Priorities Committee of Council.
- Policy Review:
 - Non-Academic Conduct.
 - Conduct in Research.
 - Tuition Principles.
- Residence Rates Review.
- Student Evaluation of Educational Quality (SEEQ) Committee.
- University Learning Centre Advisory Board.
- Voting Member – University Council.

- Voting Member – University Senate.
- Vision 2057 Committee.
- Website Redesign.
- Western Canadian Graduate Students' Associations Meeting (Regina).
- Other meetings, correspondence and administration as required.

Ongoing Activities

Aboriginal Engagement

The GSA needs to make a commitment to continued engagement of Aboriginal graduate students in legitimate, accountable, and transparent governance of the organization. Developing a plan, with the IGSC and the Aboriginal Representative is imperative to the future of the GSA and the IGSC and is ongoing.

Transit

The GSA is committed to finding and developing low-cost transit options for our members. Currently I am working with a variety of stakeholders in the development of a Staff/Faculty/GSA bus pass option. My vision of this bus pass would be a 100% opt-in program. This will be discussed further later in the agenda.

Office and Commons Organization and Transition Planning

The office staff has been directed to prepare for the transition of the executive. This is to ensure that the transition happens smoothly and that information changes hands effectively.

The Future of the GSA

Accountability

The GSA is lacking in some standard accountability mechanisms, some of which have been addressed this year and in constitutional revisions however there are some issues that remain outstanding that the incoming executive must address.

- Financial Accountability:
 - The finance committee of the GSA needs to be re-established.
 - The GSA Executive Committee needs to participate in the budget planning process.
 - Organizationally separate accounts payable and accounts receivable as a matter of proper business management.
- Executive Accountability:
 - Standards of conduct for the executive must be set and adhered to.
 - A mechanism for addressing inactive executive members needs to be instituted.
 - An annual review of the performance of the executive with published results should be instituted.
- Social and Environmental Accountability:
 - The GSA should aim to be a leader in both of these areas.
 - The GSA should actively strive to meet the needs of the diversity that make up our membership including International, Indigenous, Women, Sexual Minority, and other distinct groups.

- The GSA is in a position to be a leader in sustainability on campus and should ensure that environmental accountability is included in all of the activities that the university undertakes.

Organizational Sustainability

The GSA is growing as an organization in membership, responsibilities, and accountabilities. The short-term growth of the organization needs to be managed by intelligent planning and sound business practices with its goals and ambitions as a non-profit member and council directed organization considered. There are actions that can be taken by the GSA in the short-term that will encourage the long-term viability of the GSA as a successful, engaged, influential, and visible graduate student organization.

- Capacity Building:
 - Ensuring the GSA is appropriately resourced to meet stated goals and objectives:
 - Properly staffed facilities.
 - Ensuring staff are properly trained and supervised for their positions.
 - Finding appropriate training opportunities as necessary.
 - Appropriately compensating staff (Salaries).
 - Creating a principled and sound working environment following a sound workplace ethic.
 - Providing for a well-trained management team for the GSA:
 - With the growth of the GSA the organization has reached a point where a qualified general manager should be sought.
 - This will reduce the pressure on the GSA Executive to fill this role and allow the Executive to focus on their portfolios.
 - Developing a long-term business plan for the organization including identifying opportunities for growth, resource development, and membership engagement.
 - Re-establish the GSA Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC):
 - Utilize this group to create a variety of long-term organizational plans with at least a 5-year plan as a starting point.
 - Look for unique revenue generating opportunities that will not undermine the vision of the organization.
 - Create a structure of GSA Volunteers for Committee, Event, and Lobbying activities:
 - With a structured volunteer training and appreciation program.
 - Develop a comprehensive communications strategy:
 - The largest hurdle of the organization is to reach the membership and communicate activities and events efficiently and effectively.
 - An Annual report should be created, printed, and disseminated to all GSA members in time for the April AGM.

The GSA is poised to be an effective and efficient organization that can successfully represent the will of our members and council if the growth of the organization is managed, and a structured plan is put into place. This will be a large undertaking that will not occur overnight or over the term of one executive. Council and future executives must pick and choose the appropriate steps to take and in what order. It is important that the Course Council be prepared to engage the GSA in these matters and that council hold the executive accountable to these and other important activities.

In conclusion – the GSA has gained a great deal of momentum over the past year. This is directly due to the groundwork of previous executives, and has managed to continue on due to the dedication of the current executive and council. In order to successfully maintain the momentum

steps need to be taken so ensure that the progress is sustainable into the future. Steps that the next executive must be prepared to take and that council needs to be prepared to monitor.



Graduate Students' Association

VP Operations Report

2009 - 2010

This year, as Vice President Operations and Administration, I have been able to be part of many great initiatives.

Survey

In September 2009 I created a survey for all graduate students. The survey was distributed on paper and electronically. Of the 2 752 graduate students registered in term one, 69 responded to the paper survey and 405 responded to the online survey for a total of 474 (17 %) of 2752 registered graduate students. This survey asked questions about student demographics, income, housing, and transportation.

Here are a few key observations from the survey:

- 85% of U of S graduate students are under the age of 35
- 22% (87) of the respondents were international students
- Of the 55% (220) who lived with a partner or spouse, 23% (87) of respondents' partners were also students
- 25% (98) of respondents indicated that they have dependent children
- 57% (227) indicated that they were receiving a scholarship on top of their stipends
- 9% (36) of respondents live in residence, 33% (129) own property and 54% (214) have room mates to minimize living expenses
- the average rent was \$683 per month
- 36% (121/333) indicated that their rent has increased in the last year, with the average increase of \$ 121.
- 62% of survey participant (252) disclosed their yearly travel expenses. Those responses averaged \$574.
- 71% (271/382) of respondents are in favor of a UPass for graduate students.

Bursaries

The GSA distributes bursaries in all three terms each year. This year we awarded \$ 750 to four recipients per term for a total of \$ 9 000.

The application and selection process have been tweaked during the time that I have overseen the bursary selection process. The application instructions, form and the bursary selection rubric have been improved.

Committees

College of Graduate Studies and Research, Admissions and Recruitment

This committee met every second month to discuss issues such as admission criteria. We planned a recruitment event on campus for U of S undergraduates. Myself and VP Academic, Shazia Khan were invited to give a talk on applying to graduate studies.

College of Graduate Studies and Research, Programs

This committee met monthly to review and approve addition and deletion of courses and programs.

College of Graduate Studies and Research, Student Affairs

This committee met monthly to recommend policy changes relevant to management of individual graduate student programs, review and approve special case admissions and programs of study, approve transfers from Master's to PhD programs, and act on appeals and grievances.

This committee created a student supervisor agreement that will spark clear communication between students and their advisors. This document will be suggested as a template that can be tailored to suite the individual requirements of the department or student-supervisor pair.

Teaching and Learning Committee of Council

The Teaching and Learning Committee of Council met bi-weekly to review and advise on pedagogical issues for faculty, teaching evaluation guidelines and implementation, and policy issues relating to instructional development for faculty. This committee created a Learning Charter that outlines the roles of students, instructors and the institution in creating high quality instruction for all U of S learners.

Copyright Advisory Committee

This committee advised the university community on issues surrounding copyright. We considered ways of educating the public and instilling a sense of duty in abiding by copyright laws. This committee created the "Use of Materials Protected by Copyright" document.

Better Than Bottled Campaign

Together with the school of environment students' association, the GSA is undertaking a campaign to raise awareness about the environmental, social and economical issues surrounding bottled water use on campus. This group is for access to quality public drinking water and against the sale and provision of bottled water on the U of S campus.

This group has been compiling information and presenting them on the Better than Bottled website at <http://betterthanbottled.jimbo.com>. We have participated in World Water day on March 22, 2010 by having a table in the Arts Tunnel and hosting a talk from Alina Siegfried about her 25 L per day water conservation challenge followed by a screening of the documentary Blue Gold.

Heath and Dental Plan

I have been the liaison between the GSA and our health care provider, Student Care. The cost for coverage in the coming year will be a bit lower than they were for this year. We have opted to keep the fees the same and increase vision coverage as well as replenish our reserve fund. The fees for 2010-2011 are \$ 186.80 for health and \$ 153.71 for dental coverage through the GSA.

Policy and Operations Manuals

In an attempt to ease the transition between executives and improve institutional memory, I have been organizing the documentation of duties and contacts. I have created a Policy Manual that will compliment the revised constitution. With the help of our staff and president, I have compiled internal Operations Manuals that will help employees and executives to have the tools that they need to do their jobs effectively.

Course Council Meetings and Membership

We have 43 regular course councilor and 40 alternates, representing 22 departments across campus.

I have been the official contact between Council Members and the GSA. This entails organizing and advertizing Course Council meetings and distributing information packages.

GSA Website

This year, the GSA launched a new website. After Nicholas Fraser (GSA President) got the website up and running, it has been maintained by me and the GSA staff. This has improved the communication between the GSA, its students and the university community.

Human Resources

I had the pleasure of overseeing the hiring and supervision of a really great team of staff this year. Many thanks to:

Office Administrator: Sarah Masood

GSA Commons Coordinators: Adrienne Collins Bretell, Bassey Bassey, and Katelyn Crosbie

Conference Coordinator: Heather Touet

Orientation Coordinator: Mercy Addo

Other

I had the opportunity to attend the Western Canadian Graduate Students' Associations meeting in Regina on February 26 and 27, 2010.

I was able to assist in the selection of an Associate Vice President Communications for the University. This was an opportunity to provide feedback to the university about what is required of this new role and each candidate.

My term as VP Operations and Administration has been very successful and rewarding. I would like to thank the other executive members and our staff for so much support and enthusiasm.



Graduate Students' Association

VP Academic's Report

2009 - 2010

My term as GSA VP Academic has consisted primarily of three types of activity: lobbying, advocating, and committee work.

Lobbying

I have led two dedicated campaigns for change this year: one for 24-hour access to Arts, and one for higher wages for Teaching Assistants.

TA Rates

Through a combination of presentation of pay rates at other universities and allusions to the possibility of unionization, in the course of lobbying CGSR, the Office of the President, and the Board of Governors, I was able to achieve a 5% pay increase for Teaching Assistants, which will be increased further over the next two years.

24-hour Arts

Through petitioning and meetings with various university representatives, I did not get the university to reverse its decision to lock the Arts building at night. However, I did guarantee access for graduate students in Arts. They may now obtain a radio key fob (with a deposit) to enter the building after hours.

Especial thanks for this campaign's success is due to VP Operations Amanda Hunter for her help collecting petition signatures, and President Nicholas Fraser for his help in negotiations.

Advocacy

My advocacy work has included addressing both academic grievances and advising/advocating for non-academic issues. Cases have included refusals of faculty to show final exams to students, or to explain their grading; inappropriate use of student work; and many cases of students feeling pressured out of a program and concerned about the biases of the university committees/offices to which they have appealed for help. Resolutions in simple academic cases have consisted in informing faculty or department heads that they are in violation of university policy. Where policy exists, this always results in compliance.

However, the non-academic issues have been more difficult to deal with since there are contradictory claims being made on the part of the university as to which office or policy which issue ought to fall under. It is with this in mind that I have begun a process of streamlining and formalising relations between this position, the VP Student Affairs position, CGSR, and such bodies on campus as the Office of Discrimination and Harassment and the University Ombudsman. There is still much work to do in this area. I have recommended that the College needs to make clear to students and faculty their rights and responsibilities as students and faculty, as well as their rights and responsibilities as teaching assistants or research assistants and employers. Specifically, the differences between one's role as a student and as an employee needs to be clarified. I see this as a priority for the next VP Academic.

Committees

Most of my hours have been spent on committee work and representing students within the University's governance structure.

University Council: I have been attending University Council, which is responsible for academic affairs, along with GSA President Nich Fraser. This has involved reading the reports of all Committees of Council, participating in Council discussions, and speaking to Council on behalf of the GSA in the President's absence.

Committees of Council: Research, Scholarly, and Artistic Work Committee; Academic Programs Committee; Scholarships and Awards Committee: my work on these committees has been reported in my monthly GSA Council reports.

Among university initiatives that I have provided input into through these committees are its Institutional Positioning initiative and its Learning Charter. While I have expressed skepticism over the year at the University's work to "find its identity" through brainstorming and advertising industry methods, I have enjoyed participating in the Institutional Positioning project as a discussion of the University's role and purpose. The Learning Charter, on the other hand, I see as a very useful (and potentially dangerous) means of articulating what it is to be a scholar in a scholarly community. What I find most valuable about the Charter, and I have stressed this in all discussions, is that it creates a sense of *citizenship* in an academic community. This model is far closer to what it really is to be a scholar than the "customer" or "consumer" model of education that is destroying not only the integrity of scholarship, but the ability of scholars to articulate their rights. I see it as a priority of future VPs Academic to defend academic principles against market principles in determining the future direction of the University of Saskatchewan.

Other Activities

I have been overseeing the planning of a conference, "Intellectual Property and the Academy," for this summer. This will be the first GSA Conference since 2005, however, there have been few submissions and it may have to be cancelled. As my position ends before the conference takes place in May, I will not likely see through the planning to the end. Most of the work has been and will be performed by our conference co-ordinator, Heather Touet.

I attended the Canadian Federation of Students National General Meeting in Gatineau, PQ, in November with two other delegates. The concern I raised most often at this event was that since the GSA does not ask people what their political affiliations are before collecting their dues, we have no right to use those dues for clearly partisan or rigidly politicised ends. And since the CFS runs on student union dues, it has no right to lobby on issues not directly relevant to education— the only thing students have in common is that they are students. It was made VERY clear to me that the CFS *is* a political organisation, that it *is* closely allied with a specific political party, and that their executive truly feels they not only have the right to use student money for partisan ends, but that they also have the right to sue student unions that try to defederate. I see it as a priority for future GSA executives to get out of the CFS.



Graduate Students' Association

VP Student Affairs' Report

2009 - 2010

1. Orientation 2009

This years Orientation was for all “New Students” rather than just undergraduate students so we were asked to join in and have a presence at the activities planned for Orientation Week

- U of S Marketing requested GSA to have a booth at the **LIVE Expo**
 - GSA Table at **LIVE Expo** Education Bldg Gym **Sept. 1, 1:30 to 4:30** : HUGE success! ☺
 - GSA dayplanners and brochures were provided
- **ISO Welcome on Sat. Sept. 5, 8:45 am to 10 pm** : HUGE success!! ☺
 - I attended and co-hosted event beginning 8 am until approx. 10:30 pm.
 - The ISO hosted a Volunteer Training seminar on Thursday Sept. 3 from 4 to 7 pm which I also attended
- **USSU Welcome Week Sept. 8 to Sept. 11**: HUGE success!! ☺
 - The GSA table in the bowl was attended by GSA execs. Students were offered day planners, GSA brochures and informed of the BBQ
 - Complaints: GSA were not present at table at times advertised (Wed to Friday: 11-1 and 4-6)
 - Reason: Wednesday we received a huge response so I remained at table from 1 to 4 as well by which point everyone else in bowl began packing up. Thursday 4-6 slot was cancelled due to rain, and by Friday we ran out of day planners.
- **GSA Welcome BBQ Friday Sept. 25 from 4 to 8 pm**: HUGE success!! ☺
 - BBQs purchased
 - Door Prizes, cheap drinks and good music!
- **Health & Dental Orientation**: Success! ☺
 - Rm 232 PAC : 10:00 to 1:30 pm with free pizza lunch provided
- GSA Insurance was renewed Aug. 14, 2009 by myself and Mohamed and a certificate acquired for the GSA Welcome BBQ

2. NSID acquisition for new Graduate Students

In the past, new graduate students had to wait and personally approach CGSR in order to acquire an NSID to access email and register for classes. Since many Graduate Students may also be new International Students this posed a huge problem and was not a very welcoming situation. As of Sept. 2009, CGSR has begun processing applications of new Graduate Students similar to new Undergraduate students' applications and as a result new Graduate Students are provided their NSIDs in their Letter of Acceptance and no longer have to wait. Success!! ☺

3. GSA Channel on PAWS: Success!! ☺

- Monisha Shuka, PAWS Administrator, and the PAWS ITS team have provided a “GSA News and Events” channel which is optionally available for graduate students to add to their PAWS homepage.

4. International Students Welcome: 1 pm to 8 pm Sat. Jan. 9, 2010

- HUGE success!! ☺

5. Grad Student Commons Grand Opening/Ribbon Cutting Friday January 15, 2010: HUGE success!! ☺

- This was an opportunity for the University Executives and CGSR personnel to celebrate the launch of the Grad Student Commons by cutting a red ribbon and enjoying wine and cheese with GSA staff, executives and volunteers.

6. Green Campus Initiative: Work in Progress

In keeping with the University of Saskatchewan's commitment to promote an environmentally friendly campus, an initiative for faculty, staff and students to reduce paper usage prompted the request for an alternative to printing.

- Adobe Professional meetings have been underway with:
 - Senior IT Product Consultant: Terrance Cennon
 - Student Computing Program Manager (ITS): Bill Wallace
 - Campus Computer Store Manager: Scott Findlay

In an effort to provide free/low cost access of Adobe Professional to all graduate students for PDF editing and annotating needs.

7. Credit Card Transaction Fee: Work in Progress

Meeting Feb. 2: Marion Van Impe, Director Student Accounts & Treasury

- Efforts will be made to better advertise the online banking payment option
- Offered to hire financial advisors and budget planners for new students entering into a new program of study
 - Budget and estimated living expenses advertised on usask.ca do not accurately represent present cost of living
 - University can not lower interest rates on late payments as they are not a bank
 - Tuition due date is already past most institutes due date
 - Installment plan administration fee of \$40 is not too much
 - Federal motion to allow CC companies to charge transaction fees currently in parliament
 - Considering possibilities for accommodating international students

8. Expansion of TA/RA Opportunities for Interdisciplinary Students:

Work in Progress

- Currently, students who are registered in Interdisciplinary Programs are not allowed the opportunity to supplement their income and polish their teaching skills via Teaching and Research Assistantships.

9. Ethnomixicology: Feb. 12 : 9 pm to 1 am - HUGE success!! ☺

- Success! ~ 60 to 80 students came out! Cultural music, dancing and fun. Continued until ~ 3:30 am → Good interest, response and feedback; learning opportunity for better event communication strategies: more to come!
- **Haiti Relief:** \$50. Collected and matched by Federal Government

10. Academic Support Committee: Work in Progress

- E-books, E-texts selling at USask Bookstore
- Requires a change in culture of Faculty...

11. Upcoming Event: Spring Sizzler BBQ – Fri. April 16, 2010

- Come celebrate the end of another fun-filled school year, bid farewell to past GSA Execs and welcome new Executives for 2010-2011.
- The GSA offers our congratulations to new graduates venturing off into the “real world” and our gratitude to event volunteers

12. Graduate Students’ UPass: Work in Progress

- Discussed intention for Grad Student/Faculty/Staff/Post-Doc UPass at Presidents’ Advisory Committee on Womens’ Issues

13. Uniformity of the Greater U of S Student Experience: Work in Progress

- Questions were raised regarding the autonomy of the academic units at U of S and their lack of accountability regarding registration, stipend allowance, and student acceptance from various different universities in Canada/US and around the world.
- GPA Conversion Scale to be addressed.

14. Meetings and Committee Work

Academic Support Committee Mtgs: June 8, June 12 and June 17, Oct. 5, Oct. 7, Oct. 21, Nov. 2: 12:15 to 5 pm, Dec. 7, Jan. 11, Jan. 18, March 15, April 5

Orientation 2009 Mtgs: May 29, June 2, July 10, July 14, Aug. 4

Alumni fundraiser envelope stuffing: June 18

ISO meeting: May 29, June 22, June 25, July 20, July 23, July 28, July 30, Sept. 3, March 25

Graduate House Mtgs: June 23, June 30

Meetings Re: Orientation Coordinator: July 6, July 17, July 23, Aug. 18, Aug. 20

Meetings with ITS Re: GSA Channel: July 15, July 16

Coffee with CGSR: July 9, July 14, Aug. 19, Oct. 27, Jan. 11, March 3

GSA Executive meetings: July 8, Aug. 24, Aug. 28, Aug. 31, Sept. 8, Sept. 23, Oct. 7, Oct. 21, Nov. 2 (11:30-5), Dec. 4, Dec. 9, Dec. 15, Jan. 8, Jan. 22, Feb. 2, Feb. 16, March 2, March 26, March 30

GSA Course Council mtg: July 6, Sept. 10, Oct. 8, AGM Nov. 10, Dec. 10, Jan. 21, Feb. 25, March 18,

President’s Breakfast mtg: Sept. 29, Nov. 5, Dec. 8, Jan. 26, March 2

Canadian Federation of Students mtg in REGINA: Oct. 16: 8 am to 5 pm

Interdisciplinary Committee Mtg: Oct. 20, Dec. 16, Feb. 1, March 1, April 6,

Canadian Federation of Students National General Mtg in GATINEAU, QC: Nov. 25 to Nov. 28

CGSR Recruitment Fair: Nov. 17 and Nov. 18 12:00 to 1:00 pm

Student Advocacy Private Mtg: Dec. 3

Meeting with University of Regina GSA: Jan. 15

Meeting with Marion van Impe Re: Credit Card Transaction Fee: Feb. 2

Meeting with Campus IT Re: Green Campus Initiative: Jan. 25, March 12

President’s Advisory Committee on Womens’ Issues: March 17



Graduate Students' Association

VP External's Report

2009 - 2010

CFS

There will be a final CFS meeting on April 27, just before the end of my term, hopefully the VP External candidate will be able to attend. The meeting is just to discuss any business that needs to get resolved transitioning into the next year. Since there isn't much to discuss it will most likely be a year-in-review type meeting. The only mention on the CFS is that the U of R will not be leaving the CFS. Though there have been serious allegations that have come out of the referendum its self. If you would like more detail please ask me at the AGM because I would like to establish the proper context as these are only rumours.

Constitution

The constitution is out in first draft. There are some minor changes that will need to be made because of feedback and to include some policies not included in the original. Again, these are only minor changes and should not fundamentally change anything that is in the document. I have been making myself available to discuss the constitution so please feel free to drop by the grad commons or fire me an email at grt126@mail.usask.ca. I would like to hear anyone's feedback, you can also email the VP Ops. Please do take the time to read over the constitution there are some major changes intended to make the organization more accountable to the graduate student body at large. Besides the constitution there is much else to discuss right now from the VP External position. As universities are moving into the summer things have slowed down. The final push now is getting the governance documents ready.



Graduate Students' Association

VP Finance's Report

2009 - 2010

1. Statement of Operations for the fiscal year 2009-2010 (Refer to page 3 of this report):

- Currently we have an excess of \$50,926.25 of the GSA fees, however around \$10-\$15K of salaries and wages are yet to be paid to the University by end of April plus expenses. Therefore, I don't anticipate we will have deficit of any kind. Last year's excess was \$42,587.97, however this year's excess is anticipated to be lower (although the revenue from GSA fees went up by ~ \$8 000) due to increased expenditure. The increase comes from extra expenditures inquired while transitioning to a commons and the actual operations of the commons itself.
- There is an excess of \$12,433.25 for health and dental fees, however a third premium might be requested in May of either whole amount or any percentage of it.
- So far all budgets are within the proposed expenditure limit.

2. Unlike previous tradition, the budget for next fiscal year will be proposed in today's meeting (see page 4 of this report). The things to note on this proposed budget compared to last year's:

- GSA fees are increased to 118,400. This amount was picked to cover offset all the proposed budgeted expenses. The amount is slightly lower than this year's actual fees. Each year, the GSA fees has increased, hence the proposed fees is realistic based on the trend of last 3 years.
- The bolded numbers: the Health and Dental fees and CFS fees not to be considered hence won't be discussed (all money received is paid out). The GSA Orientation revenue is the proposed target (based on previous years' trend) for future VP Student Affairs to try and raise from University. The CFS handbook revenue is to be raised by administrator with the help of VP External. The proposed amount is sufficient to cover for next year.

- CAGS and CFS conferences will be unified into one account known as Conferences. The budget will be the same as the combination of the two from the previous year i.e. \$5,000.
 - We will be hiring a full-time administrator and since Commons is proposed to be open at least up to 6pm from 8:30am part-time admins will be hired to cover for the extra hours. As a result, the GSA administrator budget is proposed to be \$45,000. In order to stay within the proposed realistic revenue, some changes had to be made. This includes the following:
 - Course council funding budget reduced from \$8,000 to \$5,000. We have never spent more than \$4,500 to date hence the proposed budget is practical. In case the actual expenditure goes up, excess from previous years will be used to cover for it.
 - Charitable Donations budget removed completely. There has been no expenditure of this account for the last 3 years. If there is any donation to be made, councilors can approve it from the previous excesses.
 - Bank charges budget reduced from \$500 to \$200. Once again, previous records indicate \$200 is more than sufficient to cover for it.
 - Subscription budget removed completely. This expenditure never exceeds \$50 in a whole year hence any expenditure on it will be taken from miscellaneous.
3. University has not invoiced us yet on the renovation charges for Commons. A full breakdown of cost in acquiring the Commons will be circulated once there is any progress on this.
 4. Other duties included: bursary committee, president's service award committee.

**University of Saskatchewan Graduate Students' Association
Statement of Operations for the Fiscal Year 2009-2010**

Revenues

		Proposed 2009		Current
GSA Fees	\$	110,100.00	\$	119,686.26
CFS Fees	\$	15,000.00	\$	22,592.42
Health and Dental Fees	\$	420,000.00	\$	495,041.90
Interest Income	\$	2,000.00	\$	-
GSA Orientation	\$	4,250.00	\$	1,608.00
CFS Handbook	\$	2,000.00	\$	1,130.00
Total Revenue	\$	<u>553,350.00</u>		<u>639,995.58</u>

Expenses

Audit	\$	500.00	\$	-
Bursary	\$	9,000.00	\$	9,000.00
CAGS Conference	\$	1,000.00	\$	-
CFS Conference	\$	4,000.00	\$	2,495.91
CFS Handbook	\$	2,000.00	\$	1,367.10
CFS Fees	\$	15,000.00	\$	10,894.66
Charitable Donations	\$	1,000.00	\$	-
Course Council Funding	\$	8,000.00	\$	2,805.37
Entertainment	\$	1,500.00	\$	1,413.11
GSA Orientation	\$	4,250.00	\$	4,047.16
Health and Dental Plan Premiums	\$	420,000.00	\$	289,876.92
Honoraria	\$	24,500.00	\$	20,416.50
Property Insurance	\$	2,500.00	\$	2,407.95
Liability Insurance	\$	1,000.00	\$	297.00
Miscellaneous	\$	4,000.00	\$	1,959.66
Office	\$	6,000.00	\$	5,378.00
President/Student Fund	\$	6,000.00	\$	6,000.00
Reinvested interest	\$	2,000.00	\$	-
Bank Charges	\$	500.00	\$	72.60
Subscriptions	\$	400.00	\$	20.00
Wages - Office Administrator	\$	31,000.00	\$	13,855.67
Operating cost – Wireless Internet System	\$	1,000.00	\$	-
Operating cost – Media equipment	\$	700.00	\$	-
Equipment renewal	\$	6,000.00	\$	-
Computer renewal	\$	500.00	\$	-
Total Expenses	\$	<u>553,350.00</u>	\$	<u>579,312.34</u>

NB:

Numbers that are not in bold in each the proposed column 2009 should add up to \$110,100

**University of Saskatchewan Graduate Students' Association
Graduate Commons Proposed Statement of Operations**

Revenues

		Proposed 2009		Proposed 2010
GSA Fees	\$	110,100	\$	118,400
CFS Fees	\$	15,000.00	\$	20,000
Health and Dental Fees	\$	420,000.00	\$	480,000
Interest Income	\$	2,000.00	\$	-
GSA Orientation	\$	4,250.00	\$	4,500
CFS Handbook	\$	2,000.00	\$	2,000
Total Revenue	\$	<u>553,350.00</u>		<u>624,900.00</u>

Expenses

Audit	\$	500.00	\$	500.00
Bursary	\$	9,000.00	\$	9,000.00
CAGS Conference	\$	1,000.00	\$	1,000.00
CFS Conference	\$	4,000.00	\$	4,000.00
CFS Handbook	\$	2,000.00	\$	2,000.00
CFS Fees	\$	15,000.00	\$	20,000.00
Charitable Donations	\$	1,000.00	\$	-
Course Council Funding	\$	8,000.00	\$	5,000.00
Entertainment	\$	1,500.00	\$	1,500.00
GSA Orientation	\$	4,250.00	\$	4,500.00
Health and Dental Plan Premiums	\$	420,000.00	\$	480,000
Honoraria	\$	24,500.00	\$	24,500.00
Property Insurance	\$	2,500.00	\$	2,500.00
Liability Insurance	\$	1,000.00	\$	1,000.00
Miscellaneous	\$	4,000.00	\$	4,000.00
Office	\$	6,000.00	\$	6,000.00
President/Student Fund	\$	6,000.00	\$	6,000.00
Reinvested interest	\$	2,000.00	\$	2,000.00
Bank Charges	\$	500.00	\$	200.00
Subscriptions	\$	400.00	\$	-
Wages - Office Administrator	\$	31,000.00	\$	31,000.00
Operating cost – Wireless Internet System	\$	1,000.00	\$	1,000.00
Operating cost – Media equipment	\$	700.00	\$	700.00
Equipment renewal	\$	6,000.00	\$	6,000.00
Computer renewal	\$	500.00	\$	500.00
Total Expenses	\$	<u>553,350.00</u>		<u>624,900.00</u>
Excess (Deficit)	\$	<u>0.00</u>		<u>0.00</u>

Numbers that are not in bold in each the proposed column 2009 should add up to \$110,100

Numbers that are not in bold in each the proposed column 2010 should add up to \$118,400



Graduate Students' Association

VP Aboriginal

2009 - 2010

Report will be distributed at the meeting.



Graduate Students' Association
Administrative Accomplishments

Sarah Masood

2009 - 2010

2010-2011 Day planner

- Compiled day planner
- Raised funds through advertizing
- Helped in design of some of the advertisements

Financial Help

- Helped with arranging for the GSA insurance policy
- Helped to find a lawyer to oversee GSA insurance.
- Oversaw finances of the GSA in the absence of the VP finance for over a month.
- Oversees regular payments
- Submits hours for casual staff.

Administrative help

- Reception duties.
- Contributed to creating documentation for use of the GSA Commons.
- Helping to compile survey results
- Helping to track course council attendance.
- Sending announcements to Course Council members
- Organizing meetings for executives.

Supplies

- Creating and printing business cards.
- Organizing an account with Grand and Toy to order office supplies.

Moving

- Organized moving the GSA offices twice.
- Organized installations for the GSA Commons
- Having phones connected
- Ordering keys
- Packing and moving

Website

- Updating content and structure.
- Adding new posts etc.
- Subscribing Course Councilors to GSA Website

The GSA really appreciates the help that Sarah offers every day. She is a major asset.



Graduate Students' Association
GSA Commons Staff Accomplishments
Adrienne Collins-Bretell, Bassey Bassey
and Katelyn Crosbie

2009 - 2010

The GSA would like to welcome Katelyn Crosbie to the Commons Coordinator team.

The Commons Coordinators have streamlined the operations of the GSA Commons. They are responsible for booking and organizing events at the Commons. They are often tasked with working on the website.

Commons daily usage:

January: 135 persons, an average of 13 persons per day.

February: 374 persons, an average of 19 persons per day.

March: 523 persons, an average of 22 persons per day.

Events:

- Jan 15th, Opening wine and cheese/ ribbon cutting
- Feb 11th, Multi Faith Ceremony
- Feb 12th, Ethnomixology Evening
- Feb 18th, Blockbuster Night; Farris Bueller's Day Off
- Feb 21st, Rights and Democracy Network, Conference of Indigenous People Rights Internationally
- March 5th, HGSC Annual Book Pub (live and silent auction fundraiser)
- March 8th, Saskatoon Footlights: Comedy Workshop for Actors and Writers
- March 9th, Role Model Lecture, Department of History; a talk entitled "Aboriginal Culture and Tradition in a Global World."
- March 12th, History Graduates' IT and Writing Workshop
- March 14th, Ides of March: A Night of Ancient and Medieval Trivia, Museum of Antiquities
- March 18th, Career Workshop: Developing your Networking Techniques, Career Centre
- March 22nd, Documentary Night
- March 24th, Graduation/Ceremony for GSR non-credit course (GSR 989)
- March 25th, Commons Coffee House
- April 1st, GSA Residence Design Meeting
- April 12th, Saskatoon Footlights: Comedy Workshop for Actors and Writers

Documentaries, Movies and Prisoner TV show nights have been held regularly.

Upcoming

- April 23rd, Spring Sizzler BBQ



**Graduate Students' Association
General Meeting
Appendix I
Transit Update – April 22, 2010**

The GSA has been seeking a low-cost bus pass solution for the GSA members. In the past the GSA has sought a Universal Bus Pass (UPass), which has not passed referendum and has become a point of contention amongst GSA members. As a result the GSA has come up with a solution and needs council to mandate the direction that the GSA undertakes with parameters for action.

Conversations with the university and appropriate stakeholders are at a very preliminary stage and the GSA is seeking a mandate from council to proceed with some basic approvals in principle with appropriately timed updates and the final proposal to come to council for approval.

The Vision

The GSA will be seeking the creation of a low-cost Staff/Faculty/GSA bus pass. The vision for this bus pass would be that staff, faculty, and GSA members would be able to opt-in to a low cost bus pass to encourage the use of public transit over private automobiles, and provide graduate students with access to affordable transportation.

The Facts

- The U of S is one of the largest employers in Saskatoon.
 - More than 7500 faculty and staff.
- There are currently 2700+ graduate students with anticipated growth of 8% per year.
- The Mayor has committed to working with employers to create public transportation programs.
- Parking at the U of S is under continuous strain.
- As a matter of environmental and social sustainability this should be of utmost importance to the University and the GSA.
- The minimum cost of public transportation for a graduate student for one full year is \$748.00 (Two term passes and monthly passes for the summer).

Considerations

There are several factors that will come into play when considering working on this issue.

- The GSA is the only stakeholder with the ability to guarantee any specific level of buy-in.
- The University of Saskatchewan has the capacity to negotiate a contract more effectively than the GSA.
- Working collectively the University and the GSA has a stronger negotiating position than either has individually.
- A University investment in transit will offset the need for a university investment in parking infrastructure.

- Going forward with a UPass in the form that it has been brought forward in the past and through a referendum has a high potential for failure given the history of previous undergraduate and graduate attempts.
- The U of S has the resources to manage such a program where the GSA does not have the capacity.

The Motion

Be It Resolved That:

The GSA will create a transportation committee of council, mandated with the creation of a U of S Staff/Faculty/GSA Bus Pass Program, which will report back to council regularly on the progress of this work. The committee will be constrained by the following parameters:

- It will not commit any funds to subsidize the program.
- It will guarantee a reasonable level of graduate student buy-in annually.
- It will commit to a trial period for a program within reason to establish program parameters and buy-in.
- It will only accept an opt-in program;
 - Unless an opt-out program is a 100% opt-out program only constrained by a reasonable time limit.
- Any unforeseen details will be brought to the committee for consideration, and brought to council if appropriate.
- A final agreement, if struck, will be brought to Course Council for approval;
 - In the case where a referendum is required the committee will take the appropriate steps.