



**University of Saskatchewan
Graduate Students' Association
Annual General Meeting
April 27th, 2016
5.00 P.M. onwards
AGENDA**

1 Call to Order: Mitchell Anderson as chair of the meeting called the meeting to order at 5:10pm.

- Minutes taken by Savhanna Wilson (savhanna.wilson@usask.ca)

2 Announcements

2.1 Quorum

- *Quorum is not present – Section 129, subsection 3 of the Act states that the meeting can be adjourned and postponed for a later date, or the meeting could wait for quorum to be reached.*
- *Point of information – how many members: 44;*
- *Motion to postpone for 15 minutes; seconded; carried.*
- *Quorum reached; meeting constituted at 5:30.*

3 Approval of Agenda

- *Motion to move 'New Business' to the front of the agenda. Seconded. No further discussion. Carried.*
- *Motion to amend the motion previously known as 8.2 to read: "That David Bennett, Dana Carriere, and Rajat Chakravarty be made honorary lifetime members in recognition of the pivotal role played in the reform of the GSA in addition to years of dedication and service to the GSA as volunteers, councilors, and executives." Seconded. No discussion. Carried.*
- *Motion to approve amended agenda; seconded; carried.*

4 New Business

4.1 Motion: Approval of GSA Auditor 2016-17

Whereas the bylaws of the GSA and the Non-profits Corporation Act, 1999 [section 149(1)] state that the “members of a corporation, by ordinary resolution, at the first annual meeting of members and at each succeeding annual meeting or meeting mentioned in subsection 123(2), shall appoint an auditor to hold office until the close of the next annual meeting.”

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Buckberger Baerg and Partners LLP be appointed as auditors for the 2016-17 Financial Year. [Bennett / Chakravarty]

- *Motion; seconded; discussion:*

- *David Bennet – update on audit process. Ongoing process, going slower than anticipated. There are some problems with the files from 2013, and so qualified opinions on 2014 and 2015 are complicated. Auditor invited to give opinion.*
- *Auditor from Buckberger Baerg and Partners LLP – Has been working with David to accumulate an appropriate audit file in respect to the 2013 year; we have required documentation for 2014 and 2015, but 2013 year has virtually no records. Expense legitimization is complicated. Plan is to issue a qualified opinion on those financial opinions to carry on and move forward. Auditors will claim to have received enough audit evidence, but cannot necessarily opine on other items related to certain expenses that have gone through the GSA. Once this is finalized, the audit will carry forward to 2014-2015. Does not anticipate having the roadblocks from 2013.*

- *Motion to appoint auditors; seconded; carried.*

4.2 Motion: Honorary Lifetime Membership

Whereas section 5.3 of the GSA Constitution permits the naming of an Honorary Lifetime Member which is purely symbolic. Such a position shall be awarded by a majority vote at a General Meeting.

~~BE IT RESOLVED THAT David Bennett be made a honorary lifetime member in recognition of dedication and years of service to the GSA as a volunteer,~~

~~Councillor and Executive that transformed the financial practices of the GSA.~~
~~[Ghaith / Pratt]~~

BE IT RESOLVED THAT: David Bennett, Dana Carriere, and Rajat Chakravarty be made honorary lifetime members in recognition of the pivotal role played in the reform of the GSA in addition to years of dedication and service to the GSA as volunteers, councilors, and executives.

- *Moved; seconded; no discussion; carried.*

5 Approval of Minutes

5.1 GSA Annual General Meeting 2015 – April 28th 2015 (attached [here](#))

- *Motion to receive; seconded; carried.*

5.2 GSA Special General Meeting – May 19th 2015 (attached [here](#))

- *Motion to receive; seconded; carried.*

6 Motion to receive GSA Executives Report (not more than 5 minutes each)

- *Motion to discuss Report 5.3 separately and after the rest of the reports; seconded; carried.*

6.1 Vice President Finance Report (attached [here](#))

- *Thanks colleagues for service this year; thanks members for success of 2015-2016 GSA year. Highlighted achievements:*
- *Speaking to the big picture: acknowledges the turmoil of the previous year.*
- *System focused on transparent and accountable financial reporting, including updated budgets, ledgers of expenditures, open access policy for GSA finances to all members.*
- *Budget committee passed a budget for next year, with descriptor notes. The committee found ways to re-allocate finances to better support members: increased bursaries, Crisis Aid program, travel bursaries – all without raising fees of membership. U of S GSA pays the second lowest graduate fees in the country.*

- *Developed a comprehensive expenditure coding system for more accurate financial forecasting. All staff and coordinators put into University payroll, removing administrative burdens from GSA.*
- *Served on 10-11 committees; CGSR scholarship committee, significantly. There will be an increase of 1.5 million towards student funding going forwards for next year, and will be committed to graduate students. Stakeholders will be consulted by CGSR moving forwards.*
- *Organized a film screening, provincial election debate. To incoming GSA and to members: Thanks for the great year; thankful for being part of the GSA. Believes in the value of graduate students serving one another in operation of graduate student services.*

6.2 Vice President Operations Report (attached [here](#))

- *Has been a great year in terms of achievements and experience. When deciding to run, the mission of the campaign was to enhance transparency, increase diversity of services. Highlighted achievements:*
- *Communication – pushing GSA communication to more professionalism in terms of content; worked hard to build and strengthen communications with graduate students, and has been successful. All GSA member requests were handled in a timely manner.*
- *Logistics – hosted about 200 events this year; most were student-oriented. Special thanks to Manager, Sherri, and coordinators for the events that were so successful. More details available on these in section three of annual report.*
- *Bursary – with support of CGSR, 50 bursaries were given; it was a historic year in terms of the number of bursary applications (650), a 300% increase from last year, demonstrative of the great success in student engagement this year.*
- *New Initiative: with support of the current executives, \$110,000 contributed to the Graduate Student crisis fund, aimed at supporting students who are going through crises in their lives.*
- *Student Advocacy – this initiative aimed at improving advocacy; a complete proposal is available in section six.*

- *Finally: Thanks to all outgoing executives and GSA staff for their great efforts over the last year. Also would like to congratulate the newly elected executives, and wish them the best in the coming year.*

6.3 Vice President Student Affairs Report

- *Moved to the end.*

6.4 Vice President Academic Report (attached [here](#))

- *Had a wonderful experience as VP Academic, felt the team was great and thanks all coordinators and Sherri. Began with several questions: what are the critical issues concerning graduate students, and how should responsibility to students be implemented? Learned of the routes of using collective voices to achieve Graduate student goals. Connecting students to GSA executive is an ongoing process, and getting better as time goes on.*
- *GSA Achievement week: Three Minute Thesis and GSA Conference.*
- *Organized several workshops that had 50-100 students each.*
 - o *Student Academia workshop; advocacy for scholarships; workshop to improve supervisor-student relationship; anti-racist and ant-oppression workshops, as well as joining a national conference; advocated cross-cultural education, organizing an event with the Global Village; acted as advocate for indigenizing campus spaces; organized events on International Day of Remembrance for Violence against Women; a Get to Know Immigrant Student and Family workshop; engaged resident students as well; created educational programs on the Community Radio station; engaged with several committees as well.*
- *Thanks to all for their attention and encouragement.*

6.5 Vice President External Report (attached [here](#))

- *Thanks colleagues in GSA Executive. Highlighted achievements:*
 - o *Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) – there was no provincial executive and was non-functioning, so became a Saskatchewan representative. In November, an executive was elected for the provincial component, and has now started functioning.*

- *International Student Identity Cards – made them available for all GSA members, with a printer from CFS; issued over 200 cards for graduate students, free of charge.*
- *Grad School Health Chat – had six sessions. In the conferences attended (CFS and Student Care.Net), many grad students were speaking of mental health issues for graduate students; grad school health chat brought forth this issue and promoted awareness and support.*
- *GSA Gala Awards Night – 370 people in attendance; many dignitaries also in attendance; very successful event, with positive feedback from that.*

6.6 Aboriginal Liaison Report (attached [here](#))

- *Thanks colleagues, coordinators, and Sherri. Collaborative work was successful, individuals contributed greatly. Detailed written report is available, but notable achievements include:*
 - *Role of Aboriginal Liaison has become more active in recent years as indigenous issues are growing in prominence. This year has had overwhelming support for indigenous initiatives.*
 - *Gordon Red-Bear Oakes officially opened – in the works for 20 years. The aboriginal graduate student population has grown to over 200 in recent years, and advocacy for space*
 - *Incorporating indigenous content into curriculums – significant steps have been made, and progress is finally being made in this area.*
 - *Building Reconciliation forum – leaders and scholars gathered at the U of S – spoke on issues of aboriginal and metis students, and has made strides in improving processes through which non-status indigenous students can become eligible for scholarships and awards.*
 - *Started a league for rec sports.*
 - *IGSC: Raised enough to give 2 \$500 bursaries to indigenous students; hopes to continue the initiatives to provide more support to aboriginal graduate students at the U of S.*

6.7 President's Report (attached [here](#))

- *Report is attached, 45 pages; any questions, please ask. Wants to speak to general year.*
- *Events of last year seemed to de-legitimize the operations of the GSA. Ran on 'Transparency, Engagement, Collaboration' platform.*
 - *Transparency: we needed to get the GSA back into a position of trust, effective operations, and accountability. This has been a success. There has not been any transgressions, and governance has been particularly inclusive this year.*
 - *Collaboration – USSU and elections (candidates forums); CGSR (funding for events, bursaries, scholarships) and an increase of 1.5 million dollars to graduate student funding, with advocacy to increase the PhD funding from 3 to 4 years; collaborated on social justice issues, mental health, sexual assault; also with CFS which provided funds for the GSA conference (details in the report).*
 - *Engagement – GSA Guppies, GSA Achievement Week, Gala. Increased participation in our socials, increasing friendship and networking.*
- *This year has been so successful. Wants to thank the Executive, the office coordinators, and Sherri for the successful and amazing year.*

6.8 Questions and Answers (not more than 15 minutes)

- *Concern that there was low attendance at the AGM And that the Social groups section has not been coordinated -this is the job of the VP Student Affairs. Member would like this concern noted in the minutes.*
- *What is the GSA's position on the tuition hike?*
 - *Has gone to CGSR to express student's concerns. It is apparent that the university simply does not understand the economic needs of the students, and what accessibility means from a student perspective. The president wanted to go to the student membership and run a proper data survey to collect information on what the expenses for graduate students are; 350 responses are needed to get a proper survey. This is underway presently, but more data is needed. The GSA membership is not mobilized enough to understand the situation on tuition, and this is a recommendation to be*

continued in the next year. It will be a long process, but the GSA started this year.

- *No more questions.*

6.9 Vice President Student Affairs Report (attached [here](#)) – New placement in agenda.

- *Motion to accept VP Student Affairs Report; Seconded; Discussion:*
- *President: feels that this report should be rejected; it borders libel and scandal, and should not be accepted as a legitimate report.*
 - *Member: Amendment to this motion – accept the report in that the VP Student Affairs is liable for his opinions, not the GSA Executive or Membership – accept the report, but not approve the content: “That the AGM accept the VP Student Affairs report as the VP Student Affairs’ opinion, and disclaim any of its content.*
 - *VP Ops: this report gives information on GSA members without evidence or supporting documents.*
 - *President: rejects amendment to accept report, as it would be posted to internet; feels that the report should not be accepted or published, and totally delegitimized.*
 - *Member: Fact remains that the VP Student Affairs has been elected as a representative, and so his report, as provided, should be part of the final report for the year.*
 - *VP Ops: accept the report, but to hide the content and mention “due to the unprofessionalism of the report, it will be excluded from the minimum” – it does not reflect the standard of reporting expected from the GSA Executive.*
 - *VP Finance – rejects report; while VP Student Affairs has the right to submit the report, the membership has the right to reject it.*
 - *President – because the report would be submitted under his role as VP Student Affairs, but not as his name – this could stand against the executive in the future; should be rejected, as it is a personal opinion.*
- *Motion to end debate on motion to amend; seconded; motion to amend defeated.*

- *Motion to accept the report; discussion:*
 - o *VP External – would like to cancel the honorarium for VP Student Affairs for the month of April and reject the report; it is unfair to executives and membership due to the lack of work done by the VP Student Affairs.*
- *Incoming VP Student Affairs – she has not gotten an incoming transition report; would like to state concern and add that the president has taken on the transition. This evidences a lack of carrying out the responsibilities of the Executive position.*
- *VP External – would like to recognize that failure to do the job of the GSA Executive position to which one has been elected has no repercussions or punitive measures in place; this is problematic.*
- *VP Ops – going back to minutes over the year, the failure to perform the duty of the VP Student Affairs has been tracked throughout the year. This is available in all minutes.*
- *Member: With regards to the April payment – if a member fails*
- *Motion to receive VP Student Affairs Report is defeated unanimously.*
- *Member motion: “That the AGM request the VP Student Affairs provide a revised report that reflects facts and includes written language up to GSA standards within two weeks.” Seconded. Carried.*

~~7~~ GSA Social Groups

~~7.1~~ Campus Fellowship

The chair of the meeting declared that this item, not having been sent out with proper notice, is special business under the Act and the meeting can not therefore legally transact this business.

8 Motion to receive GSA Committee Reports and Minutes

8.1 GSA Executive Committee Minutes

8.1.1 Executive Meeting Minutes – March 23 2016 (attached [here](#))

8.1.2 Executive Meeting Minutes – April 5 2016 (attached [here](#))

8.2 Student Advocacy Steering Committee Final Report (attached [here](#))

8.3 Governance Committee Final Report (attached [here](#))

- *Motion to receive reports; seconded; discussion:*

- *VP Finance – Speaking to Student Advocacy: Campus Legal Services and advocacy for students was a notable achievement.*
- *Motion to receive; seconded; carried.*

9 Introduction to New Executive

- *New Executive introduced. Incoming President thanks membership and invites increased engagement in the 2016-2017 academic year.*

10 Questions and Answers

- *None.*

11 Adjournment

- *Meeting adjourned: 6:49 pm.*