

Graduate Students' Association Course Council Meeting Minutes



University of Saskatchewan
Graduate Students' Association

Wednesday Oct 6th, 2010
GSA Commons.

Present: Alison Ward, Ian Larsen, Riley Glew, Jason Grier, Bonnie Cherewyk, Travis, Lingenfelter, Yining Liu, Robert Moley, Ranjan Dajja, Stephanie Thompson, Tanya Andrusieczko, Yimeng Wang, Adam Benn, Steve Jimbo, Justin Botterill, Lisa Johnson, Nicholas Fraser, Mohamed Mohamed, Matthew Munson, Spike Posnikoff, Wendie Marks, Rebecca Major, Bill Bewer, Leila Bahrami, Nathan Reis, Jania Chilima, Omeasoo Butt and Mike Secora.

Regrets: (Only those Course Councilors who have handed in their ratifications) Ashley Mclardy, Fidel Obu, Graham Fairhurst, Holly Kelleher, Jacob Oullet, Julie Anderson, Eamon McDermott and Cletus Asquo

1.0 Call to Order: 5: 10 p.m

2.0 Appointment of Chair

Alison Ward was appointed as a GSA Course Council Chair (permanent chair) and by virtue of her position as per GSA Constitution became the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) for the GSA By-election for election a new VP Academic.

Motion: BIRT Alison Ward to be the permanent Course Council Chair and CEO for the upcoming by-election.

Second: Matt and Nic, Motion carries

3.0 Approval of Agenda

Motion: BIRT the agenda be approved as circulated.

Second: Amy and Matt, Motion Carries.

4.0 Course Councilor Ratifications

*Motion: BIRT the aforementioned individuals be ratified as Course Councilors for the 2010-2011.
Second: Jania and Bonnie, Motion carries.*

5.0 Approval of Minutes

No minutes were circulated with the Executive reports and agenda. Minutes to be circulated to the course councilors after the meeting and to be approved in the November 3rd meeting together with the October 6th Executive reports.

6.0 President Report

Report summarized as circulated. Also, Omeasoo announced the Art Work display/exhibition currently in the GSA Commons and stressed that this has been a goal for the Commons for a while to have a student to agreed to display their work for free. An opening night is to be arranged in a future date.

6.1 New VP Academics

Omeasoo announced that the VP Academic is currently vacant and will need to follow the democratic process as per constitution to prepare for a by-election. With a CEO- Alison Ward selection and ex –facto Chief Returning Officer- CRO (Jania Chilima-VP Operations and Administration), she announced the official nomination period open. The CEO and CRO to work details and procedures after the meeting. Also see section 12.2 and 12.4 of the minutes.

6.2 Conference Hire

Omeasoo explained that GFS for the Conference Coordinator is currently open. The last day to submit Resume is October 12th, 2010 at 4:00p.m Hiring will be on October 14th, 2010. Interviews to be conducted by the GSA Conference Committee.

Jania and Mohammed added on the eligibility points: To be considered a candidate the graduate student should have maximum of \$ 7500/year as funding and should be FT student.

6.3 Student Commission

The Students' Commission is a not-for profit that serves to teach young people (high school and elementary school aged youth) about engagement with the broader world socially and politically. I asked Course Council to allow me a letter of support for the Students' Commission on behalf of the GSA.

Point of Discussions: Rob asked if this is politically inclined?

Omeasoo advised its non-partisan organization.

Motion: BIRT the GSA be allowed to endorse this organization.

Second: Rebecca and Amy, motion carries.

6.4 Nov 20th - International Day of the Child

Omeasoo wanted ideas on showing solidarity on campus for this initiative and requested course councilors to volunteer to work with her. However no one was nominating himself or herself from the floor. Given the time sensitivity on this issue, she asked then if she could involve the general constituency.

Point of Discussion: Nic advised if the course councilors can send this message back to their student council executives to see if anyone is interested?

Action Item: Reply from various student councils executives required on this item.

4.5 Conference

Omeasoo solicited further involvement from course council into the GSA Conference Committee. With the days getting closer a lot of logistics, planning and decision have to be made. Riley Glew and Tanya Andrusieczko nominated themselves to the committee. They are to be briefed accordingly on the progress of the committee thus far.

Omeasoo added an item: Safety Phone

It has been noted that the safety phones on campus are not working and only 20% are in full service. This has been an issue USSU is following up for a while with the university administration responsible for this-Campus Security.

Point of Discussion: Nic: advised that the company which had a contract with the university to have these installed are out of business and that they have classified these phone as “not working permanently and beyond repair”.

Rebecca: emphasized that the university should look into replacing /repairing so that its safe to walk at night. For example if someone is being followed or assaulted the phones are normally the first option to dial for assistance.

Motion: BIRT GSA support the report of safety on campus and advice the university to make a permanent strategy for updating the safety phones and should be working at all times.

Second: Emmy, Motion carries.

7.0 VP Academic Report

Currently vacant no report available for this period.

Jania advised that there are 4 University Council Committees that the VP Academics was in charge of and that they have meetings very sparingly however there are a few coming up this month. She placed a list of the committees for course councilors to volunteer to attend these until there is incumbent to the position.

8.0 VP Student Affairs Report

In addition to his report, Steve emphasized the need to have a strategy towards International students' fees differential to be effective next fall-September 2011. He advised that there is no firm commitment from the CGSR when further information is required and everyone contacted is sort of "passing the ball" to the next person. He has been in-touch with some international students who are concerned due to lack of clarity on this issue, some associate deans of programs and the International Student Office (ISO) personnel and none seem to be aware of what is the current decision on the funds to be disbursed to current students and where exactly to find this information. Very little is on the CGSR website. An example was given whereby the VIDO HR head was unable to find this information until they searched thoroughly and found small fonts on the website buried in archives news.

Point of Discussion: Jania asked if perhaps there is a need of a new policy statement or enhance the existing one to specifically include differential discussion.

Nic advised the available statement is sufficient since we have declared a stance of no tuition increase. He urged that we needed to take a stance as GSA to move this further. He agreed even on his own inquiries as well as last year there was no concrete answer from the university administration on this issue. We need to take this to the BOG and given them our piece of mind.

Rebecca suggested if this can be added as a campaign and be passed around as newsfeed on PAWS as well as work with ISO on how to disperse this information.

Action Item: Steve is to look into adding International Differential as campaign to be passed as newsfeed on PAWS as well as work with ISO on how to disperse this information better.

Currently GSA doesn't have a seat in BOG and USSU does and they can be represented when such decisions are made. Both Steve and Omeasoo echoed that most students don't know if this differential is coming.

Alison rose a question to Steve in regards to an email circulated earlier in the summer to request departments to supply their students' emails to the GSA- this is breach of confidentiality. Steve assured her the attempt didn't succeed to do so after the realization of this breach.

9.0 VP Aboriginal Report

Rebecca advised there is little to report at the moment as the AIGSC is currently in the process of completing drafting its constitution. However the council is working on a few initiatives including the support staff it's expecting to have soon.

10.0 VP Finance

Mohammed explained the proposed budget changes from the earlier \$ 24,500 to \$ 27500 are due to a new executive position - VP Aboriginal Liaison to cover for the rest of the year.

Motion: BIRT the changes in the proposed budget be approved.

Second: Jania and Allison, Motion carries.

Mohammed presented on The Commons Shaw cable option that we have right now, advised currently the monthly payment is \$ 80.00 and it used to be \$ 30.00 when we got it, he called Shaw cable to negotiate and they would only be bale to deduct \$ 28/month.

Point of Discussion: Jania wanted to know why we couldn't move to other cable service providers?
Allison wanted to know hwy not download to basic cable instead?

Mohammed advised the reason behind negotiation was to see if we could get the service for free since Engineering Student Lounge receives the same service without paying for it. Also informed that we can't move to other service providers due to the fact that Shaw Company set the infrastructures at the Commons. If we download to basic we will miss most of the sports channel and the payment per month would be \$ 20.00 per month.

Point of discussion: Nic advised perhaps this is an issue that should be discussed by the executives and make decision on it rather than bringing it to Council.

Omeasoo and Mohammed advised that it has already been discussed by executives however given the Commons is used by our constituents wanted to make sure this information "gets out". Mohammed advised also incase its cancelled Council needs to know its because it wasn't made full use of by people.

Mohammed also advised we are still collecting the payments of adverts on the Graduates Day Planner (See his report point # 5).

Action Item: Mohammed to negotiate with Shaw further if not satisfied to cancel Shaw Cable for the Commons and use alternative means of providing entertainment (visual and music).

11.0 VP External Report

Omeasoo summarized VP External's report in his absence. She emphasized on the CFS's Saskatchewan election and the CFS Job Opportunity (See Appendices to the VP External Report)

12.0 VP Operations Report

12.1 Bursary Committee

Jania advised that the deadline for GSA Fall Bursary is October 15th, and there is still a spot to be filled by Course Councilor as the bursary selection has to happen by October 20th. Riley Glew volunteered to join this committee.

12.2 Chief Electoral Officer (CEO)

As per the Constitution's Policy Manual 2: Election and Referenda. Following Alison's election as CEO AND Course Councilor Chair Jania wanted to know from Mohammed if we have in the

budget the honorarium for this by election: CEO is awarded a honorarium based on GSA budgeting process. Nomination period is marked Opens today and should run for 2 weeks until 2October 20th.

Jania read out the some of the key duties and responsibilities for the CEO

- To chairs and advertises the candidate forum
- To organize a Candidates Forum during the Campaign period is during the week of Oct 21-27th, voting date after this forum to be set by both the CRO and CEO.

12.3 Student Council Updates

Jania advised as per the message sent on Sept 24th to Course Councilors on the PAWS group about the requirement for up to date list of all the student councils executives, their current constitution and their members, as outlined in the GSA Constitution Section 5.1 Course Council Membership, found at <http://gsa.usask.ca/main/wp-content/uploads/GSA-Full-Constitution.pdf> that there has been very slow response.

Alison advised there should have been a few from the outgoing executives. Jania informed only 3 are on file currently.

Point of Discussion: Nic advised perhaps example of constitution should be posted on the PAWS group and he said SENSsa had a good example. Ranjan agreed for SENssa copy to be available to all to follow.

Action Item: Jania is to post the SENSsa constitution and other prototypes on the PAWS group.

Jania also summarized the section 2.2 and 2.3 of her report and advised of the exciting opportunity for Course Council to endorse the Learning Charter. Not all the course councilors have seen this so she will also post this on the paws group to start receiving feedback and brainstorm ideas on how we can endorse this charter, which outlines our responsibilities as students. She so provided examples of how USSU has done.

Action Item: Jania is to post the Learning Charter on the PAWS group.

12.4 Election Procedures

Jania advised that information on vacant executive position was circulated by Bea from the CGSR via email as well as in the GSA Newsletter. Also added that as per constitution 8% student body must votes as urged for everyone's participation. The GSA will be covering the campaigning expense; this will be reimbursed with proof of receipt and expense caps at \$ 10.00 per candidate.

13.0 Next Course Council meeting

Wednesday, November 3rd, 2010, 5:00 - 7:00 pm

14.0 Adjournment: 6:11 p.m

Motion: BIRT the meeting to be adjourned

Second: Matt and Emmy, Motion carries