



University of Saskatchewan
Graduate Students' Association
GSA Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday September 25, 2018. GSA Commons

As Council gathers, we acknowledge that we are on Treaty 6 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis. We pay our respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of our gathering place and reaffirm our relationship with one another.

Attendance: *Adrienne Ratushniak, Aine Dolin (ARCHAIA), Brittany Ross, Tess Mills (Animal and Poultry Science), Dylan Baloun, Carmen Marquez Mellidez (Biology), Richard Pettipas (Chemistry), Rifat Zahan (Computer Science), Khaled Zoroufchi Benis (Engineering, Chemical), Elisha Asiri (Engineering, Electrical), Stephen Owuamanam, Bicheng Xing, Cloud Heng (Engineering, Mechanical), Saman Naghieh, Ejalonibu Hammed (Engineering, Biomedical), Sam Rezazadeh (English), Bethany Thiessen, Maria Elisa Sanchez Garces (Geography and Planning), Brittany Laing (Geology), John Bird (History), Tara Million (Indigenous Graduate Students' Council), Natasha Boyes (Kinesiology), Stephane Gerard (Language, Linguistics and Cultural Studies), Kushagra Parolia (Medicine, Anatomy and Cell Biology, Pharmacology and Physiology), Kusum Sharma, Mamata Panigrahi (Medicine, Biochemistry, Microbiology and Immunology), Ethan Runge (PEGASUS), Lina Kharabsheh (Pharmacy and Nutrition), Kyla Collins, Katrin Ritchie (Physical Therapy), Sarah Mohammed (Psychology), Peter Friedrichsen (SENS), Alhassan Alhassan (Sociology), Aimee Schryer (Soil Science), Breanne Murray, Narsimha Pujari (WCVM),*

Guests: Laura Larsen, Isaac Armstrong (PSAC), Blessing Okeke (Nigerian Students' Association), Osama Ansari (IEEE-PES), Amara Zuhaib (Pakistani Students' Association)

Organization of the Meeting:

Dr. Scott Adams acted as the Chairperson, until Council elect a new Council Chair and Chief Electoral Officer as per Bylaw 1.8.4.

The acting Chair indicated that the meeting was properly constituted.

Osai Clarke acted as the recording secretary for the duration of the meeting.

1. Call to Order

Dr. Scott Adam, acting Chair called the meeting to order at 5:08pm.

2. Approval of the agenda

The acting Chair asked for a motion to adopt the Agenda as circulated.

Motion to adopt the Agenda as circulated (SAHTOUT/ PRESBER).

CARRIED

3. Election of Chair of the GSA Council and Chief Electoral Officer

Dr. Adams reminded the audience that a Council member couldn't serve as the GSA chair and announced that Mr. Ziad Ghaith was nominated for this position. The Acting Chair asked if there is any other nomination. With no other nominations made from the meeting floor, Mr. Ghaith was asked to introduce himself to the Council.

Motion to elect Mr. Ziad Ghaith as GSA Council Chair and Chief Electoral Officer (SHARMA/PETTIPAS).

CARRIED

4. Guest from the Public Service Alliance of Canada, Local 40004

Isaac Armstrong, the regional representative from the Local 40004, briefed the audience on what a union was, who it consists of and how one can participate in its activities. More specially; this local represents graduate student workers on campus, post-doctoral fellows and veterinary residents.

A few salient points from Mr. Armstrong:

- A union is an organized association of workers that advocate for the rights and interests of its members.
- The local ratified its first collective agreement for graduate student workers (teaching, research, or student assistants earning a wage at the university) last October.
- Representatives are elected at duly convened meetings, Saman Naghieh, a GSA Council member, also serves as the president of the local through this same process.
- Main purpose of the union is to get a collective agreement. In essence to use collective power to bargain wages via an elected bargaining team who reports on the bargains to its members to ensure satisfaction.
- As a member you can participate in the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) and Public Services International (PSI) conferences and activities.
- Occupational health and safety laws is a big part of what unions advocate for.

Laura Larsen also added that the union have an office on campus in room 131 McLean Hall from 9:30 AM -4:00 PM, Monday to Friday.

5 – 6. Consent Agenda

Motion to receive for information and/or approve by consent items 5-6 (UFONDU/NAGHIEH).

CARRIED. 1 ABSTENTION

7. Report of the President

President Sahtout briefed the gathering on the following:

- The relationship of the GSA and PSAC Local 40004 is strong and both will continue to advocate for the best interests of our members.
- Working towards having a graduate student voice on the University Board of Governors.

- Student-supervisor agreement approved by the Faculty Council of the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral studies in May of 2017 and should be used as guidelines to set an understanding of expectations for both parties. Will continue working to ensure that this is used across campus.
- Networking opportunities for students to engage in industry. On October 17th, 5 to 6 graduate students will be welcomed to give 5 minute talks to the industry and community.

8. Report of the VP Finance and Operations

Vice President Finance and Operations Gomez thanked volunteers who had participated in the recent orientation activities and thanked the GSA Executive for their part played in the orientation week activities. The VP Finance and Operations thanked the team of members who assisted in the Spring / Summer Bursary Committee and wished them success in their academic journeys.

The Vice President Gomez closed the agenda item by announcing that they would be looking for two volunteers to serve on the bursary committee which will be finalized at the next council meeting.

9. Report of the VP Student Affairs and GSA Fall Orientation Report

The VP Student Affairs Martinez-Soberanes indicated that the orientation activities were much more efficient this year with regards to the food, as much less food was left over and all the leftovers were given to the PSAC. Additionally, he notified members of a Wine and Cheese social will be held by the GSA this week on Friday in the GSA Commons. Vice President Martinez-Soberanes emphasized that he would continue advocating for student needs and looks forward to participating in the networking opportunity with industry.

10. Report of the VP External

First Aid course is being negotiated at discounted rates for graduate student body. In addition to the first aid certification, there will be a series of 5 health talks/activities slated for this academic year. The first of which is “Tips on becoming an exceptional graduate student” held this Thursday at 12 noon in the GSA commons. The other 4 are as follows:

- “Surviving Canada with humor” in October
- “Laughter therapy session” in November
- “Health from an Indigenous perspective” in January
- “Self Defense training” in February

The GSA recreational sports team, called the GSA Guppies, plays both soccer and basketball for the semester. If one doesn't want to play they are welcome to cheer on their fellow graduate students at 2 PM on Saturdays for soccer and at 6:30 PM on Wednesdays for basketball.

11. Report of the Indigenous Liaison

At the Indigenous Graduate Students' Council (IGSC) AGM meeting last week, Marie-Eve Presber was voted in as the official Indigenous Liaison and IGSC Co-Chair.

12. Ratification of Social Clubs for 2018/19

Vice President Student Affairs Martinez-Soberanes called on representatives from the different social clubs to share a few words with the membership before each was ratified.

The first was the USASK Emerging leaders of Solar Energy. Representative Richard Pettipas spoke to the efforts of the club to engage industry and awareness of solar energy to the campus community.

Motion to ratify the Emerging Leaders of Solar Energy USask as a social club (SHARMA/UFONDU).

CARRIED. 1 ABSTENTION

The second group was the Nigerian student association which was formed to provide a sense of community for the relatively large Nigerian student body.

Motion to ratify the Nigerian Students' Association as a social club (MARQUEZ MELLIDEZ /NAGHIEH).

CARRIED

The third social club was the Nepalese Students Association. The group helps bring Nepalese students together and helps promote and share their culture.

Motion to ratify of the Nepalese Students Association as a social club (LAING /MARQUEZ MELLIDEZ).

CARRIED

The fourth was the Pakistani Students' Association. The president listed a few activities that they have had in September for the large number of new Pakistani students on campus.

Motion to ratify the Pakistani Students' Association as a social club (UFONDU /PEPPITAS).

CARRIED

The fifth was the U of S American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists Chapter. The purpose of this group is to establish a welcoming social and scientific community that serves the interests of graduate and undergraduate students in pharmaceutical sciences.

Motion to ratify the U of S American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists Chapter as a social club (LAING UFONDU).

CARRIED.1 ABSTENTION

The sixth was the USASK Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers which was founded to explore renewable energies and offers different seminars on related research topics.

Motion to ratify the USask IEEE PES Student Branch Chapter as a social club (UFONDU/PETTIPAS).

CARRIED

The seventh was Let's talk science which really pushes S.T.E.M outreach from pre-schools to the high schools.

Question from Peter Friedrichsen. Does your group cater to the social sciences?

This organization caters more to the STEM fields of study.

Motion to ratify Let's Talk Science as a social club (LAING/UFONDU).

CARRIED.1 ABSTENTION

13. Appointment of representatives on the University of Saskatchewan Student Forum

President Sahtout informed the Council that the student forum falls under the portfolio of the Vice Provost Teaching Learning and Student Experience and that this forum was dedicated to the discussion of student issues and the overall nature of the student experience on campus. A venue where all categories of students (graduated, undergraduate, indigenous etc.) can discuss with stakeholders, like professors, the quality of teaching, class sizes and how to improve certain aspects of the overall student experience.

Three council members nominated themselves: Saman Naghieh, Carmen Marquez Mellidez and Tara Million. Since only 2 GSA Councilors could be submitted to the forum it was put to a vote each candidate being allowed a minute to introduce themselves and why they'd be a good fit for the forum.

The council voted Carmen Marquez Mellidez and Tara Million to participate in that forum.

14. Discussion and decision regarding GSA sponsorship of the Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity

The Council agreed with the GSA Executives' recommendation which was to not contribute to the Center for Gender and Sexual Diversity at this time as the budget didn't allow for such.

15. Other Business / Announcements

The Chair informed the gathering that the next GSA Council meeting is on the 16th of October where there will be a orientation segment for the new council members.

The President spoke to the promotion of sustainability as being one of the initiatives taken on by the GSA during summer, so in keeping with this all the plates and cups used for dinner are reusable so will be washed and used at the next meeting. The President also reminded folks of the wine and cheese event on Friday and asked that its members start to think about the first networking event.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn (PRESBER/NAGHIEH) at 18:42.

CARRIED