

# Graduate Students' Association GSA Council Meeting Minutes (Amended)



University of Saskatchewan  
Tuesday, September 23th, 2014  
5:12 P.M - 8:00 P.M  
GSA Commons

**Council Members:** Rajat Chakravarty; Izabela Vlahu; Kathryn Forrester; Chi Su; Stacey Domolewski; Warrick Baijius; Andrew Frank-Wilson; Marion Hewitt-Pollack; Krystal Caldwell; Tyler Koebel; Robin Brown; Amanda Guy; Christopher K. West; Isaac Pratt; Anne Janhunen; Ashton Reimer; Josie Steeves; Setareh Shahkarami; Austen Smith; Layla Gould; Alex Stoddart; David Saunders; Garrett Morandi; Frederick Sage; Seth Dueck; David Bennett; Rachel Phillips Hall; Devon Stumborg; William Bonner; Kendra Meier; Dustin MacLean; Kung Chi Cinnati; Mostafa Aghbolaghy; Mohsen Sanayei; Xin Lu; Mohammad Rafati; Christopher Gbekorbu; Marzieh Eskandari; Khalil; Ranjan Datta

**Visitors:** Cynthia Bottomley; Patricia De Ciman; Manishankar Mondal; Jason Ho; Sarah Sangster; Eric Lorentz; Diana Chisholm; Kota Kimura; Cody Manchester; Hauwa Bwala; Ivan Ramadanov; Adeola Olubamiji; Carl Dunlea; Oleksandr Koshkarov; Aaron Thacker; Kyle Dase; Ahmad Ghadyani

**Chair:** Samer Assaf

**Regrets:** VP External (Rahwa Osman); Aboriginal Liaison (Dana Carriere).

## 1.0 Call to Order 5:12 PM

## 2.0 Approval of the Agenda

**2.1** Motion to move Executive Reports on the draft agenda to after 14, because there are more important things to be discussed before the executive reports.

**2.1.1** Moved by Marion Hewitt-Pollack.

**2.1.2** 25 in favour, 3 against, no abstentions. Motion was adopted.

**2.2** Motion to add agenda item regarding legal consultation of the GSA as the last agenda item:

WHEREAS the GSA engages in contractual obligations with internal and external bodies (e.g., The City of Saskatoon), and

WHEREAS the GSA has not had prior professional legal consultation on any matters that may require legal consultation (e.g., ensuring good standing with Non-Profit

Corporations Act, contractual consultation for U-PASS);

BE IT RESOLVED that the GSA executives investigate options for legal consultation with the intent to hire professional legal counsel who is familiar with the Non-Profit Corporations Act,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that \$9,000 from the GSA reserve fund to be allotted for legal consultation costs for the 2014/2015 fiscal year,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that tasks that are critical to GSA operations, such as contractual obligations and ensuring good standing under the Non-Profit Corporations Act, be given priority for legal consultation,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the GSA Executive, the Constitution Review Committee, and the Code of Ethics and Discipline Committee also be given priority for GSA-related legal consultation should the need arise.

**2.2.1** Moved by VP Finance.

**2.2.2** 25 in favour, 0 against, 1 abstain. Motion was adopted.

**2.3** All in favour of the amendment of the agenda, 0 against, no abstain.

**2.4** 25 in favour of the approval of the agenda, 0 against, 1 abstain. Agenda was approved.

### **3.0 Ratification of 2014/15 GSA Council**

**3.1** Moved by VP Operations.

**3.2** All in favour.

### **4.0 Ratification of Samer Assaf as GSA Council Chair**

**4.1** Moved by Josie Steeves.

**4.2** Samer Assaf successfully chaired the Special General Meeting on June 2, 2014, where proved his capability of chairing with a solid knowledge of Robert's Rule of Order, and the GSA Constitution and Policies.

**Discussion:**

**4.3 Point of Order:** According to Robert's Rule of Order, the Chair of the meeting cannot move a motion. Since VP Operations was in the chair position, Josie Steeves moved the motion.

**4.4 Question:** Why wasn't a call made for the Chair position to all grad students? If the Motion failed to pass at this meeting, the Council would like to follow a selection process.

**Answer:** According to GSA Policies available to us now, the VP Operations is responsible for the appointment of the GSA Council Chair. Questions regarding whether this call should be sent to all graduate students for competition could be forwarded to the Policy Review Committee.

**4.5 Question -Point of Information:** How many votes are required for the approval of the Chair?

**Answer:** The GSA Constitution and Policy didn't indicate on votes of the Chair. Therefore, it requires majority plus one vote according to Robert's Rule of Order. Also in this meeting, 25 is already two thirds of the vote.

**4.6** 26 in favour, 2 oppose, Marion Hewitt-Pollack abstain. Samer Assaf was ratified as 2014-15 GSA Council Chair.

**5.0 GSA auditor presentation**

**6.0 GSA Oohlala App Presentation**

**6.1** The President explained that the presentation was cancelled.

**7.0 Chair's remarks**

**7.1** Academic councils contribute in the decision making processes of the GSA.

**7.2** The Council process needs to be trusted. Should there be concerns, it is advised that they be brought to council before addressing them in social media. That will demonstrate trust and respect for the council.

**7.2.1 Question:** Over the summer, communication is less because there are less meetings. Does the Chair's remarks stated in 7.2 mean that the Council will have to meet more than once a month to deal with the issues if these issues are not allowed to be discussed on open forums on Facebook? Because asking a group of people to act as the governing body while requiring them not to discuss issues outside this forum sounds incoherent.

**Answer:** The Chair's remark stated in 7.2 does not require people not to discuss on Facebook, but only saying that councillors are preferred not to do so. There are limited number of council meetings. However, if there is an important issue, a special council meeting could be called by councillors. Don't judge the outcome of Council before giving it to Council.

**7.4** Students attending council meetings are to respect each other's dignity and rights.

**7.5** Priority to speak will be given to councillors and first time speakers. People from outside the Council will be put on the speaker list and will have a chance to speak provided that Councillors have exhausted discussion.

**7.6** The habit of limiting discussion will not be followed by the current Chair for now. However, the Chair will move a motion to resume time limitation in discussions in necessary cases.

**7.7** People all make mistakes, including the Chair. If anyone makes any mistakes, always refer to the legal documents to fix mistakes and move on. If the Chair made a decision that the room doesn't agree with, the room is free to appeal the rule of the Chair by raising the question: "Shall the decision of the Chair be sustained?" Voting yes is voting to sustain the decision. Overruling of the Chair needs a majority vote of more than 50%.

**7.8** Respect the confidentiality of issues with sensitive nature. If the room decides a discussion or a motion to be confidential, Councillors are required to keep it as such.

**7.9** Attendees should not interrupt other speakers unless one needs to inquire for more information (“point of information” or “request for information”), not adding extra information. If the person is attempting to add extra information, which is considered to be a debate, he or she will be put on the speaker list.

**7.10** Respect and support the decision of the majority.

**7.11** The “GSA” means every single member. Insulting the GSA is not insulting the executives, but insulting every single member of the GSA.

## **8.0 Ratification of 2014/15 Academic Councils**

**8.1** Moved by Josie Steeves.

**8.2** List of 2014/15 Academic Councils:

- Psychology Graduate Students' Association, 10 members;
- Toxicology Graduate Students Association, 48 members;
- History Graduate Student's Committee, 62 members;
- Physics and Engineering Physics Graduate Students Academic Council, 57 members;
- Soil Science Graduate Students Association, 60 members;
- JSGS Students' Association, number of members not available;
- Plant Sciences Graduate Student Association, 11 members;
- Bioresource Policy, Business and Economics Graduate Student Society, 10 members;
- Archaia, 38 members;
- PhiloCoCo, 2 members;
- College of Kinesiology Graduate Society (CKGS), 7 members;
- Educational Administration Graduate Students' Association, 500 members;
- University of Saskatchewan Graduate Geological Society, 70 members;
- WCVm GSA, 5 members;

- School of Environment and Sustainability Student Association (SENSSA), 10 members;
- Geography and Planning, 54 members;
- Engineering Graduate Course Council, 500 members;
- College of Medicine Graduate Student Society, 150 members.

**Discussion:**

**8.3 Question:** Why wasn't AIGSC ratified?

**Answer:** According to the GSA Constitution 5.1.4., the AIGSC is included as a member of GSA Council and will be granted representation as outlined by section 4.1.5. Therefore, AIGSC is automatically ratified, since AIGSC has automatic representation in the GSA council through the Aboriginal Liaison who is on the GSA Executive. Until the time for this council meeting, the number of councillors from AIGSC is not clear.

**8.4 Question:** Isn't AIGSC having their full authority to choose their full and maximum number of representatives for the Council?

**Answer:** Yes. Since the AIGSC has not given us the numbers yet, what we have is only unclear information that is causing misunderstanding. The GSA Aboriginal Liaison, who is absent for this meeting, is the Chair of the AIGSC, and she has yet given us any information regarding representative members of the AIGSC. This will be brought to the next Executive Meeting.

**8.5** All in favour. Motion was adopted.

**9.0 Ratification of 2014/15 Academic Councillors**

**9.1** Moved by Josie Steeves.

**9.2** List of 2014/15 Academic Councillors up to September 23<sup>rd</sup>:

Warrick Baijius; David Bennett; Andrew Frank-Wilson; Patricia De Ciman;  
 Devon Stumborg; Alex Stoddart; Jennifer Rychlo; Kimberly LaFreniere; Rachel Phillips Hall; Kendra Meier; David Saunders; Garrett Morandi; Casey McMahon;  
 Melanie Deneiko; Erin Barbour-Tuck; Christopher K. West; Marzieh Eskandari;  
 Josie Steeves; Emmanuel Ozemoya; Layla Gould; Robin Brown; Amanda Guy;

Austen Smith; Tyler Reimer; Anne Janhunen; Kathryn Forrester; Chi Su; Tyler Koebel; Cynthia Bottomley; Kayla Lindenback; Dustin MacLean; Robert Perry; Marion Hewitt-Pollack; Khalil; Rae-Leigh Pederzolli; Stacey Domolewski; Colleen Fitzpatrick; Krystal Caldwell; Robert Perry; Isaac Pratt; Kung Chi Cinnati Loi; Setareh Shahkarami; Ashton Reimer; Fred Sage; Seth Dueck; William Bonner; Mohsen Sanayei; Mstafa Aghbolaghy; Christopher Gbekorbu; Ahmad Ghadyani; Dallas Posavad

**9.3** All in favour.

## **10.0 Ratification of new Social Groups**

**10.1** Moved by Josie Steeves.

**10.2** List of social groups up to September 23<sup>rd</sup>:

- Persian Students' Association at the University of Saskatchewan, 120 members, 97% graduate students.
- Graduate Student Chinese Culture Club, 18 members, 100% graduate students.
- Nepalese Student Association, 24 members, no percentage of graduate students.
- FOCUS Club, 30 members, 93% graduate students.
- Biology Graduate Student Association, 74 members, 100% graduate students.

**10.3 Motion to amend the motion of social group ratification, there is no graduate / undergraduate ratio available in the submitted ratification application for Nepalese Student Association. Therefore, the motion is to ratify Persian Students' Association at the University of Saskatchewan, Graduate Student Chinese Culture Club, FOCUS Club, and Biology Graduate Student Association.**

**10.3.1** Moved by Marion Hewitt-Pollack.

**10.3.2** 23 in favour, no objection, no abstention.

**10.4 Motion to ratify Persian Students' Association at the University of Saskatchewan, Graduate Student Chinese Culture Club, FOCUS Club, and Biology Graduate Student Association.**

10.4.1 25 in favour, no objection, 1 abstention. Motion was adopted.

**Discussion:**

**10.5 Question:** Is there any deadline for social groups to submit their ratification forms?

**Answer:** Technically, all ratification forms from social groups are required to be sent before September 31<sup>st</sup>. However, should we receive application later, which is also the case in the past, we will be able to ratify them in the next council meeting. Whenever the social group is ratified within this academic year, the ratification will expire in next September and will need to re-submit their application.

**11.0 Motion to extend the meeting for half an hour.**

11.1 Moved by Josie Steeves, 17 in favour, 7 opposed, and 2 abstained.

11.2 Motion was adopted.

**12.0 Motion: U-Pass administration Budget Line dissolution**

WHEREAS expenses for the U-Pass support service have been in the form of office supplies and staff salaries, and

WHEREAS for the 2014/15 fiscal year, the U-Pass service is being provided by the GSA staff, thus creating a need to pay a portion of the staff hours from the U-Pass administration budget line, and another portion from the office staff salaries budget line, and

WHEREAS it is a recommended accounting practice that expenses of similar or same nature be paid from a single budget line,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the U-Pass administrations expense budget line be dissolved by moving \$3,000 into the office supplies budget line and the remaining \$7,940 into the office staff salaries budget line

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the GSA executive presents an accurate up to date cost for U-Pass administration to the December council meeting.

**12.1** Moved by GSA President.

**12.1.1** Reason for this merge is for better accounting practise. The motion does not represent a request to increase budget. Under the current condition, having a separate budget line would, from an accounting point of view, expect that if someone is assigned to work on the U-Pass, they get paid from that budget line. However, it is hard to tell how much time is spent on the U-Pass and how much time is spent on office work when a staff is working for the GSA office. In case there is no student coming for the U-Pass, it would also be a waste of labour to have a staff waiting for students coming for U-Pass while doing no office work.

**12.1.2** This year for the fall term, the GSA coordinators worked for the 9 full-day administration of U-Pass. After this, U-Pass administration is available 2 hours per day between 5 and 7 pm, handled by staff. For the next term, there will be another 10 full-day followed by 2 hour per day U-Pass administration, and there will be no U-Pass for the summer in 2015 as per the 2014 referendum. This change is to make sure that staff will be available to handle U-Pass sticker distribution every day within the allocated budget.

**12.1.3** Last year, there was a special U-Pass Staff for about a month and left the continuation of U-Pass administration to the office. This year, the U-Pass administration is handled by the office staff, namely coordinators, under the guidance of the office manager and ultimately under VP Operations and Communications.

**12.1.4** To establish the U-Pass station, several infrastructure items were installed. This expense is not likely to reoccur each year. Projection of time in handling opt-outs, email responses, phone calls, and client handling is not foreseen yet, because there was no record in the previous year.

**12.1.5** It is difficult to make a precise projection of the expenses considering that last year's report was not very detailed in how the office staff were used to administer the U-Pass. The projected revenue is \$10,000 from the U-Pass administration fee. However, although we have the numbers of reloaded U-Pass

stickers and opt-outs, we do not have the number from the administration regarding how many students are automatically opted out. Once the numbers become available to the GSA, the GSA will have a better projected revenue and will let Council know.

**Discussion:**

**12.2** A concern was raised by a Councillor that as per GSA Policies, any expense over 10% of the budget line need to come to Council. Therefore, the laptop should have come to Council for approval.

**12.3** A concern was raised by a Councillor that the Council is to make budgetary decisions. The AGM already discussed when the motion passed to have a separate budget line for the U-Pass instead of having it within general GSA administration. The reason for that is that every GSA business has a separate line, and that should the budget line be dissolved and merged into the office administration budget line, the latter will be over budget.

**12.4** A concern was raised by a Councillor that students are paying \$3 more per term for half the service. When the \$3 U-Pass Administration Fee was passed in the referendum, the purpose was to facilitate a four-week full day administration. The U-Pass report for the last year included numbers and recommendations for this year's implementation. The report was shown to students for the referendum for a better service. And that is the case when the City Transit allowed to put a \$3 administration fee on top of the U-Pass fee.

**12.5 Question:** Why is U-Pass administration and infrastructure changed this year?

**Answer:** Concerns from students were received that they need to talk with the VP Student Affairs and VP Academic but that was not possible while U-Pass was administered. In additionally, no matter how many signs were put out guiding students where to pick up the U-Pass, they always go to the other office making disruptions, making constant disruptions for the office to do what needs to be done. Offices are to be used for what they are meant. Students are witnessed to be happy to pick up their U-Pass without having to wonder which office to go to, and positive feedbacks were received. Last year, there was also a discussion within the

executives as to whether or not moving the U-Pass administration outside the office. The reason why that did not happen was that changes in mid-year should not happen.

Portion of the U-Pass administration was delegated to the office and that in no way was reflected in transferring funds from the U-Pass administration budget line to pay for that.

**12.6** 4 in favour, 23 oppose, and 3 abstain. Motion was not adopted.

**The Chair ruled that every single speaker needs to give a sign to the Chair and ask to speak.**

Josie Steeves moved the motion to challenge the ruling of the Chair.

3 in favour, 19 oppose, 7 abstain.

**12.7** A concern was raised by a Councillor that the motion will be in contradiction with Constitution 7.2.1. and 7.2.4.

**13.0 Motion: Budget Increase for the GSA**

WHEREAS the GSA received a \$6,000 contribution from the university administration which was not accounted for as a revenue in the GSA budget, and

WHEREAS the budget for executive travel fund (\$3000) was not sufficient to cover travel costs for GSA representation in major conferences and meetings, and

WHEREAS the estimated expenses for GSA office supplies and operating costs for the fiscal year is higher than the approved expense budget (\$6,000), and

WHEREAS the budget for bank charges (\$350) is insufficient to cover the expenses for the additional services for the GSA account,

BE IT RESOLVED that council approves a \$3,000 increase in the budget line for executive travel fund,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that council approves a \$2,000 increase in the budget line for office supplies and operating costs,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that council approves a \$1,000 increase in the budget line for bank charges.

**13.1** Moved by VP Finance.

**13.2** The GSA did not receive a reimbursement from CFS for travel cost for one GSA delegate at the June SAGM. In addition, executive travel budget was decreased by \$2,000 compared to previous year, while the number of meetings and conferences that GSA needs representation increased.

**13.3** The office supplies has not been updated since years ago.

**13.4** Bank charges increased considerably compare to last year due to capital cost and monthly fees for installation of debit machine, online direct deposit service, which are for more efficient accounting and budgeting practices practice.

**Motion to extend the meeting for half an hour.**

18 in favour, 4 opposed, 2 abstained.

Motion was adopted.

**Discussion:**

**13.4 Question:** Where and for what is the travel funds used?

**Answer:** “Travel funds” means flights and transit and other costs for conferences.

**13.5** A concern was raised by a Councillor regarding financial accountability of the GSA that these two motions relate to. The Councillor expects to see executive reports on conferences attended. In the next council meeting, financial explanations is expected be reported.

**13.6 Motion to divide the motion into three parts.**

**13.6.1** Moved by Isaac Pratt, because the three parts of the whole motion need to be discussed differently with different necessity.

**13.6.2** 26 in favour, 0 oppose, 0 abstain. Motion was adopted.

**13.7 Motion to move the first part from the original Motion 13.0 regarding executive travel fund as the last.**

**13.7.1** Moved by Seth Dueck.

**13.7.2** 28 in favour, 0 oppose, 0 abstain. Motion was adopted.

**13.8 Motion: Budget increase for bank charges**

WHEREAS the GSA received a \$6,000 contribution from the university administration which was not accounted for as a revenue in the GSA budget, and  
WHEREAS the budget for bank charges (\$350) is insufficient to cover the expenses for the additional services for the GSA account,  
BE IT RESOLVED that council approves a \$1,000 increase in the budget line for bank charges.

**Discussion:**

**13.8.1 Question:** Where is the increase going to?

**Answer:** The answer is in the report in the draft agenda sent to the councillors.

**13.8.2 17 in favour, 6 oppose, 7 abstain. Motion was not adopted.**

**Point of Order:** How many votes are required for budgetary change?

**Answer:** Motions that change the GSA budget need a 2/3 majority to be adopted.

**13.9 Motion: Budget increase for office supplies and operating costs**

WHEREAS the GSA received a \$6,000 contribution from the university administration which was not accounted for as a revenue in the GSA budget, and  
WHEREAS the estimated expenses for GSA office supplies and operating costs for the fiscal year is higher than the approved expense budget (\$6,000), and  
BE IT RESOLVED that council approves a \$2,000 increase in the budget line for office supplies and operating costs.

**13.9.1** The office has not changed some of the office supplies such as the fax telephone since years ago.

**13.9.2 5 in favour, 16 oppose, 6 abstain. Motion was not adopted.**

**13.10 Motion: Budget increase for executive travel fund**

WHEREAS the GSA received a \$6,000 contribution from the university administration which was not accounted for as a revenue in the GSA budget, and

WHEREAS the budget for executive travel fund (\$3,000) was not sufficient to cover travel costs for GSA representation in major conferences and meetings,  
BE IT RESOLVED that council approves a \$3,000 increase in the budget line for executive travel fund.

**13.10.1** 2 in favour, 23 oppose, 2 abstain. Motion was not adopted.

**14.0 Motion to add a motion of ratification of Tox on Tap as a new social group.**

**14.1** Moved by the GSA President.

**Discussion:**

The room can amend the agenda after it's approved given 2/3 of the room agrees.

**14.2** 24 in favour, 0 oppose, 1 abstain. Agenda was amended.

**14.3 Question:** What is the membership of the group?

**Answer:** The constitution did not indicate the membership, but said "only members of the current GSA members are eligible to hold voting privileges in the organization.

**14.3** 20 in favour, 0 oppose, 4 abstain. Motion was adopted.

**15.0 Adjournment — 8 pm.**