

# The University of Saskatchewan Graduate Students' Association



## Council Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, February 17, 2016

5:00 P.M. – 7:00 P.M.

### GSA Commons

#### 1 Call to Order

- Called to order at 5:15 pm.

#### 2 Announcements

- 2.1 **Announcement of new academic councils**
- 2.2 **Establishment of quorum** – quorum established.

#### 3 Approval of Agenda

- Motion to approve. Seconded. Carried.

#### 4 Approval of Council Minutes

##### 4.1 January 20, 2016 Council Minutes

- Question for VP Academic was actually for VP Student Affairs. Amend minutes to go forward.
- Motion to approve minutes. Seconded. Carried.

##### 4.2 Review Voting Allocations

#### 5 Motion to receive Executive Reports for information – not more than two (2) minutes each

##### 5.1 Aboriginal Liaison Report

- Gordon Oakes Redbear Student opening – Feb 3-5. On 3<sup>rd</sup>, blanket presented to Jean Oakes, Gordon's widow. Thanks to David and Natalia for supporting.
- Aboriginal Achievement Week. Indigenous Council hosted FN and Metis artists; provided workshops and artistic presentation. Had fundraiser for Zoe Roy to send her mother with her to receive an award.
- In November, 2015, USSU passed motion to include indigenous content in every degree. January 21, motion at UofS council meeting to support and incorporate process of indigenization of

curriculum. Motion endorsed and carried at undergraduate level. GSA has not put forth a position on indigenization, Dana will prioritize this in the coming months.

- A \$500 bursary at graduate level will be available, more information in coming months.

## **5.2 VP External Report**

- Attended CFS meeting, and hopes our Saskatchewan component will have similar conversations.
- Had provincial exec meeting (CFS) – was first meeting in some years, already an improvement. Set priorities and approved budget for remainder of the year. Decided to focus on the provincial election in April. The national office will help to develop a campaign to bring out student voters. Set tentative date for culture forum in the fall.
- Indigenization of campus acknowledged as important, will be working on campaign for the graduate level.
- With Rajat, acquired funding for GSA week.
- Jan 21, attended library review meeting with deans from other universities, who asked for graduate student feedback on libraries.
- GSA Gala fundraising amount is almost achieved. Awards nominations are now closed. Committees meeting to select winners next week. Awards, cultural performances, and photobooth confirmed. Will have it in TCU place, with live music during dinner. There are a number of things to do, including ticket sales, so all are encouraged to purchase tickets and to advertise the event in your departments.

## **5.3 VP Finance Report**

- Along with volunteers on budget committee, operating budget for next year almost finalized, will be presented prior to next meeting, two weeks. Increased funding through bursaries included.
- Conference, gala, 3MT are coming up, busy with support in those.
- Will be attending a meeting with parking and transportation committee, if anyone has issues with this or with alternate transportation (ie: cycling), come to VP Finance with concerns.
- Will be working with elections SK to arrange a meet-and-greet with Provincial election candidates, wherein students can posit questions to candidates. Will be announced prior to event. Tuition freeze could and should be pressured for, as tuition hikes are presenting barriers to graduate education.

## **5.4 VP Operations and Communications Report**

- Winter bursary – was advertised for, will be giving \$20,000 in bursaries for graduate students. Encourages council to encourage peers to apply. Deadline is 29<sup>th</sup> of February.

- Was part of GSA Student Advocacy Steering Committee, met for two hours. VP Ops thanks all for participation. Have plan for advocacy improvement for students.
- Worked for GSA Achievement Week. Was also part of successful fundraising. Encourages all to participate in the Achievement Week, either the 3 Minute Thesis or conference, or attending the Gala.

### **5.5 VP Academic Report**

- Currently working for GSA Week conference. Working with coordinators of 3MT and Conference. Conference abstracts deadline today, 3MT deadline is Saturday February 20<sup>th</sup>.
- Those who are willing to volunteer, contact Ziad.
- Working on Global Village – to engage graduate and undergraduate students for social justice, cultural diversity, and gender diversity on campus. On March 10<sup>th</sup>.
- March 18<sup>th</sup> –
- Anti-Racist workshop on March 26<sup>th</sup>.
- International mother language day – February 24<sup>th</sup>, in GSA commons, aimed at building bridges.
- Funding deficiency due to conference has taken a lot of her time this month.
- Conference update from Vince – encourages people to participate. Opening ceremony begins Wednesday March 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Gordon Oakes Red Bear Student Centre at 6:30 pm, with keynote speakers and other guests. Encourages students to attend the opening ceremonies – social event at the GSA Commons will follow. The conference presentation panels will take place over the next two days at the GSA Commons and at Gordon Oakes Red Bear Student Centre. Interdisciplinary collaboration in research panel on Thursday, with opportunity for poster presentations of research being undertaken, and some roundtable discussions on methodology and research work at various disciplinary levels.

### **5.6 VP Student Affairs Report - Absent.**

### **5.7 President Report**

- Winter Welcome Social Jan 28<sup>th</sup> – successful, well attended.
- Tuition increase is a huge focus of work this last month, many colleges have had sessions and discussions, and have contacted GSA Pres with concerns and questions. He will be bringing these to CGSR an
- Had a Town Hall with CGSR Dean Adam Baxter-Jones today. Well attended and students were able to posit questions.
- University President will preside over a town hall next month, and is looking for consultation from graduate students on what areas of student enhancement should be focused on.

- Now is CFS Provincial rep for the U of S. Discussion on indigenizing the curriculum occurred, U of R does not have motion in place for this, U of S does, and GSA needs to move on this.
- ??!\*\* Security for self-identified minorities across Canada is a focus of this event.
- This weekend, there is a meeting at the Federal Level in GSA Commons – if any students have concerns to raise at this level, let Rajat know.
- Now have Campus Legal Services, who is looking for collaboration with GSA. A meeting will happen in the next weeks. Update to follow this meeting.

### **5.8 Q&A – not more than ten (10) minutes**

1. VP Student Affairs – what has he been doing, why is he not attending the meeting today?
  - a. Rajat responds – Hardi was the rep for CFS Saskatchewan, but we could not get a hold of him. He has not responded to emails about CFS, so Rajat took on that responsibility. Hardi did send his regrets immediately prior to the meeting. Unsure of the reason for his absence.

- No more questions.
- Motion to approve executive reports. Seconded. Carried.

## **6 Motion to approve GSA Social groups 2015/2016**

### **6.1 Let's Talk Science**

- Motion to approve. Seconded. Council member to speak to the motion.
- Coordinators speaking to motion – initiative to bring science to youth. Graduate students volunteer time to create activities and deliver sessions to students across the province.
- Ziad – update: the application for the social club has been approved.
- Motion to approve Let's Talk Science as a social group. Seconded. Carried.

## **7 Motion to receive committee minutes**

- Motion to appoint David as temporary chair so Chair can deliver his report. Seconded. Carried.
- Elections committee members signed declaration of neutrality. Designed as impartial body to oversee the elections. Need to come up with an election agenda – bylaws lay out a number of steps (modelled on USSU election process)
  - First thing – call for nominations on March 16<sup>th</sup>, to be announced at GSA council and posted on PAWS
  - First orientation meeting for any prospective candidates on March 29<sup>th</sup> at 5pm, at GSA Commons. If unavailable, potential candidates can get more information from Mitchell.
  - Candidacy forms will be available to any potential candidates, deadline April 5<sup>th</sup>.

- April 5<sup>th</sup>, nominations close and a procedures meeting will take place. Each candidate form will be reviewed and all candidates will be ratified.
- Campaign period, April 5<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> inclusively (no prior or post campaigning allowed). During this time, there will be a candidates' forum on April 11<sup>th</sup>, so GSA members can hear candidates and ask questions. April 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> = 2-day voting period, access on PAWS.
- April 14<sup>th</sup>, elections committee will meet. If there are significant violations, the committee has the authority to void any or all of the elections. If no severe irregularities, elections results will be ratified and announced to graduate students. The meeting will be public.
- There will be a period of complaints following, inclusive of complaints directed to elections committee and elections chair. There are 14 days for grievances, but following this period no complaints will be allowed. There is a process to appeal laid out in the bylaws, which can be followed upon grievance.
- Question: VP Ops – last year there were complaints about the nominations form. Are there changes to this?
- Answer – nominations forms will be released, as per outline from the by-laws. Anything that meets the by-law requirement will be valid as a nomination form.
- Q VP Ops: Would like the committee to consider the complaints from last year for this years' election.

## **7.1 Elections Committee Minutes – February 11, 2016**

### **7.1.1 Verbal report on elections from chief electoral officer**

**7.2 Executive Minutes – January 26, 2016** – No questions or comments.

**7.3 Executive Minutes – February 10, 2016** – No questions or comments.

**7.4 Budget and Finance – November 9, 2015** – Clarification – these were sent in attached to the report from VP Finance, have been re-sent as their own document.

**7.5 Budget and Finance – February** – No questions or comments.

**7.6 Student Advocacy – January 28, 2016** – No questions or comments.

**7.7 Governance – February 8, 2016** – No questions or comments.

- Motion to receive all committee reports as are. Seconded. Carried.

## 8 New Business

### 8.1 Motion: To increase the budget of the GSA Conference by \$10,000.

- Motion to increase. Seconded. Discussion?
- VP Academic – There had been more funding available from the President’s office in previous years, this year unavailable (\$5,000). By the time the absent funds had been announced, it was well into the process of conference preparations. Already have raised \$3,200. Funds needed for keynote presenters, food, etc. Had a meeting with Budget committee last week, and are hoping for increased funds. Had a meeting with all executives and coordinators for GSA Week – Gala committee also has shortages this year, and increased collaboration between both events will occur.
- Bylaw 5.2.3 “approved budget may only be modified subject to a 2/3 vote from council.”
- Further Discussion – the budget is \$10,000 – VP Academic wants to re-allocate funds from a different budget line to this one, as there is a shortage of revenue this year.
- Question from Dana – which budget line are we suggesting to take money from?
- VP Finance – the budget committee does not decide on the budget, can only suggest – suggests re-allocation of \$7,000 from \_\_\_ line to the conference.
- President – the budget will be coming out of Tech Venture Challenge, which has not been won, and is not until April so essentially the money is sitting there, and the suggestion is to re-allocate the funds from the Tech Venture Challenge, which carries over year to year.
- Dana – clarified that the Tech Venture Challenge is not over, so we don’t know if it has been won by a graduate student.
- Ziad – we will not be using this money for an outside cause, it is for an event directly benefiting all graduate students. To clarify, there was a miscommunication between the office of the President and the GSA as to funding allocation.
- Councillor – supports the budget allocation, wondering about what we can expect from the presidents’ office next year?
- President – We found out that the funding received last two years was seed funding, and the conference is established so we cannot expect money from them again. Next year will have to have an adjustment of the budget.
- Councillor – This is important and we should fund it, but there is no concrete demonstration of where the money will come from.
- President – Contingency fund exists, at about \$7,521 – suggests transferring \$6,500 from this contingency budget line, as the GSA foresees no legal disputes in the immediate future.

- Councillor – does not agree with removing funds from contingency fund, because it may leave GSA in problematic situation in the future.
- President – given that we do not have alternate budget lines to transfer from, this could be used for the conference.
- VP Finance – the contingency fund does protect against unpredictable climates at the GSA.
- Councillor – are there other places to move the money from?
- VP Finance – only the Tech Venture Challenge Fund. We could theoretical nickel-and-dime other lines, but not at the amount of increased needed.
- Motion to amend motion to “To change the budget of the GSA Conference by transferring \$6,500 from the GSA Financial and Legal Contingency Fund (line 60 of the budget).” Motion seconded. Carried.
- Motion to change the budget of the GSA Conference by transferring \$6,500 from the GSA Financial and Legal Contingency Fund (line 60 of the budget).”
- VP Finance – motion to amend \$6,500 and replace it with \$5,000. This would leave us with the financial resources in case of a financial or legal contingency, and still provide support to the VP Academic for the conference.
- Councillor – is it the responsibility of the current representatives to replenish the contingency fund?
- President – each year a new budget will come out, in April, and at that time there will be a discussion of the budget lines and necessity of each.
- VP Ops – to add that the conference will take place in two weeks, so there is not much time for fundraising. Strongly supports the \$6,500 and hopes to defeat this motion.
- Councillor – Is \$5,000 enough to cover the costs of this event?
- VP Academic – No it is not.
- Councillor – is there a budget for the conference that we can see?
- Coordinator of Conference – the budget we originally established has been heavily amended, to provide the conference at a cheaper cost. We have already pared down the costs from \$15,000 by cutting costs. The difference between \$5,000 and \$6,500 is not going to prohibit the functioning of the conference, but the difference would contribute to the quality of the conference itself.
- VP Finance – the next year’s proposed budget has \$5,000 for the conference, which it did not have this year.
- Councillor – for further reference, it is important to put a lid on contingency funds so that we have established an amount required for that fund.

- Councillor – supports defeating the amendment and maintaining \$6,500 – we want a successful conference. If that money is there, and we fundraise alongside using these funds, there is potential to replace funds in the contingency line.
- President – To clarify, the \$6,500 may not all be used, but will ensure there is no deficit. Any leftover funds will be transferred back into the contingency fund, and the coordinator of the conference will continue to cut costs at all opportunities.
- Councillor – we need a copy of the budget.
- VP Academic – I will need some time to prepare for the budget.
- Two Minute Break declared.
- Back in session – Conference coordinator reviewing the budget.
- Councillor – I do not see providing food as an essential service to a conference, but the contingency fund is essential.
- Councillor – also – the pamphlets printing costs are not necessary.
- President – we need to decide whether we give the coordinator breathing space or if we make his budgeting a tight and stressful situation. He will incorporate the feedback from council, but the \$6,500 would be less of a suffocating experience for the coordinator.
- Motion to change \$6,500 to \$5,000. Seconded. Amendment fails.
- Motion to change motion to “To change the budget of the GSA Conference by transferring \$6,500 from the Tech Venture Challenge Funding (line 99 of the budget.)
- The red amendment is voted and approved.
- President is in favour.
- Mitchel, to amend the motion to make it 10,000 again
- Moved by Mitchel, seconded. Carried.
- Back to the original motion.
- All in favour from tech funding. Carried.



## 8.2 Policy Manual Amendment

WHEREAS the 2014-2015 GSA Governance Committee (formerly Constitution & Policy committee) consolidated the policy documents of the GSA into one Policy manual. The purpose of this effort was to increase transparency, and accountability of the GSA, and to reduce confusion and remove errors and contradictions in the documents

WHEREAS the new policy manual has been available on the GSA website for several months (except for the new social groups policy, and the new GSA Commons policy)

WHEREAS the social group policy has been updated with the following major changes:

- Details have been added about the requirements social groups must follow to become ratified, notably about their constitutions
- The requirement for GSA membership in social groups has been changed from 75% to a simple majority to enable more groups to join in recognition of the fact that graduate students are a minority on campus and in the city
- Social groups may be able to use GSA liability insurance for some events
- Social groups must be open to all GSA members

WHEREAS the GSA Commons policy was updated in 2015 but not brought to council, and has the following major changes:

- The policy has been streamlined overall, for increased clarity, simplicity, and legibility.
- The GSA no longer automatically endorses all events held at the Commons

and WHEREAS the Constitution 9.6.4.i. states "Policies may be amended by a majority vote of Council or at a General meeting."

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the GSA Council approve this new Policy manual

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the GSA Council redacts the following old policy documents: "Communications", "Student Services", "GSA Commons", and "Position Statements" as updated versions of these documents are included in the new Policy Manual.

- Motion 8.2 policy manual.
- Motion to extend the meeting for 10 minutes. Seconded. Carried.
- Isaac speaks about the new armament of the policy.
- All in favour, none opposed motion carries.

**9 Questions and Answers** - No questions posited.

**10 Next meeting** - Set for March 16, 2016 at 5pm in the GSA Commons

**11 Adjournment** - Motion to adjourn carried. Meeting adjourned at 18:59.