

# Graduate Students' Association Course Council Meeting Minutes



University of Saskatchewan  
Graduate Students' Association  
September 1<sup>st</sup>, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m  
GSA Commons

*Present: Justin Botterill, Wendie Marks, Nathan Reis, Ashlee Mclardy, Steve Jimbo, Jacob Ouellet, Matthew Manson, Amy Noakes, Spike Postnikoff, Emma Turner, Cletus Asuquo, Eamon McDermott, Bill Bewer, Mohammed Mohammed, Jania Chilima, Omeasoo Butt.*

*Regrets: Couldn't quantify, as majority did not return ratification forms by this date.*

## **1.0 Call to Order:** 5:09 p.m

## **2.0 Approval of Agenda**

*Motion: BIRT agenda be approved with additional items: 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5*

*Second: Jake and Jania, motion carries*

## **3.0 Approval of Minutes**

*Motion: BIRT Agreed to approve as circulated since were already posted on line and occurred in the last VP Operation's time (June 13<sup>th</sup>).*

*Second: Eamon and Jania, motion carries*

## **4.0 President Report**

### **4.1 Learning and Writing Across the Disciplines**

Omeasoo explained about the great services offered by the Writing Centre at Murray Library that is open to all graduate students.

With this Omeasoo also talked about the new programming at the GSA Commons to be taking place every Wednesday and Thursday over the lunch hour –Lunch N' Learn whereby the different services on campus will deliver 20-35 minutes information session on what they can provide to graduate students and some of these service providers will be bringing free lunch. Full brochure and information can be found with the Commons Coordinators.

Also added on the fact that she had a meeting with Mary Van Impe in regards to the installment payment options.

Point of Discussion: Amy asked if the installment is currently available at all?

Omeasoo advised it is however we are working with the university to receive a hit of \$ 40.00 on this installment option. She is going to have another meeting September 2<sup>nd</sup> on this again.

#### **4.2 Surveys**

Omeasoo advised on how the university conducts survey and informed that in the past GSA were not given much access to the data collection. She is currently working with the university especially the CGSR to put forth mechanisms by which we can get statistics and information relevant to us.

#### **4.3 Selection of chair of the Course Council Meeting**

Jake Oullet chaired this course council meeting.

#### **4.4 Referendum for the U-Pass**

This is to be opened if the options for opting out are to be re-evaluated to make sure students living close by are not forced into obtaining one.

Point of Discussion: Justin advised that most of students are not very well informed on this. Jania also wanted to know if more opting out would be available such as for students living across from McEown Park.

Emmy advised there hasn't been any referendum on this since the last AGM 2010. **Medical Student Councilor (sorry I cant remember the name-Please add)** added also last year a staff option was suggested on this issue, which is not bad looking. Omeasoo advised that currently USSU pays \$ 76.00 on their ancillary fees to include this without opting out options if you live on campus but the bus operators wont do it out of campus. Eamon suggested we could at least add our constituents to the USSU's and build a better case this way for opting out options. Nathan and Bill added if broad options for opting out are provided we should have this as a referendum once again. Eamon will be meeting with USSU on this once again.

*Motion: BIRT that GSA is going to explore the referendum on U-Pass for graduate students provide that opting out options are broadened especially for off campus students.*

*Second: Neil, Eamon and Bill, motion carries.*

#### **4.5 School of Architecture**

Omeasoo read out the letter written by the GSA to endorse the School of Architecture. Please see Appendix 1.

*Motion: BIRT GSA publishes and circulates the letter in support of the School of Architecture at U of S.*

*Second: Eamon and Wendy, motion carries.*

## 5.0 VP Academic Report

### 5.1 The multidisciplinary conference committee.

Summarized on what has been done so far and circulated a copy of the newly added information that is going to go out to the public to advertise the 2010 GSA Conference “*Academia in Society: Your Research and its impacts in the Community*”. These are the agreed upon conference date: Nov 18-19; registration \$ 20.00 for GSA members and \$ 30.00 non-members, Lunch to be provided both days. Fundraising for the conference was going to be launched with this call for participation/papers.

Cletus called for volunteers: Spike and Ashley will not be available these date; neither would Nathan, Wendy and Justin.

Omeasoo advised for all course councilors to pass along and announce the call for volunteers and to garner interest to the conference.

Point of discussion: Amy wanted to know why there is a fee for the conference for the members? She raised this with the fact that even when the conference is free students normally do not show up. Also she said perhaps we could also consider date changes if students do not show interests and hold it later.

Eamon advised these dates were selected since they coincide with the Grad Expo Week.

Mohammed said perhaps with the fees some incentives could be purchased/announced and that way people will come forth and participate.

Omeasoo emphasized that that’s why its important to have a big group of volunteers to the GSA Conference Committee so there can be further discussions on this and how to better handle logistics.

## 6.0 VP Student Affairs Report

### 6.1 Volunteers for The GSA Orientation BBQ.

Steve provided a summary of the Orientation and Life Expo that is to take place on September 2<sup>nd</sup> as per his report sections (a) and (b). Ashley and Nathan have volunteered themselves for Steve will do helping out with the BBQ on September 23rd. Further contacts on this.

### 6.2 The fee differential issue.

Steve commented on the ne wave of information about the international student differential. He is working with Cletus to produce a summary of all the documents received from the CGSR and the little known from their website.

### 6.3 The list of graduate students.

Steve explained on the difficulty that arose due to the request he sent to the departments to request emails for students so as to inform them of the new initiatives by the GSA. He explained had to meet with David – Student and Enrollment Services Division (SESD) Vice-President and go over this unfortunate circumstance and that we will not follow this route without explaining properly why to all parties involved and going through the students themselves directly not to breach their confidentiality towards GSA. The positive twist to this unfortunate event is at least our need of

knowing our constituents has reached the higher ranks.

Steve advised to go around not knowing how to contact our constituents, a voluntary list will be made available for students to provide their NSIDs and email addresses as well as at the BBQ on September 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Point of Discussion: Nathan suggested we should put something on the website to advise why its important to provide emails to GSA and importance of communicating various GSA initiatives. Jake advised if emails can be sent to departments secretaries instead and ask them to forward all these information to their respective students and Amy wanted to have further as well to what exactly happen with the emails circulate to the Course Councilors from the former GSA executives.

Omeasoo added that's why it's important to have ways to reach our constituents in a proper manner. Also informed that voluntary collection of contact information (emails) ahs started.

Issues around what happened on how the former GSA executive who was using course councilors emails contacts for personal vendetta was addressed *in Camera*

## **7.0 VP Finance Report**

*7.1 Motion passed by Mohammed: BIRT the proposed budget for the year 2010-2011 be approved.*

*Second: Eamon McDermott carries unanimously.*

### **7.2 Liquor License**

Mohammed provided information on the current situation on the Liquor license and advised that we are currently paying \$ 250.00, which covers two days at a tem to save liquor. This is mot profitable and doesn't cover private events that still need to also acquire Special Occasion Permit (S.O.L). We can shift to a different company (HUB International) which will be costing the GSA \$ 3000.00 instead of the current \$ 8100.00.

Point of Discussion: Amy Noakes wanted to know what would be the cancellation fees to move to this option. Mohamed and Eamon explained: Cancellation to this new insurance will cost \$ 790.00 (\$ 30/month for each month remaining in the contract)

Jake wanted to know what would happen to the insurance if we accede the 12 events per year?

Mohammed advised this could be negotiated with them; they are not very stringent on that. Eamon also added once we have clearer operational costs of the first year we would know if more events are possible. Mohammed also added that so far we don't have more than 12 per year and given that this insurance will require formal reports on for example information on who serves liquor and what kind of experience and certifications they hold, there is still a lot of work to be done but will keep abreast once change over is done.

*Motion passed by Mohammed: That the GSA cancel its insurance for the GSA commons and shift to another company which covers liquor sale permission at the GSA Commons.*

*Seconded: Amy Noakes carries unanimously.*

Mohammed also provided information on the changes on the budget in regards to student governance (student associational groups) Conference funding provided for executive and involved Course Councilor to attend. He has moved this to appear as a single expense (See his report). He advised that the CFS fees have decreased but other have gone up.

Point of Discussion: Jania wanted to know about the CAGS conference.

Eamon advised this has ceased to exist now.

## **8.0 VP External Report**

Eamon brought forward the following motions:

8.1 Bill C-32 (Copyright Modernization Act) statement WHEREAS Parliament will Soon be returning from summer recess, and WHEREAS the GSA membership is Active consumers and creators of copyrighted works.

Point of Discussion: Nathan wanted to know if the mill is not to oppose the entire Bill C-32 but just part of it?

Eamon explained that most part of it is “good” to academic institutions but there are part of it that deals with digital locks is not necessarily all that representative of all available options.

*Motions: BIRT the GSA oppose the outlawing the use of anti-circumvention technology to access works a user has a legitimate right to access  
Second: Mohammed and Jania, motion carries*

See the attached letter to the MAEEI in the VP External report for the motion below. He also explained on the Ontario’s experimentation with the Canadian Experience Class (CEC) immigration class and related it to the current process for the same class in SK.

*Motion: BIRT the GSA send the attached letter to the Prime Minister, Ministers of Industry and Canadian Heritage & Official Languages, as well as Saskatoon’s MPs.  
Second: Amy and Jania, motion carries.*

Eamon also summarized his meeting with USSU (see his report) on range of issues, including the issues surrounding housing and vacancy rates in Saskatoon. He advised that has learnt of Co-op student housing in Ontario and suggested this could be considered in Saskatoon so as to increase the source of low income housing for students. He advised for those who want to learn more on this option to contact him later.

Omeasoo added that childcare is an important initiative to support given that we want to allow “parents” to be a part of our constituents and increase diversity among our members.

## **9.0 VP Operations Report**

Provided summaries as per circulated report.

### **9.1 Bursary Criteria revision and Fall Bursary Committee**

Advised that as per the summer bursary committee some individuals suggested that some criteria especially dealing with the merits and extenuating circumstance be revised because they are very much value laden.

Point of discussion: Jania asked the councilors on their input.

Mohammed advised that its difficult to divide these sections up and in the previous years they had tried to do so but this current methods seem to work best and allow for critical thoughts and common sense plus availability to discuss among bursary selection committee.

*Motion: BIRT Health and Dental Standing Committee is formed to assist in Disseminating information to greater student body.  
Motion blocked.*

Majority of the councilors felt this could be left with the health and dental administrators to address.

### **10. 0 other business**

Eamon raised a question on the importance of volunteerism from the Course Council and posed a question: For events, how do we mobilize graduate students to volunteer.

Omeasoo pinpointed the importance of building a strong graduate student campus culture such as involvement in the upcoming Orientation. The more we all get involved the more we create new momentum to the new students.

**11. 0 Adjournment** 7:17 p.m, next meeting October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2010, 5:00- 7:00 p.m

**Appendix 1:**

To Whom it May Concern:

The Graduate Students Association (GSA) is writing to you to support the proposed School of Architecture at the University of Saskatchewan. The GSA supports the School of Architecture because we believe it will:

1. Build on the Universities' established programming.

Four existing programs at the University of Saskatchewan will contribute their expertise, faculty and programming: the College of Engineering, the Regional and Urban Planning Program (Geography) Art and Art History, and Native Studies.

2. Offer students increased opportunities for interdisciplinary learning

The proposed School of Architecture will allow our members, including students from the programs mentioned above, to examine their discipline from a new perspective through interaction with local experts and a different group of peers. They will have the opportunity to participate in classes offered by the School of Architecture that will shape and develop their careers in diverse ways.

3. Contribute to a vibrant Saskatoon community.

The extension of the University of Saskatchewan into a new region of study will help develop deeper connections between the City of Saskatoon, students, faculty and staff at the University of Saskatchewan. This will engage Graduate students in the community and help us to make an impact in the community in positive and tangible ways.

4. Help grow a prosperous province.

Our members have chosen to study at the University of Saskatchewan over many other national and international Graduate education options, and therefore have a vested interest in the growth and economic success of the province of Saskatchewan.

5. The unique Indigenous Architecture aspect of the proposed University of Saskatchewan School of Architecture supports a positive Aboriginal environment important to the Graduate student experience.

Acknowledging the Indigenous fact and history of Saskatchewan and Canada is an important aspect of our appreciation of this city, province and country and their rich Aboriginal heritage. We support any opportunity to strengthen the growth of both the well-being of the Aboriginal population as well as the knowledge of Indigenous peoples and lifeways amongst all Canadians and especially students at this University.

We are pleased to provide this letter of support for the proposed School of Architecture to be established at the University of Saskatchewan. We look forward to a bright future here at the University of Saskatchewan enhanced by forward-looking expansion.

Sincerely,

Omeasoo Butt, President, Graduate Students' Association, University of Saskatchewan