

The University of Saskatchewan Graduate Students Association

Council Meeting

Wednesday January 20, 2016

5pm – GSA Commons

1. Call to order

Meeting called to order at 5:04

2. Announcements

a. Declaration of presence of Quorum

Quorum reached.

3. Additions/Deletions/Approval of Agenda

Chair – “783” – Motion to allow appointment of electoral assistants, especially ballot counters, who are not candidates.

Add another enabling motion to allow ballots to be destroyed after election.

Ziad – would like to add under executive reports, a report on the GSA conference.

Motion to move agenda, as amended. Moved, seconded, carried.

4. Motion to approve the minutes of the December 9, 2015 – p.3

Motion to approve council minutes. Seconded. No discussion. Carried.

5. Executive reports – not more than 2 minutes each

a. Conference Report

Call went for abstracts, coordinator advises council to encourage abstract submission in their own networks.

Has been working with Aboriginal and Indigenous Graduate Council to host opening ceremony at Gordon Oakes-Redbear Student Centre, for GSA conference.

Promotional materials for all events, and for the GSA Conference will be sent out periodically. New call for abstracts will go out soon.

Contact vince.anderson@usask.ca for any questions on the conference.

VP Academics asked coordinator to note other things she has worked on, she had to be away today. She has been:

- Working with Industry Talks on a series of events
- Working on events for:
 - o International Mother Language Day – February 21st
 - o International Women’s Day – March 8th

- International day for elimination of racism – March 21st

b. Aboriginal Liaison

Gordon Oakes is open now, officially on January 4th. Building is an inclusive inter-cultural gathering place for the university community. All grad students encouraged to visit building.

Room 210 – Indigenous Graduate Student council space. IGSC had no

February 3-5th, opening ceremony. Some is open to public, graduate students encouraged to attend.

Aboriginal achievement week – all are welcome to attend events. Information available on website, and link will be included in upcoming newsletter.

Next Tuesday, Graduate students information session held for undergraduate students, to encourage aboriginal undergrads to enter graduate studies, here or elsewhere. Also intended to encourage more indigenous faculty, particularly in response to no clear directive for indigenizing the curriculum.

GSA Guppies rec sports teams formed, activities began this week, grad students encouraged to join the roster, speak with Dana if interested.

Dana is GSA representative on committee for search for new Provost, hopefully to be completed this spring.

c. Vice-President External

Finally able to issue the ISIC (International Student Identity Card) – over 100 have been issued since mid-December. They are not restricted to International Students, but are available to any graduate student on campus.

Next Grad School Health Chat, next Wednesday from 5-7pm, titled 'Food and Mood' exploring nutrition and mental health, Council is encouraged to spread the word about this chat.

Gala – location and date set, March 5 2016, upstairs at TCU Place. Sponsorship from University Admin is not confirmed, still looking for sponsorship – all councillors encouraged to ask their departments to sponsor and purchase a table. All councillors will receive a sponsorship letter for this purpose.

Looking for some councillors to sit on the Awards Selection Committee, let Natalia know if you are interested in this position.

d. Vice-President Finance – p. 32

Met the Provost and Senior Leadership yesterday, and tuition hike has been indicated as a disappointing move this year. Organizing a Town Hall to discuss tuition. VP interested in presenting a resolution expressing the disappointment of the GSA and Graduat Student Body to communicate this, will reach out to media and campus.

Will start advocacy committee.

Audit process – process is quite slow. Lots of back-and-forth. Problem with firing auditors is going back to beginning and starting again, but open to sending out a proposal or tendor for new auditors.

Questions invited in Q & A Session.

e. Vice-President Operations and Communications – p. 28

GSA President was away, VP acted as interim president.

Has been working on the Social Club policy. It is not well defined, and Ziad has prepared a draft for submission.

Represented GSA in five meetings, has been working with conference and gala coordinators in publicity and website resources.

f. Vice-President Academic

Sends Regrets. No report.

g. Vice-President Student Affairs

Had an orientation for new members of University. This year, there was not any different orientations, but rather streamlined into a single event. ISEC Coordinated an orientation for entire university, GSA was paired with CGSR. Information bags – housing handbook, planners, newcomer information – handed out to new students at this event, along with information on GSA.

Hardi has continued advocacy for students – new initiative to survey all graduate students to identify issues students face, and how the GSA can address these issues. Survey being prepared presently, should be ready soon for conduction.

Further, has been representing students facing residence problems, and has been advocating for resolution of these issues at the University level.

h. President – p. 31

Has been away for a month – thanks to the GSA executive for picking up the slack and successfully managing his absence.

Reported disappointment to Adam Baxter-Jones on tuition hike, he has agreed to offer an explanation about the increase at a Town Hall where graduate students are able to posit questions.

With Jebbunnessa, looking for a way to communicate with each college on student queries and frustrations regarding the tuition hikes as well. If any councillors are interested in participating in this conversation, or hosting a session on tuition hikes within their department, let Rajat Know.

Campus Legal Services – new office, being funded by USSU, opening for legal representation and legal advice for all students – undergraduate and graduate – to obtain legal advice. Has been attending sessions, and most of the conversation focuses on academic appeals, for which this office will be able to provide legal representation. CLS is not interested in criminal law, or representation of criminal charges.

Strategies on GSA elections – how to motivate more people to stand for the elections. We have not been communicating our portfolios and what the GSA Executive does. Communication is a key component of encouraging students to participate in student politics. Potential to organize workshops to explain GSA positions, and encourage more people to run. Rajat is open to suggestions for ways to reach out to graduate students and increase participation.

i. Q&A – not more than 10 minutes

Question for VP Academic – “We have 29 new students, and in previous years we have held the tradition of holding an orientation. This year, we did not hear about an orientation or any social of

sorts, even within departmental councils. Why was there no social or welcoming orientation session this year open to all graduate students, for new students to meet colleagues?”

VP Response - Orientation is organized for incoming students. This year, an orientation for new students only was planned by CGSR. Orientation is intended to introduce new students to the university. A social event is a separate thing, and is open to all students. If there is a tradition of having a social in the past, it was not planned this year. Based on the needs identified by the new students and the needs of the GSA, Hardi decided not to have a welcome social. The reason is due to lack of capacity to organize a winter social this year, as it was not identified as a necessity.

Comment from President (Rajat): January 29th at 7pm is a GSA welcome social for all GSA students, and can be used as an orientation for new students to the GSA Commons and GSA Activities.

Comment from VP Operations (Ziad): the welcome back social invitations have gone out, and there will be a follow-up email inviting students to attend going out soon. Council is encouraged to invite others.

Additional comment to Dana’s Graduate Information Session report – it will be in the GSA, volunteers will be needed. All students are welcome, and volunteers will be set up at a table to present their grad school experiences. If anyone is interested in volunteering to share experiences, contact Dana. This event will help with retention rates, and will encourage active participation in the GSA activities.

6. Committee minutes

- a. Executive meeting December 17, 2015 – p. 9**
- b. Executive meeting January 13, 2016 – p. 12**

Motion to receive minutes. Seconded. No discussion on these minutes. Carried.

7. New business

- a. Enabling motions:**
 - i. That individuals who are not GSA Councillors or Alternate Councillors be allowed to speak during the committee elections process.**

Motion to carry. Seconded.

Hardi – point of information – Is there a change in the constitutional by-laws that would allow a student who is not a GSA Councillor to attend meetings and cast a vote?

Chair - GSA members who are not councillors are allowed to attend the meetings, but by-laws do not give them the right to speak.

Hardi – Moves to appeal ruling that this does not conflict with by-law. Seconded. Carried.

Constitution 5.4.1 gives regular members the right to attend meetings and speak forward against motions. The Constitution is clear where the bylaws are not. This enabling motion is declared out of order.

- ii. That all speeches by candidates or a representative of a candidate be not more than two (2) minutes, with the Chair providing fifteen (15) seconds warning and allowed up to fifteen (15) seconds grace.**

Moved. Seconded. Carried.

- iii. **That the Chair of Council and Chief Electoral Officer be authorized to supervise the elections to the Elections and Code of Ethics committees and be authorized to appoint individuals to assist him who are not candidates in that election, representatives of candidates in that election, Councillors, or Alternate Councillors, or a member of the Executive**

Moved. Seconded. Carried.

- iv. **That Council direct the chair of Council ...**

Moved to carry. Seconded. Carried.

b. Elections to the Elections Committee

Call to membership was sent out, with expressed interest. Candidate statements will be distributed here.

The bylaws suggests that the elections committee is limited to the CEO, and the 3 council positions only.

Those elected to the Elections Committee are mandated to remain impartial, and must sign a declaration of impartiality upon election.

Resignation will allow an Elections Committee member to run for a position.

i. Three (3) Councillors or Alternate Councillors

Point of information – Hardi expressed concern that the names and candidate profiles of those candidates for Elections Committee was not added to the agenda.

Response: Chair – the call was sent out to council asking for candidates for this committee. No councilors indicated ahead of time that they are running. The current agenda item is to nominate councilors for the Elections Committee. No council names are on the agenda because there were no candidates identified at the time of the agenda distribution.

Nominations:

- David Bennet nominated – declined.
- Jennifer Rychlo nominated – accepted.
- Isaac Pratt nominated – accepted.
- Michelle Whitstone nominated – accepted.
- Cody Manchester nominated – accepted.
- Garrett Morandi nominated – declined.
- Jason Perez nominated – accepted.

Nominations called once, twice, thrice. Nominations closed.

Nominated candidates made speeches on qualifications – two minutes.

- Jennifer Rychlo
- Isaac Pratt

- Michelle Whitstone
- Cody Manchester
- Garrett Morandi
- Jason Perez

Election Result:

- Michelle Whitstone
- Isaac Pratt
- Cody Manchester

ii. Three (3) GSA Members who are not Councillors or Alternate Councillors

Point of information – Hardi expressed concern about exclusion of candidates in agenda.

Chair – an email was sent out via Ziad to call for GSA members to join this committee, including profile request and questions on qualification for position, to be submitted by today’s date. To facilitate fairness, no names were included in agenda and will all be presented today.

Call for nominations of non-council or non GSA members. Once, twice, third. No more nominations.

Candidates:

- Anurag Das
- John-Etienne Myburgh
- Olufemi Ajiboye
- Ericmoore Jossou

Ziad moves to postpone the election of this position to next council meeting, and require candidates’ presence at the election.

Discussion on postponing open:

Rajat opposes postponement because the election committee must begin work immediately. Also suggests that Anurag Das is present, and it is not fair to his time to have to attend twice.

2/3 in favour required for passing, because it changes the agenda.

Motion to postpone, seconded. Votes – motion defeated.

Rajat moves to elect one position tonight, and elect two at the next meeting. Discussion open.

Natalia opposes motion, because the committee needs to meet and all members should be present.

Rajat speaks for the motion, to pay respect to the time that Anurag Das committed to the meeting tonight.

Speaking against the motion – it would not make any sense to vote for this twice. Because we have the candidate statements, there is no need to elect only one today.

Motion requires 2/3. Motion defeated.

Elected positions:

- Anurag Das

- John-Etienne Myburgh
- Olufemi Ajiboye

2016 GSA Elections Committee Members (in alphabetical order):

Olufemi Ajiboye

Anurag Das

Cody Manchester

John-Etienne Myburgh

Isaac Pratt

Michelle Whitstone

c. Elections to the Code of Ethics Committee

i. At least 2 Councillors or Alternate Councillors

There is no limit to Committee. Nominations open.

- Ziad Gaith nominated – accepts
- Jason Perez nominated – declines
- Seth Doer nominated – declines
- Kiefer Waite nominated – accepts
- Mohammed Rafati – accepts

Second call, third call, nominations closed.

No opposition to declaring candidates as Committee Members without election.

Code of Ethics Councillors or Alternate Councillors:

Ziad Gaith

Kiefer Waite

Mohammed Rafati

ii. At least 2 GSA Members who are not Councillors or Alternate Councillors

Rajat moves to proceed to an election to limit appointment to three candidates. Seconded.

Natalia speaks against this motion, suggesting that seven is not too many, and they may not all be available for meetings.

Motion to amend the motion and restrict candidates to those who submitted a statement. Seconded.
Motion passed.

Motion to election for three positions, to be restricted to those who submitted the candidate statements. No further discussion. Motion carried, election called.

Election for GSA Members – Candidates:

- Anurag Das
- John-Etienne Myburgh
- Jitendra Singh
- Ashley Dolovich
- Mackenzie Fulton

Motion to postpone election to when candidates can be present. Not seconded, motion fails.

Votes counted, GSA Members Elect:

Ziad Gaith

Mohammed Rafati

Kiefer Waite

2016 GSA Elections Code of Ethics Committee (in alphabetical order):

Ashley Dolovich

Mackenzie Fulton

Ziad Gaith

John-Etienne Myburgh

Mohammed Rafati

Jitendra Singh

Kiefer Waite

Questions and Answers

Comment – CGSR is working on eliminating limitations to scholarship funds (currently there is a cap on the funds that can be accessed). If you have any concerns with movements like this, speak to Rajat for him to represent to Adam Baxter-Jones.

8. Next Meeting: February 17th at 5pm in the GSA Commons

9. Adjournment

Chair declares meeting adjourned at 6:54 pm.