

# Graduate Students' Association Course Council Meeting Minutes



University of Saskatchewan  
Wednesday, September 25, 2013  
5:00 P.M - 7:00 P.M  
GSA Commons

## Attendees

Jules Hamara, Marzieh Eskandari, Wenona Partridge, Karlee McLaughlin, Alex Stoddart, Madelaine Gierc, Eli Mizelman, Nicole Spencer, Cynthia Bottomley, Steven Kraus, Mylyne Tham, Tyffany Amy, Natalia Terekhova, Akindamola Awyjoola, Amanda Guy, Amir Abolhassani, Ana Maldonado, Andrew Frank, Atiquil Islam, Austen Smith, Balazs Toro, Brittany Gackosa, Carla Labarrere, Cinnati Loi, Cody David, Cody Manchester, Davood Ghadiri Maghadlam, Dmitry Chesnakov, Federica Giannelli, Fedir Razumenko, Fred Sage, Isaac Pratt, Kayla Lindenback, Kim Harrison, Kristian Hermann, Kurt Woytiuk, Laura Carsen, Layla Gould, Mark Kroeker, Martin Prusinkiewicz, Mohamded Rani Abdel-Salam, Nicole House, Phillip Garvey, Priyaugi Edirisinghe, Rajat Chakranaity, Ranjan Datta, Rob Perry, Robert Nicks, Sarah Purdy, Sarah Sangster, Seth Dueck, Tara Chambers, Zak Baker, Zixnan Zhao.

## GSA Executive

President, Ehimai Ohiozebau  
Vice President (Student Affairs), Reanne Risdale  
Vice President (Academics and Awards), Izabela Vlahu  
Vice President (External Affairs), Steve Jimbo  
Aboriginal Liaison, Nicole Callihoo

## Chair

Dena Burnett

### 1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:10PM by the President.

### 2. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was presented to the chair.

Motion 1 - to add Academic Council Ratification between 5 and 6.

Motioned by Fred

Seconded by Rob Perry

Motion carried

**3. Ratification of 2013/2014 GSA council**

Motion 2- to ratify 2013/2014 GSA Council

Motion carried

**4. Ratification of the Chair**

Motion 3- to ratify Dena Burnett as Chair

Motioned by Dena

Seconded by Laura Larson

Opposition raised to the ratification of the chair. Opposition raised to proceeding with vote prior to appointing to a new VP Finance and Operation.

Point of order from the Chair: President acts as replacement for missing VP.

Rob Perry calls the question, seconded by Sarah Pauley

Voting on ratification of Chair: yea: 35, no: 3.

Motion carried.

**5. Ratification of new Course Councillors**

The members ratified the following new course councillors:

Jules Hamara, Marzieh Eskandari, Wenona Partridge, Karlee McLaughlin, Alex Stoddart, Madelaine Gierc, Eli Mizelman, Nicole Spencer, Cynthia Bottomley, Steven Kraus, Mylyne Tham, Tyffany Amy, Natalia Terekhova, Akindamola Awyjoola, Amanda Guy, Amir Abolhassani, Ana Maldonado, Andrew Frank, Atiquil Islam, Austen Smith, Balazs Toro, Brittany Gackosa, Carla Labarrere, Cinnati Loi, Cody David, Cody Manchester, Davood Ghadiri Maghadlam, Dmitry Chesnakov, Federica Giannelli, Fedir Razumenko, Fred Sage, Isaac Pratt, Kayla Lindenback, Kim Harrison, Kristian Hermann, Kurt Woytiuk, Laura Carsen, Layla Gould, Mark Kroeker, Martin Prusinkiewicz, Mohamded Rani Abdel-Salam, Nicole House, Phillip Garvey, Priyaugi Edirisinghe, Rajat Chakranaity, Ranjan Datta, Rob Perry, Robert Nicks, Sarah Purdy, Sarah Sangster, Seth Dueck, Tara Chambers, Zak Baker, Zixnan Zhao.

Motion 4- to accept new course councillors

Motioned by Reanne Risdale

Seconded by Rob Perry

Motion carried

#### **5a. Ratification of GSA Course Councils**

The members ratified the following new course councils: Chemical Engineering, Biological Engineering, Civil & Geological Engineering, Electrical & Computer Engineering, Mechanical Engineering; Biomedical Engineering; College of Medicine Students; Soil Sciences

Motion 5- to accept new course councils

Motioned by Isaac,

Seconded by Laura

Motion carried

#### **6. Ratification of GSA Clubs**

The members ratified the following new GSA Clubs: India Students Association, Persian Student's association, Let's Talk science club

Motion 6- to accept the three new GSA club

Motion carried

Another club submission was made at the last minute; sent to review to exec.

#### **7. VP External Report**

The VP External presented a report regarding the development of a Standing Committee on Policy Review, as well as presenting policy changes on website for members to review. A representative from the Canadian Federation of Students gave a presentation on the activities of the CFS.

#### **8. VP Student Affairs Report**

The VP Student Affairs presented a report highlighting the success of Orientation. \$450 is left over in the Orientation budget. The final report for Orientation will be available October 3. VP Student Affairs will be meeting with USSU to discuss GSA's continued presence in the Bowl during future Orientations. VP Student Affairs is also working with an individual to acquire better insurance rates and permit delivery. The GSA Executive were able to negotiate a better rate from the city. Approximately 200-350 have not been assessed the UPASS fee. Also working on a childcare project but that is on hold until finances are reviewed. Also working on with Policy Review Committee on gender issues and transgendered inclusion.

#### **9. VP Operations and Administration report**

Combined with President's report

#### **10. VP Academic Report**

VP Academic presented a report in regarding current and ongoing activities. She has met with 13 grad students regarding academic challenges (research, student-supervisor relationship). There has been 1 successful resolution so far. Travel bursaries were dispersed in June, she recommended the program reoccur year to year. The GSA Conference/Congress will be happening with the assistance of Rob Perry and the Gwenna Moss Centre. The congress should represent both academic research and academic experience. Hoping to incorporate a Community Outreach connection. There will be SECC Industry talks once again this year. The GSA is campaigning for a University Ombudsman Office to advocate for students, a report supporting this position will be going to the Student Senate. The VP Academic would like to have participation for an advisory committee for policy on academic issues.

### **11. Aboriginal Liaison Officer Report**

The Aboriginal Liaison gave her final report. There will be the Aboriginal and Indigenous Students' Grad Council and election on October 1, 1:30PM-5:00PM at the GSA Commons. The Liaison has been working with the SESD on Aboriginal engagement. They have been looking for a coordinator for the Aboriginal Student's Centre and have taken into account grad students' needs in their search. There was also a reminder about the Aboriginal self-identification project.

### **12. VP Finance Report**

(Part of the President's Report)

### **13. President Report**

The President gave a report that covered the mission statement and governing structure of the organization. He noted that there has been an increase in electoral participation as well as member participation at orientation. He reported on the resignation of the VP Finance and the upcoming resignation of the VP Operations. He reported on some new developments including the Legacy Fund, an increase in health plan coverage and meeting with the Minister of Advance Education on funding issues.

He reported that UPASS implementation is well underway, has been a lot of work for everyone. The only amount used, not originally in the budget was \$2200 for communications/publicity. He also noted that councillors look at Appendix 2: staff funding approval.

### **14. Questions and answer**

There were a number of questions asked. Some councillors noted that they had only been provided with documents to review just prior to the meeting. They discussed ways to circulate information ahead of time, possibly on the new website.

There was questions about the difference in UPASS price from what was voted on in the referendum. The executive responded that the lower price was only negotiated in July and August and that students' accounts have been adjusted. Anyone who paid the higher price was refunded the difference. There was

also discussion of when the UPASS contracts were signed (July) and why there was a delay having the price change reflected on PAWS (Executive was budgeting implementation costs).

There were questions regarding why there were no meetings in the summer after the VP Finance resigned and also regarding the change in UPASS funds. The Executive responded that councillors were off-campus so they could not obtain quorum during the summer. The VP Finance's responsibilities were divided among the executive as was the VP Finance's portion of the Executive stipend. She resigned Aug 2, was paid for half of August.

There was a question regarding the resignation of the VP Finance, she responded that she did not agree with the behaviour of the other Executives, that there was collusion between the Executive and friends and that she received threatening email from the President. The President responded that he would forward emails to councillors, he is offended by these serious allegations, his behaviour was above board.

Motion 7- to extended question period by 5 minutes

Motion carried

There was a question regarding the resignation by VP Operations. Executive responds that VP Operations has agreed to remain until a replacement is found. She needs to focus on academics.

## **15. Motions**

### 15.1:

WHEREAS the GSA financial statement is in surplus,  
WHEREAS the GSA is currently renting the Commons space for a three year period,  
WHEREAS the GSA is a non-profit organization, expected to have zero profit,  
WHEREAS one of the missions of the GSA is to ensure its members have access to quality services that support their academic success, and  
WHEREAS most graduate students are entrepreneurial,  
(A) BE IT RESOLVED THAT the GSA is to establish a dedicated infrastructure account for the purpose of financing a capital project, and move the sum of \$60,000.00 (sixty thousand dollars) from the surplus fund into this special account, and  
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the GSA Finance Committee and the GSA Council allocates 10% of its annual budget to this pool until such a time the accrued fund is sufficient for capital investment  
(B) BE IT RESOLVED THAT the GSA is to transfer the sum of \$60,000 (sixty thousand dollars) to the university's Industry Liaison office for the purpose of establishing the GSA legacy fund. The intent is to invest the \$60,000.00 as a lump sum, with the understanding that the distribution of funds to the recipients of the awards would be monitored based on a funding agreement. Any revenues would be returned to the fund, in anticipation that this

would be an evergreen fund.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the said fund can only be utilized under the following terms:

1. The Award is for all grad students registered at the U of S
2. This Award is to support grad students in their endeavours, whether this is a forprofit or social economy organization.
3. The GSA Award would be a three year initiative
4. Awarding \$20,000/yr
5. 2 awards for \$10,000 each year; spreading the winnings over 6 companies
6. Must apply within both or one of the existing competitions, TVC or/and i3
7. These awards will be independent of the i3 or TVC awards, but there will be one within each competition. The decision will be made by the existing judging panels (external) based on existing judging criteria along with GSA specific criteria.
8. The award would be in the form of a loan; repayable upon negotiated terms which could include milestones, royalty etc.
9. It is possible that through TVC or i3 there is no appropriate recipient for the Grad Student Award. In this case the award will be deferred to the next year.
10. Each competition, i3 and TVC, will grant one Grad Student Award; however, even if one team wins both i3 and TVC, they cannot win both Grad Awards.

(C) Motion to adopt supplementary budget

GSA Conference \$15,000

GSA Award Gala \$5,000

UPASS Implementation \$15,000

Rescue Fund \$5,000

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the supplementary budget be adopted to the GSA 2013/2014 annual budget

Moved by Nicole

Seconded by Isabelle.

Discussion on the details of the Legacy fund with representative from University Industry Liaison Office. Discussion on the benefits to students from humanities. The need to deal with this surplus before there are tax implications from the Canadian Revenue Agency.

Motion 8- to extend the meeting by 30 minutes

Motion fails

President wants to pass the motion because of the timelines for the ILO (2 weeks).

Motion 9- to extend the meeting with 30 minutes

Motion passes.

Motion 10-to amend the presented motion into 3 separate motions (a, b, c)

Moved by Nicole

Seconded by Davoud  
Motion passes.

President calls the question:  
Motion 15.1B passes (yea: 16; opposed: 13)

Motion 11- to table Motion 15.1.A  
Moved by President  
Nicole seconds  
Motion passes

Motion 12- to table Motion 15.1.c  
Moved by Rajit  
Davoud seconds  
Motion fails

Motion 13- to devide Motion 15.1.C into line items for voting  
Motion passes

Motion 14- to table Motion 15.1.C.GSA Conference  
Motion passes

Motion 15- to table Motion 15.1.C.GSA Awards gala  
Motion passes

Called to question: Motion 15.1.C.UPASS Implementation  
President motions  
Davoud second

Motion 16- to pass Motion 15.1.C UPASS Implementation  
Motion passes

Motion 17- to table Motion 15.1.C Rescue fund  
Reanne motions  
Isabella seconds  
Motion passes

## **15.2 Motion regarding GSA Executive positions**

WHEREAS the GSA executive positions of VP finance, and VP Operations and Communications are open,

WHEREAS the GSA Constitution Section 2.2.3 states that “In the absence or unavailability of

any one member of the Executive the remaining Executive members may appoint a replacement, who is an association member, subject to the approval of two-thirds (2/3) of the

members of the GSA Council present and voting at a meeting where notice of a motion of

approval has been duly given”,

And WHEREAS Mohammad Rafati Nasr, and Kiri Staples are graduate students and members of the GSA,

(A) BE IT RESOLVED THAT Mohammad Rafati Nasr be appointed to the position of VP Finance until the end of the term of this position,

(B) BE IT RESOLVED THAT Kiri Staples be appointed to the position of VP Operations and

Communication

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT these appointments are effective on October 1, 2013.

Reanne moves

David seconds

Motion 18- to extend meeting by 30 minutes

Isabella moves

Reanne seconds

Motion passes.

Discussion ensues on the constitution rules regarding this motion.

Chair decides to interpret the document for the good of the operation of the organization, to proceed according to the agenda in order to attempt to fill the positions.

Discussion on the authority of the Chair to do this. Chair asks Amir to leave. Takes a break in the session to read the Constitution and decide how to proceed.

Chair calls meeting back to order. Decides to vote according to Section 2.2.3 of Constitution.

Candidate for VP Finance Mohammad Nasr speaks. Leaves the room.

Motion 15.2.a- to elect Mohammad Nasr as VP Finance

Motion passes (27 in favour, 3 opposed)

Candidate for VP Operations and Communications Kiri Staples speaks. Leaves the room.

Motion 15.2.b- to elect Kiri Staples as VP Op & Com



Motion passes (21 in favour, 11 opposed, total 32)

Motion 19- to adjourn the meeting

Chair motions

Isaac seconds.

Motion carried