

Graduate Students' Association GSA Council Meeting Minutes



University of Saskatchewan
Thursday, January 23, 2014
5:00 P.M - 7:00 P.M
GSA Commons

Attendees: Abdel-Salam Mohamed Rani, Mostafa Aghbolaghy, Hafiz Faizan Ahmed, ASM Atiqul Islam, Akindamola Awujoola, Suranjan Bairagi, Zak Baker, Edward K.P. Bam, David Bennett, Cynthia Bottomly, Robin Brown, Nicole Callihoo, Manuel Chavez-Ortiz, Rajat Chakravarty, Tara Chambers, Dmitriy Chesnakov, Heemel Datta, Cody David, Seth Dueck, Priyangi Edirisinghe, Kaitlyn Frolek, Andrew Frank, Brittany Gadzosa, Philip Garvey, Federica Giannelli, Layla Gould, Amanda Guy, Kim Harrison, Kristian Hermann, Nicole House, Melanie Jean, Daniel Karran, Roanne Keller, Sahtout Khalil, Mark Kroeker, Carla Labarrere, Laura Larsen, Kayla Lindenback, Cinnati Loi, Kendra Merier, Jason Mercer, Ana Maldonado, Cody Manchester, Janna Moats, Davood Ghadiri Maghadlam, Stephanie McMillan, Robert Nicks, Kristopher Novak, Malhar Padhee, Krisztina Pandur, Rob Perry, Nathan Pham, Isaac Pratt, Natalie Preston, Martin Prusinkiewicz, Samantha Purchase, Sarah Purdy, Janell Rempell, Kelly Richardson, Fedir Razumenko, Christine Rosser, Fred Sage, Sams Sadat, Sarah Sangster, Kumar Selvaraj, Cindy Sherbac, Austen Smith, Josie Steeves, Balazs Toro, Kurt Woytiuk, Qin Xiang, Zixuan Zhao

Executives:

President, Ehimai Ohiozebau
VP Academic, Izabela Vlahu
VP Student Affairs, Reanne Ridsdale
VP Operations and Communications, Kiri Staples
VP Finance, Mohammad Rafati

Regrets:

Dana Carriere, Aboriginal Liaison
Steve Jimbo, VP External

Informal session – Presentation on Graduate Education Review Committee

- Asked to look at how graduate education is organized and how it compares to other universities
- Started a year ago and began doing research looking at how graduate studies are organized – interested not in specific programs, but more in governance (what kind of unit is it, what kind of leader does it have, etc.)
- Intention that this would be phase one of larger project, where subsequent phases would look at more specific matters
- Other research-intensive universities increasingly have graduate studies supported by departments/faculties and central unit was more administrative rather than academics
- Wrapping up first phase and want to share with the campus the idea of changing the governance of graduate studies from College with Dean and Faculty structure to a service unit that would support departments on the administrative side
- Next phase would be what exactly this administrative would look like and how it would function
- One of central questions of this process is: where should the various functions of graduate studies be carried out? Which of the functions that have to be carried out for students do graduate work be located – centrally where all students can access them or decentralized to academic units students are associated with?
- If the university campus decides that they want the next phase of the work to move on and a transition committee is appointed, this committee would look at this key question of where services would be located. It would also ask: are there additional functions that need to be added or functions that are no longer needed?

Discussion

- Question: On the list of suggested responsibilities in the report (page 2), which of them would be new?
- All of these functions are currently being carried out, but committee would look at whether there is a better way to carry them out
- There are a couple functions on this list where we have started to do more, but the question remains as to how much more needs to be done – i.e. College has been more active in recent years on fundraising, and could ask whether this trajectory needs to continue

- Trying to establish a body that rather than policing graduate studies, it would facilitate them
- In its present structure CGSR represents both students and supervisor – by distinguishing them, the body would be able to advocate solely for the student
- Question: What would be the number one argument not to centralize and keep things as they are?
- The committee has had trouble making this argument - one could say we need to keep the status quo to ensure application procedure is central, but right now this procedure is under review and will likely be changed in the future due to changes in technology
- Status quo will be different even in a year from now
- Current structure does ok job, but we are hearing that it could function better because there is certain knowledge that only the units have
- Thinking of the status quo as the general setup that we have, it made sense historically to have this system because faculties didn't necessarily have research programs, so it was necessary to have a unit to bring together faculty qualified to teach at graduate level
- People are comfortable with these procedures, but they do get in the way
- There is a central unit doing things, but what pieces of it does it make sense to keep central – i.e. quality assurance to review programs externally
- Another reason to have a centralized unit is to ensure graduate students are treated in the same way
- Question: What would be the cost of re-structuring be? What would the workload redistribution look like?
- Short answer is we don't know – this is the work of the transition committee, to determine consequences for staffing
- This is where we need to have a particular proposal put forward by the committee to evaluate the consequences and benefits
- The whole process of graduate education review is not linked to any other process on campus (i.e. TransformUS) – the timing is that they're being carried out at the same time, but it's not about budget
- Question: To follow up, do you have any ideas if it would be more cost effective to have it decentralized?

- The short answer is until we have a specific proposal, we don't know, but there are some things to think about – we are currently looking at the function, and once we know that we can determine the form – there are a few stages to work through and organizations do this all the time
- We don't actually know when we work through all this, where we will need to distribute people, but you can predict roles will change along the way
- Another question is effectiveness as opposed to cost-saving – we have already decentralized a lot, so it's more about finding optimal level of what is done centrally and what is decentralized to increase efficiency which would probably appear in the form of freeing people's time
- Current structure hasn't been intentionally designed, so there are likely inefficiencies that we could improve upon
- Question: Will there be any guidelines to these decentralized academic units? E.g. if my academic unit decides to reduce stipends for graduate students, could the central unit step in?
- How will we determine the rules by which graduate education will be carried out by the university? We have that today with the graduate faculty and the graduate council, as well as committees set up by graduate council
- I suspect that a transition committee would recommend that we will need mechanism that sets rule-making process because graduate student needs are different from undergraduate needs
- Precisely what these processes would be we don't know, but the university needs to figure out way to build that in, how that body makes decisions and what type of decisions they make
- In terms of funding issue, this sort of model is already in place – CGSR is responsible for 21% of funding that goes to students and the rest comes from colleges and supervisors, but it does make recommendations
- Do have to take autonomy of college into account
- Question: In terms of establishing campus-wide standards, right now there is no real standard. For example university has set standard for hourly wages for TA-ing, but it's up to department how many hours the TA works and is paid for.

- This issue of standards, policies and regulations is a critical one
- Ultimately you need some body that adjudicates to make decisions, and it all comes down to resources that enforce regulations and monitor units when a decision is made
- If you have too many regulations, your centralized unit turns into a police force – the intention is for this to be an advocate
- We all recognize that resources are short, but we are trying to ensure we put resources in the best area
- This is speculation, but when changes like this are contemplated, you will see some of the decentralized units change the way they make decisions and the standards that they develop because they realize they are involved in a different way than they were before – that they now have to pay closer attention to issues such as equality between students, etc.
- Question: You mention that this process is separate from TransformUS, but how will the two processes mesh going forward?
- Provost will have to look at TransformUS recommendations that apply to CGSR and decide what the University should go forward with, and there may be some overlap with the Graduate Education Review Committee – we will have to decide where we would come down and if this project proceeds, it might turn out to be the way of acting on some of the recommendations from TransformUS, even though the two reports have had different thought processes
- They're separate processes but there's an overlap in the ideas between them
- Comment: Thanks to the members of the Graduate Education Review Committee. Our hope is that implementation will consider the interests of graduate students first and foremost.

1.0 Call to Order – 5:52PM

2.0 Approval of Agenda

Added motion: BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the GSA Referendum 2014 be held on February 25th, 26th and 27th.

Motion 1 – to approve agenda

Motioned by Isaac, Seconded by Josie

3.0 Approval of last GSA Council Meeting Minutes

Motion 2 – to approve minutes

Motioned by Chrisitan, Seconded by Manuel

4.0 Ratification of new GSA Chair

Motion 3 – to ratify new GSA Chair

Motioned by Josie, Seconded by Reanne

5.0 Ratification of new Academic Councils

No new academic councils

6.0 Ratification of new Academic Representatives

Cindy Sherban (Ed. Admin), Daniel Karran (Geography and Planning), Hafix Faizan Ahmed (Civil and Geog. Engineering), Kylee Wilyman (Pharmacology)

Motion 4 - to ratify new academic representatives

Motioned by Josie, Seconded by Reanne

7.0 Ratification of new Social Groups

No new social groups

8.0 Executive Reports

8.1 VP Student Affairs Report (Report attached)

- Just a reminder - if any graduate student wants to transfer department, you don't need approval from the department you are leaving
- Student Form discussed TransformUS – have minutes if you have questions about this
- Next week Adam Baxter-Jones will be going Western Deans conference and will bring up childcare co-op issue that we've discussed in the past
- Still looking for funding for new childcare facility
- In November there was a phone survey that broke down demographic of student parents – the limited number of spaces in the facility will be done according to these demographics
- Chair of Negotiations Committee

8.2 VP Operations and Communications Report (Report attached)

- Highlights of report – GSA Bursary, UPASS Referendum, Newsletter

8.3 VP Academics Report (Report attached)

- GSA conference on March 6-8th

- Reminder that abstracts due next Friday
- Have a lot of support from faculty on this
- TransformUS
 - I am representative for graduate students and will provide student perspective as best I can – in the coming weeks I may send points that are being raised to Councilors – encourage councilors to provide feedback on this to have a more comprehensive advocate throughout this process

8.4 VP Finance Report (Report attached)

- Auditing process – still ongoing
- Health and dental – if there are any recommendations let me know, will continue to provide feedback on ways this service could be improved
- Invited to fee review committee
- GSA Gala has received sponsorship from different departments – if there are any units that aren't involved, we encourage course councilors them to sponsor

8.5 Aboriginal Liaison Report (Report attached)

8.6 VP External Report (Report attached)

8.7 Presidents' Report (Report attached)

- Thanks to new GSA Chair
- Encourage councillors to limit discussion regarding Referendum question to its clarity and relevance to the Constitution/GSA Policies rather than personal opinion
- We are excited about the fact that we have secured funding for the GSA Gala – invite you to attend, get involved, nominate colleagues for awards
- TransformUS process – we heard that the USSU passed a vote of non-confidence - we are a separate body, so during the question and answer time, I would like to hear your feedback on the TransformUS process so I can best represent graduate students' view

8.8 Questions regarding Executive Reports

- Question: Do you want questions regarding TransformUS from just councillors or all students?
 - If you want to share information with your members that's fine and we expect you to represent their view, but it is simply easier for us to send e-mails to councillors
 - It would be best for councillors to aggregate this feedback from their students
- Question: How many abstracts have been submitted for the Conference so far?
 - At this point not many, but we have heard from 5 departments interested in organizing sessions, which is about 5 abstracts
 - Right now have political sciences, social sciences, Environment and Sustainability, history of medicine , but would like to see engineers or natural sciences so we have diversity represented
- Question: Will there be room for posters during the conference ?
 - Had to cancel our poster session because we don't have the room to house posters because we don't have the room for it
- Question: What is the status of the ombudsperson position for graduate students?
 - This has been put on hold simply because everyone is so preoccupied with TransformUS
 - We could also see advocacy for graduate students if CGSR is restructured – we could emphasize that this be a part of the new function
 - We will certainly push forward with this
- Question: If a student has an issue now, who should they go to?
 - CGSR and VP Academic are the mechanisms you can use now, but on non-academic issues VP Student Affairs
 - If there are issues don't wait for ombudsperson position, come to us
- Question: Made an observation with regard to VP External reports – have noted that in the past few months the report has been brief and would like to see more elaborate report in the future.

- We will bring this to the VP External
- Question: In November 2012, the Council decided to have a vote on whether we want a Gala or a Conference or nothing, and I want to ask why didn't that vote happen? When we came back from summer it was already decided.
 - We said that we will ensure both events will occur if possible – this year the budget committee determined it was possible
 - The conference is in our policies under VP Academic
 - The vote happened when the budget was already approved

9.0 Standing Committee Reports

9.1 Budget Committee (No report)

9.2 Bursary Selection Committee (No report)

9.3 Elections and Referenda Committee (No report)

9.4 Constitution Revision Committee (No report)

9.5 Code of Ethics Committee (No report)

9.6 Travel Grant Committee (No report)

9.7 Gala Committee

- Finances are not an issue as we have secured funding through donations, what we need now is for you to attend
- Tickets will be sold on Monday until last week of February, cost will be \$35, but after last week of February the price will be increased
- Thank you to the several colleges that have already bought tables
- There are two categories given out by the

9.8 Questions regarding Standing Committee Reports

- Question: Would like to see award for research in excellence in science and engineering, as there is no category for engineering?
 - We will pass this along to the Gala Committee
- Question: What happened to the travel grant committee?
 - This was addressed two meetings ago – it is now administered through ISSAC

10.0 Special Reports

No special reports

11.0 Old Business

No old business

12.0 New Business

12.1 Question for UPASS Referendum

Do you support the implementation of a UPASS (Universal Transit Pass) for all full-time members of the University of Saskatchewan Graduate Students' Association for \$101.44 (\$97.44 for the UPASS and a \$3.00 Administration Fee) to be remitted to the GSA, per term with a yearly consumer price index adjustment for the Fall and Winter terms (September to April)?

Students in one or more of the following categories will be eligible for exemption.

Those:

1. living outside the corporate limits for the City of Saskatoon;
2. living in on-campus housing (Voyageur Place Residence and Lutheran Theological Seminary and St. Andrew's);
3. eligible for discounted passes under Saskatoon Transit's agreements with Social Services;
4. required to be away from Saskatoon working or doing research for more than half of a term;
5. enrolled exclusively in courses designated as off-campus; and,
6. holding a disabilities parking pass or those students who have a disability which precludes them accessing the services.

**For more information please see gsa.usask.ca

Do you support the implementation of a UPASS (Universal Transit Pass) for all full-time members of the University of Saskatchewan Graduate Students' Association for \$101.44 (\$97.44 for the UPASS and a \$3.00 Administration Fee) to be remitted to the GSA, per term with a yearly consumer price index adjustment for the Spring and Summer terms (May – August)?

Students in one or more of the following categories will be eligible for exemption.

Those:

1. living outside the corporate limits for the City of Saskatoon;
2. living in on-campus housing (Voyageur Place Residence and Lutheran Theological Seminary and St. Andrew's);
3. eligible for discounted passes under Saskatoon Transit's agreements with Social Services;
4. required to be away from Saskatoon working or doing research for more than half of a term;
5. enrolled exclusively in courses designated as off-campus; and,
6. holding a disabilities parking pass or those students who have a disability which

precludes them accessing the services.

**For more information please see gsa.usask.ca

Motion 5:

BE IT RESOLVED that the preceding questions be approved as a GSA 2014 Referendum question.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the GSA Referendum 2014 be held on February 25th, 26th and 27th.

Motioned by Reanne, Seconded by David

Amendment: Change to prices based on consumer price index, received from Saskatoon Transit: Do you support the implementation of a UPASS (Universal Transit Pass) for all full-time members of the University of Saskatchewan Graduate Students' Association for **\$102.88** (**\$99.88** for the UPASS and a \$3.00 Administration Fee) to be remitted to the GSA, per term with a yearly consumer price index adjustment for the Fall and Winter terms (September to April)?

Amendment motioned by Reanne, Seconded by David

Discussion

- Question: Is this consumer price index only for the next year? Will this increase be enough for the next five years
 - CPI index is yearly, so it can increase or decrease on a yearly basis – this is what USSU does
 - Referendum question includes CPI, so this will be adjusted every year and don't have to vote on it every year
 - We would have had this amount before we sent the question to Course Council, but City Transit couldn't provide a number until today
- Question: The wording is a little unclear – is the CPI adjusted per term or per year?
 - Per year
- Question: Will the consumer price index affect the administration fee?
 - The way that it's worded now, yes – for example to accommodate increases in staffing

Amendment passes

Discussion

- We are voting on two UPASSES – one for September-April, the other for May-August
- Changed language to be more in line with the language the University uses

Amendment: Would like to add the word “mandatory” to the question – “mandatory UPASS”.

Based on last year’s experiences people voiced concerns that they didn’t understand the implications of the question

Amendment motioned by Dmitry, Seconded by Cinnati

Discussion

- There is a big list of people who have exceptions, so I don’t see how it could be confusing
- Part of the student confusion last year is only one-sided advertisement for the UPASS last year
- Point of opportunity – there was an opportunity for the No side to campaign, and they did so against the Constitution
- Including mandatory would be misrepresenting the UPASS
- Saskatoon Transit wouldn’t support this phrase because it doesn’t represent their program
- Adding mandatory based on the argument that grad students didn’t understand
- Could make question more explicit – can’t deny that students weren’t confused last year, mandatory expresses that it applies to everyone to make question as clear as possible – could suggest another word to make it more clear
- Communications will make sure implications of question are made clear to students leading up to the referendum – if that’s the concern, we take note of that
- Could make it more clear – i.e. this fee will be added to the tuition of all graduate students

Motion 6 - call to question

Motioned by Reanne

Motion passes

Amendment fails

Motion 7 - to extend meeting by 30 minutes

Motioned by Josie, seconded by Ehimai

Motion passes

Discussion

- Doesn't impact part-time students, only full-time students
- It's worded to be members of the GSA rather than CGSR to allow post-docs to opt-in

Amendment: to include "for the next academic year" – since we don't know how long we want to have the UPASS, propose a specific period of time, after which point it can be re-negotiated

Amendment motioned by Dmitriy, seconded by Balazs

Discussion

- We had a one year trial, so this vote is to see how that one year trial went
- If a group of students want to get rid of the UPASS, they could make a petition to get rid of it
- No other services (i.e. Health and Dental) do this
- What would the time frame be? What number is in the contract?
 - There is no number in the contract (as there isn't in the USSU contract) – the process that exists is through a petition, as was done to bring about the UPASS
- Does this mean next year this could be revisited?
 - If a group of students followed the Constitution, yes
- Because there are no such votes on student fees, it doesn't mean that we should do that for the UPASS because every year the students change and we have new members
- Last year there was over 600 students that signed the petition, 67% of the student body voted and it passed with 67% approval – we should keep this in mind
- Would the City of Saskatoon go for us going through this process every year? Is an inefficient use of time and money
- The possibility of a yearly vote – each year graduate students
- We are here to make the question better, so let's focus on that and not personal issues

Motion 8 - call to question

Motioned by Sarah, seconded by David

Motion passes

Amendment fails

Discussion

- There was confusion about on-campus vs. off-campus residence – GSA should make this more clear in the question

- We will make this difference clear on our website
- It's worded this way based on past referendums and the lessons learned from them
- The question includes the names of the residences included in the opt-out
- Reminding councillors that we're
- Many students already have a UPASSS or don't, so they likely already understand the implications
- Friendly Amendment: "Voyageur Place Residence and Lutheran Theological Seminary and St. Andrew's **exclusively**"

Motion 9 - call to question

Motioned by Lori, seconded by Josie

Motion 5 passes

13.0 Announcements

- Invitation to participate in "Better Than Bottled" campaign

14.0 Next GSA Council Meeting: February 27th, 2014

15.0 Adjournment

Motion 10 - to adjourn

Motioned by Seth

Executive Reports for January 2014

1. VP Student Affairs Report (report forthcoming)

- Based on an incident, a friendly reminder that if any graduate student wants to transfer into another department; approval from the departing department is not required.
- Yesterday the student forum discussed TransformUS. I was not in attendance but can report on minutes next meeting- any questions can be directed at Issac Pratt
- Dean Adam Baxter-Jones went to western deans' conferences, he is going to bring up Childcare Co-op
- Also, we met with the insurance folks at the UofS and they are cautious to move forward but it is possible with further research and meetings.
- The childcare expansion progress is coming along- the data from the questionnaire is still being processed but about 10% of students are parents and the new facility will be split of 75 spaces about 22 faculty & staff, 20 graduate students, 10 aboriginal, and 23 undergrad
- UPASS Negotiations were completed with the city.
 - Yearly opt-outs in order to make the administration process less cumbersome for both students and GSA staff.
 - As with the USSU UPASS Contract, we would like to include an administrative fee of \$3.00.
 - Students living in the College Quarter residences would like to be able to opt-out of the UPASS program → this is not possible
 - Allow students to opt-out who live in areas of Saskatoon with no bus service, i.e. closest bus stop is 1 KM or further away → instead Transit would like to get bus stops out as fast as possible
 - As with our health and dental insurance plans, post-doctoral students, students attending at St. Andrews, and the families of graduate students would like to be able to opt-in to the UPASS → This is not possible for any group, but Post Docs will be looked at- by both of parties to work out if processing is possible
 - The disabilities opt-out provision in 6(2)(c) should be changed to read as follows: “students holding a disabilities parking pass or those students who have a disability which precludes them accessing the services. These students shall consult with the UPASS Opt-Out Coordinator (or designate) who, upon receipt of a medical certificate, may grant exception.”
 - Lastly, we believe the summer term UPASS needs to be revisited. Unlike with undergraduate students, graduate students are required to maintain student the summer, the number outside of Saskatoon will rise for the time period. This increases our administrative burden in terms of processing opt outs. We hope that together we can revise the summer-term option for graduate students so it becomes reflective of the unique position graduate students hold

- Splitting the referendum question into two is a go with Transit

2. VP Operations and Communications Report

- Attended and helped host Winter Orientation
- Will present at January University Council meeting
- Winter term bursary
 - The call for applications for the Winter term GSA Bursary has been sent out to all graduate students – the deadline is February 17th
 - Based on meetings with the previous VP Operations, as well as experiences in the Fall term, the bursary application and selection forms were updated in order to make these processes more efficient for both students and the selection committee
 - The selection committee will report on how effective these changes are following their implementation this term
 - Special thanks to the previous VP Operations for her help on this
- UPASS referendum
 - Met with GSA President to lay out plan for effective communication of information regarding the UPASS referendum – we will be using all forms of communication available to us to ensure students are able to access the information they need to make an informed decision
- Newsletter
 - Created a newsletter that included updates from the Executives and information on issues such as the UPASS, referendum, Graduate Research Conference and Gala, which was sent to graduate students this week
- Interviewed and hired two note-takers for GSA committee meetings

3. VP Academics Report

- The preparations for the GSA Conference are ongoing. The deadline for abstract submissions was extended to January 31st and registration is now open. For regular updates please check the GSA website at <http://gsa.usask.ca/events/grc2014/index.php> or the Conference Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/GraduateResearchConference>.
- I presented the GSA Report at the December Council meeting.
- As a graduate student representative on four committees of council, I have the responsibility to give the graduate student perspective during all discussions on the TransformUS. To be able to get a better understanding of the process and its effects on the Graduate Students, I met with several student and faculty groups to discuss the TransformUS reports.

4. VP Finance Report

- During December, VP Finance were in contact with auditor to make sure they have information for their auditing. In this regard a list of required documents and information was received in early January. Most of the required information are dated back to 2010 fiscal year. It took time to find part of the information due to unorganized nature of the old financial documents. VP finance had two meetings in January with auditor to facilitate the auditing process.
- After December meeting VP finance received some comments about health and dental plan from graduate students. He contacted the health and dental office on campus to figure out if students have more concerns. Those concerns are going to be discussed in the executive meeting with representatives from the studentcare.net on January 21.
- Due to limited remaining budget for orientation, GSA winter orientation was faced with limited funding. However, recent \$500 sponsorship by CGSR was used to cover the expenses for orientation. It is recommended for the next year to leave enough orientation budget for winter when the fall orientation is planned.
- VP Finance attended the Scholarships and Awards Committee on January 13th.

GSA Budget in 2013-2014

Information provided in this report shows the revenue and expenses from May 2013 until the January 17th 2014. Items presented in the tables are defined in the GSA website under the budget section.

GSA Business Budget 2013-2014 Fiscal Year				
	Revenue	Estimated Value	Value To Date	Amount Remaining
1	GSA Fees	\$186,000.00	\$86,725.27	\$99,274.73
2	GSA Conference Ad Sales	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
3	Commons Booking	\$3,500.00	\$3,969.52	-\$469.52
4	CFS Handbook Ad Sales	\$2,000.00	\$712.50	\$1,287.50
5	Orientation Contributions	\$1,500.00	\$3,055.00	-\$1,555.00
6	CGSR Bursary Contribution	\$20,000.00	\$20,000.00	\$0.00
7	UofS Cold Beverage Agreement	\$9,000.00	\$9,000.00	\$0.00
8	GSA Award Gala sponsorship	\$10,000.00	\$800.00	\$9,200.00
9	GSA congress sponsorship	\$20,000.00	\$0.00	\$20,000.00
10	Surplus	\$107,084.20	\$205.22	\$106,878.98
11	Total Revenue	\$360,084.20	\$123,462.2	\$236,621.91

Highlight:

- Two items were added to the revenue; GSA award Gala sponsorship, and GSA congress sponsorship. In the mid-January GSA has received sponsorship from different units at university. However, the total sponsorship value is not updated in the table.

GSA Business Budget 2013-2014 Fiscal Year				
	<i>Expenses</i>	Value	Used to date	Amount Remaining
1	Office Staff Salary	\$70,000	-\$42,131	\$27,869
2	President Stipend	\$6,397	-\$4,265	\$2,132
3	Executive Stipend	\$33,265	-\$22,177	\$11,088
4	Academic (Course) Council Funding	\$8,000	-\$2,059	\$5,941
5	Annual Audit	\$1,500	\$0	\$1,500
6	Comprehensive Audit	\$13,500	\$0	\$5,000
7	Bank Charges	\$300	-\$173	\$127
8	CFS Handbook Printing	\$2,000	\$0	\$2,000
9	Commons Insurance	\$3,500	-\$3,691	-\$191
10	<i>Commons Renewal and Repairs (Equipment)</i>	\$6,500	-\$4,664	\$1,837
11	Conferences (External)	\$5,000	-\$3,965	\$1,035
12	Entertainment/Refreshments	\$2,500	-\$1,861	\$639
13	Executive Discretionary Fund	\$3,500	-\$2,690	\$810
14	Grad Student Club Funding	\$5,000	-\$2,780	\$2,220
15	GSA (CGSR) Need-Based Bursary	\$40,000	-\$25,000	\$15,000
16	GSA Awards Gala	\$5,000	-\$2,346	\$2,654
17	GSA Conference	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
18	GSA Fall Orientation BBQ	\$7,500	-\$7,352	\$148
19	GSA Travel Grant	\$10,000	-\$9,050	\$950
20	Office Supplies	\$2,800	-\$2,573	\$228
21	Operating Costs	\$3,200	-\$1,785	\$1,415
22	UofS Student Travel Award Contribution	\$6,000	\$0	\$6,000
23	UofS Cold Beverage Agreement	\$9,000	-\$6,473	\$2,527
24	TransformUS Service	\$4,490	-\$4,490	\$0
25	Legacy Fund	\$60,000	\$0	\$60,000
26	Upass Salary	\$15,000	-\$8,765	\$6,235
27	GSA Handbook	\$8,000	-\$7,519	\$482
28	UPASS Printing Cost	\$2,132	-\$2,132	\$0
29	Note taking for GSA meetings	\$2,000	\$0	\$2,000
	Total Expenses	\$332,584	-\$138,561	\$194,023

Highlight:

- According to the GSA council approval in October meeting on releasing fund for note taking in GSA committee meetings, item 29 was added to the expenses.

5. Aboriginal Liaison Report

The AIGSC sends its regrets to tonight's Council as we are all attending the first Aboriginal Professionals' Association event in the City of Saskatoon.

We are extremely pleased to tell you that we have found a dedicated Chair (as opposed to four rotating Chairs) who will lead us through the rest of this semester. Dana Carriere is a Master's student in Native Studies and works full time for the International Centre for Northern Governance (ICNG). Her experience and enthusiasm will guide us through the next few months.

Aboriginal Achievement Week (AAW) is coming up from March 10 to 15. AAW is packed with fun and informative events for the entire campus community (including a round dance, breakfast, language revitalization presentation, and much more). The event we will host will run Monday to Thursday night in the Hilda-Neatby theatre from 7-9pm. We will be showing the CBC 8th Fire series, an excellent set of videos designed to build cross-cultural understanding. Please join us for some great shows and snacks.

In other news, our Miyasin potluck in December went very well, and Dana will be attending our usual meetings, including a planning meeting for the Gordon Oakes Red Bear Aboriginal Student Centre.

There is also a "Young Aboriginal Leader's" retreat to be held on February 8th we are all attending.

Thank you very much for your continued support. It is very much appreciated!

6. VP External Report

We are in the process of organizing the 2nd GSA Annual Gala event scheduled for 8th of March. We have been raising money for the event and have been getting quite some positive responses. We are also in the Process of getting a Keynote Speaker for the event. We have collaborated with the University of Saskatchewan Alumni Association to get a Keynote Speaker for this function. They have agreed to fund the Keynote Speaker's travel and accommodation. I have also set up an Awards Committee to help with deciding on the award categories and also to help with choosing the awardees.

7. Presidents' Report

Dear Academic Councillors,

Happy New Year!

I am delighted to report that my colleagues (in the Executive Council) and I have made significant progress in preparing for the events we have this term. To state, the GSA Awards Gala, and Congress promise to be the best events graduate students-at the U of S-have experienced yet. We have done the necessary groundwork required for a successful event; what is required is for you and members of your academic units to attend!

- a) GSA Awards Gala: Last year, we had about 250 people attend the first GSA Awards Gala held at the Radisson Hotel. Tickets were sold for \$25. This year, we are expecting about 300 people. We hope to reduce the cost of the ticket; the price will be announced at our meeting on Thursday, January 23rd. I can confirm that the Alumni Association will sponsor the event with \$5,000, and the U of S President and Vice Presidents have collectively indicated to sponsor the event with \$1,500. In addition, we have already sold tables worth over \$5000-making the expected cash for the GSA Awards Gala just over \$12,000.
- b) GSA Congress: The VP Academic and the Congress Coordinator are working to ensure a remarkable event for our members. We received \$20,000 funding from the President's Executive Council (PEC), last December, for the GSA Congress. As such, our members will attend the Congress at no cost. We have secured the keynote speaker. Kindly encourage your members to attend the event scheduled for March 6th to 8th. The theme of the event is "Curiosity".
- c) UPASS Referendum: Thanks to the VP Student Affairs, and members of the Upass Negotiation Committee, a referendum question has been sent to the GSA Council for approval. Kindly note that the essence of the motion is NOT to debate the merits of Upass BUT to ensure that the wording therein is consistent with the GSA Constitution 14.1.7: "The placement of all questions in the referendum shall be subject to GSA Council approval. Normally GSA Council shall approve any question that has garnered sufficient signatures in support; however, GSA Council shall retain the authority to reject any question where it finds compelling reason to believe that the passage of the question would constitute a violation of the mission or operating statement of the GSA; a violation of law; a contravention of University policy; a violation of contractual, financial or other obligations undertaken by the GSA; or would otherwise pose a significant threat to the best interests of the GSA or be injurious to the welfare of the graduate students at the University of Saskatchewan. Any such rejection shall require a two-thirds (2/3) vote in support from all voting members of GSA Council."
- d) Graduate Education Review: Last month, I reported on the recommendations of the Graduation Education Review Committee (GERC). I also promised to contact the Office of the Provost and request he attend the January GSA Council meeting to respond to your

questions. I am happy to report that the Provost, Prof. Fulton, and Dean Baxter-Jones will attend our meeting on Thursday, January 23rd to respond to your questions/comments. The GSA VP Operations and Communication has sent the GERC's report you. Kindly go through it-it's a quick read-and come this Thursday with your comments and questions.

- e) TransformUs: As you know, the two TransformUs task forces reports are out. And central admin is currently in consultation with the university community. If you have any question or concern with the reports and/or process, you could email me: gsa.pres@usask.ca and I will pass them to the appropriate authority.
- f) Graduate Retention Program: I heard from the office of the Minister of Advance Education; they are studying our request. Meantime, they advised graduate students who are yet to, to apply for the GRP with their undergraduate degrees. You can find the information on: <http://ae.gov.sk.ca/grp>. All the best with the application.