



University of Saskatchewan
Graduate Students' Association
GSA Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday February 26, 2019. 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: See appendix A

1. Call to Order

The Chair of Council called the meeting to order at 5:03PM.

Osai Clarke acted as the recording secretary for the meeting.

2. Approval of the agenda

Motion to approve agenda. (RODRIGUEZ/MELLIDEZ)

CARRIED

3. Approval of the Minutes from January 22, 2019

Motion to approve December Council minutes (RODRIGUEZ/ OWUAMANAM)

CARRIED

4. Business arising (STING Sponsorship)

The chair reminded the gathering that the associate director of the innovation enterprise put forward a proposal for funding, based on which the GSA executive circulated a memo for the council members' consideration. The school of sustainability also sent a memo of their own to the council and executive articulating their stance on the proposal.

The Chair then invited a member of the executive to talk about the memo.

The VP Student Affairs shared with the council members that the program would cost a total of 1.7 million dollars over 3 years and they were asking the GSA to commit to \$5000/year for those three years. In the executive meeting they realized there were some big limitations with the current proposal, the biggest of which was the fact that program seemingly only catered and targeted business/commerce students. It's not clear how the proposal would benefit the overall graduate student population that coupled with the already limited funds of the GSA.

The executive does not think it's prudent to throw support at this iteration of the innovation enterprise initiative.

The Chair then invited a member of the School of Sustainability to address the contents of their memo.

Peter Friedrichsen shared similar sentiments about the proposal to that of the GSA executive.

The Chair then reiterated the recommendation of both parties not to fund the proposal and asked the floor if they'd like to discuss. The Council Members sided with the recommendation and no further discussion was requested. This decision will be communicated by the executive to the director of innovation enterprise.

5. Information to receive

- A. Election Committee minutes from January 29, 2019
- B. Governance Committee minutes from January 18, 2019
- C. Governance Committee minutes from February 1, 2019
- D. Diversity Committee minutes from January 16, 2019
- E. Executive meeting minutes from January 17, 2019
- F. Executive meeting minutes from January 31, 2019

Motion to receive Agenda items 5A-F (ROETT/LAING)

CARRIED

6. Executive reports

A. Report of the President

President Sahtout kept her contribution brief focusing on the appreciative inquiry session held 2 weeks prior to council meeting which they invited faculty and students to engage in a discussion on what the tools to enable a positive supervisor-student relationship would look like. About 15 students and 5 faculty members including the dean and the associated dean of CGPS took part. The discussions seem fruitful but the findings of which will be presented to council once the executive has a chance to sit down with notes.

In the March council meeting the intention is to bring forward the faculty support manual which the executive has been working on for a few months now for council feedback.

There were no questions for the president.

B. Report of the VP Finance and Operations

VP Gomez addressed 3 Main things in his report, namely:

- GSA winter bursaries: applications have been opened from the 4th of February and will close Friday the 1st of March. Successful applicants will be contacted by March 15th.

- Financial support to the ratified social clubs has been taken place all through the month. Thus far we've given support to Brazil, Nigeria, Indian student, and plant science student associations.
- 2019/20 budget which will be discussed later.

There were no questions for the president.

C. Report of the VP Student Affairs

VP Martinez-Soberanes also highlighted 3 parts of his report listed below:

- GSA research Conference tomorrow February the 27th, registration starts at 9:30 am. The attendees will get the opportunity to enjoy 16 research talks over the course 2 days. If you register for the sessions and stay you'll be provided lunch.
- The three minute thesis competition dubbed the 3MT, will challenged graduated students to pitch your research in 3 minutes with the help of a single static powerpoint slide depicting an aspect of your research. Registration is open on the GSA website.
- Conflict resolution workshop is being worked on for this September.

There were no questions for the VP Student Affairs

D. Report of the VP External

VP Ufonde spoke to 4 points in his report as follows:

- Health wellness the last event was hosted on 14th Feb.
- March 4th event: Diversity + Inclusion = Unity
- GSA guppies have 3 sports teams and is good way to allow students to unwind by playing or cheering on their fellow students.
- Gala and Awards night- you can go to the GSA website (GSA.USASK.CA under events) to nominate people for the different awards. The deadline is March 4th for nominations

There were no questions for the president.

7. Social Clubs Ratification

A. TOX on TAP

Vice President Student Affairs spoke on the club's behalf.

Outlining that the purpose of this association according to their constitution is to promote lively events that bring the public and scientific community together in an informal setting to discuss toxicology and related issues. To demystify the world of science.

Motion to ratify TOX on TAP as social club. (MARTINEZ-SOBERANES/ MELLIDEZ)

Carried

B. Women in Chemistry

Paul: Founded Sept 2017, the main focus of this group is to realise gender equality by hosting several events to bring awareness to the cause. The principle goal is broken down into the following:

- Initiating open discussion concerning gender disparity at this time
- Showcasing strong role models for women in the lectureship series
- Providing career and network opportunities

This summer the women chemistry host their national conference in Montreal under the theme “Young Girls Overcoming Gender Inequality in chemistry and other STEM fields”.

Motion to ratify Women in Chemistry as social club . (MARTINEZ-SOBERANES/RODRIGUEZ)

Carried. 1 abstention

C. ASHRAE

Vice president student affairs spoke on their behalf.

The groups goals are spelt out in their name that stands for Advancement of the Science of Heating Refrigerating and Air conditioning Engineering. They have been providing a series of lectures and demonstrations to share their passion with the rest of the student community.

Motion to ratify ASHRAE as social club. (NAGHIEH/MELLIDEZ)

Carried. 1 abstention

D. Satellite Rotary Club of Saskatoon

Bring together business and professional leaders around the world to provide mentoring, and professional development. Membership is open to everyone for \$5/membership which gives you the opportunity to eventually be invited to the international Rotary club. VP external explained that this satellite group is to bring more of an on campus presence for the group.

Motion to ratify Satellite Rotary Club of Saskatoon as social club. (LAING/RODRIGUEZ)

Carried. 1 abstention

8. Draft Operational Budget 2019/20

The Chair informed the meeting that Council needs to approve a budget in March so the Executive will be presenting this tentative budget for council feedback.

VP Finance/Operations noted that there were a few changes to the budget of last academic year but the main changes were as follows:

The membership fee that was increased by 4.9% which was calculated based on the number of students registered in the fall 2018. Based on the ~3100 registered the projected increase plus the 1% university administrative fees were done to cover the cost of the GSA audio video system, and upgrade the office computers. The cost of those upgrades have been budgeted for the next 5 years. An additional \$3000 have been allocated to bursaries and is reflected in the projected membership fee increase.

Question: Can you give us some metrics in terms of student population and the % increase and what revenues are expected? Just curious as to what the additional \$3000 of bursary funds are going to look like per membership.

Answer: GSA projects a 1% increase in membership growth and any monies that we put into this budget CGPS matches so technically we expect double those extra funds in our budget.

9. Motions (Fees 2019/20)

A. CFS Fees

VP External spoke to the Canadian federation of students fee (CFS) regular annual increase based on the Canadian Consumer Price Index (CPI) and 1% administration cost which moves the fee from \$6.14 → \$ 6.30. The chair reminded the council members that a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote from council needed for approval.

Motion to approve CFS fees from \$6.14 to \$6.30. (GOMEZ/UFONDU)

Carried. 1 opposed

B. Health and Dental Plan Fees

VP external: After discussions with the student care representative it was agreed that we would maintain the same fees so no vote required.

C. Health Plan Drug Exception Maximum Policy

President Sahtout told the gathering about a drug exception policy they'd like GSA to approve. The health plan approves you 80% coverage of prescription drugs. Those drugs are part of the plan 48 formulary that the Saskatchewan government updates every year. Often times there are students that get exceptions to drugs that are beyond this plan 48 list. The current process requires the student to fill out a drug exception policy that goes to the student care representatives that approve the drug. The move approve a drug exception policy is to bring transparency to the current process to also ensure that there is equality among students. It will effectively help control the cost of the plan as well, in the past 2 years they've only been 3 students that have requested coverage for drugs above \$2000. Generally student care would make the students request coverage for \$2000 and anything above that, they've gone in to approve it manually. With this policy any student would be able to get the \$2000 of coverage and anything above that the executive with approval from council would have to approve that. Generally students have requested less than \$1000 over the \$2000 limit but this now puts control in the hands of council as really large sums over the limits can affect the general cost of the plan in future.

Question from Thiessen: For those exceptions what would that look like for the students in terms of privacy?

Answer: All confidential information that would put the student at risk would be excluded.

Motion to approve exception policy . (UFONDU/MARTINEZ-SOBERANES)

Carried

A. GSA Membership Fees

VP Fin and Ops: Based on 3100 students a projected increase of 4.9% is required to cover the upgrade of the audio visual system and increase in the allocation for bursaries.

Question from Sharma: What was the amount of benefit from the crisis help program?

Answer: Every year the executives can ask the students awards office to indicate where that money went to, think this academic year we've helped 8 to 10 students who found themselves in a crisis financially.

Motion to approve a 4.9% increase in the GSA membership fees. (GOMEZ/MARTINEZ-SOBERANES)

Carried. 2 opposed (Sharma). 2 abstention

10. Graduate Students Tuition Increase (Anatomy, Physiology & Pharmacology Academic Course Council)

The Chair invited Parolia from Anatomy, Physiology & Pharmacology course council to address the gathering.

Anatomy, Physiology & Pharmacology had a meeting in past week with their dean to discuss tuition increase and share their views on it. On Monday March 4th the CGPS dean is coming out to talk to us so it's my hope that their will be a big showing so our voice can be heard. I've also requested that this meeting be webcasted so that the students that can't physically attend can follow. One of the suggestion from our course council was that we can have tuition freezes based on your start date. That way during your program there would be no surprises. The tuition can be raised on newly enrolled students but the fees at the start of their program also get frozen. Lastly, Ontario universities are reducing the international differential fees so that they eventually eliminate it all together but at USASK we are also trending upwards on international differential tuition fees. International students see 2 sets of increases. Why would the best of the best come to USASK when their aren't as progressive with regards to differential fees.

President Sahtout: By a show of hands how many of you have attended tuition consultations in your colleges?

Medicine, Agriculture, Pharmacy, Public Health, Sustainability and Law seem to be the only colleges so far to have a tuition consultation.

5 principles of setting tuition at USASK as approved by the board of governors :

- Enabling equality
- Affordability and accessibility
- Comparability
- Predictability
- Transparency through tuition consultation

With respect to the 5th a lot of students have come to the GSA executive saying that it feels like the consultations were more like information sessions as opposed to consultations. Another frustration that was brought forward is the fact that the board is going to approve tuition in mid-March but most of those consultation are only now being had. Additionally, students in thesis based programs rely on their stipend and the fact that tuitions is increasing without any sort of increase in our scholarships or stipends is troubling and there has to be some mechanism in place to ensure that our tuition is comparable. We do understand that in Saskatchewan we might not have the support systems that universities in Ontario might have but that doesn't mean that university can continue to increase tuition without separating undergraduate and graduate students.

I'd like to reiterate the sentiments Parolia and ask that you all go to the tuition increase consultation and bring someone along with you so our voices can reach those tasked with such. The tuition consultation will be held on Monday March 4th at 4pm in room Throv.

Each college is responsible for hosting individual consultations as tuition dollars don't go to CGPS but to the colleges.

11. Confidential Session

Motion to proceed with confidential session. (SAHTOUT / PAROLIA)

Carried

Motion to return to the open agenda. (ROETT / RODRIGUEZ)

Carried

12. Other business/Announcements Information

VP Student Affairs: Reminder tomorrow's conference starts at 9:30.

VP Finance and Operations: Deadline for GSA bursary is Friday 1st of March.

The Chair reminded the gathering that GSA annual general elections was announced and it will be held this year April 1st to the 5th. Nomination opens on March 4.

The Chair informed the gathering that March 19th new Chair will be elected by the Council as the Chair will graduate this term.

13. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn (UFONDU/ RODRIGUEZ) at 6:50

CARRIED

Appendix A

Academic Council	Name of Councilors and (alternates)	Sep.25 2018	Oct.16 2018	Nov.20 2018	Dec.11 2018	Jan.22 2019	Feb.26 2019	Mar.19 2019	Apr.9 2019
Animal & Poultry Science	Brittany Ross (Tess Mills)	P	R	P	A	A	A		
ARCHAIA	Alne Dolln (Adrienne Ratushniak)	P	P	P	A	A	A		
Biology	Dylan Baloun (Carmen Marquez Mellidez)	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Chemistry	Doug Fansher (Richard Pettipas)	P	A	R	P	P	P		
Geography & Planning	Bethany Thiessen (Apeksha Heendeniya)	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Geological Sciences	Brittany Laing (James Schulte)	P	P	P	A	P	P		
History Graduate Students' Committee	John Bird (Mckelvey Kelly)	P	P	P	A	P	P		
IGSC (1)	Tara Million (Adam McInnes)	P	P	NA	NA	NA	NA		
IGSC (2)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		
Kinesiology	Natasha Boyes (Natalie Houser)	P	P	P	P	P	R		
Computer Science Grad Course Council (1)	Rifat Zahan (Tonny Kar)	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Computer Science Grad Course Council (2)	Parastoo Veisi (Kawser Nafi)	A	P	A	P	A	P		
PEGASUS	Alex Chang (Ethan Runge)	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Soil Science Graduate Student Association	Jennifer Bell (Aimee Schryer)	P	P	P	P	P	P		
WCVM GSA	Breanne Murray (Narsimha Pujari)	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Master of Business Admin Representative Council (MBARC)	Tyler Gray (Alli Sparling)	NA	NA	P	R	A	P		

Academic Council	Name of Councilors and (alternates)	Sep.25 2018	Oct.16 2018	Nov.20 2018	Dec.11 2018	Jan.22 2019	Feb.26 2019	Mar.19 2019	Apr.9 2019
Psychology Graduate Student Assoc.	Sarah Mohammed (Farron Wielinga)	P	P	A	R	P	P		
AREC	Yerebakia Choro (Ran Sun)	NA	P	P	P	A	A		
SENSSA (1)	Peter Friedrichsen (Belizario Carballo)	P	R	P	P	P	P		
SENSSA (2)	Laila Balkhi (Belizario Carballo)	NA	P	P	A	P	P		
Pharmacy & Nutrition Graduate Students' Council P&N-GSC	Lina Kharabsheh (Riley Devine)	P	P	A	P	P	P		
School of Public Health Students' Assoc (SPHSA) (1)	Cheryl Roett (NA)	NA	P	P	P	P	P		
School of Public Health Students' Assoc. (SPHSA) (2)	Chiamaka Ezekwesili (NA)	NA	P	P	R	P	P		
Physical Therapy Student Society (PTSS)	Kyla Collins (Katrin Ritchie)	P	P	P	R	P	P		
Engineering, Chemical	Khaled Zoroufchi Benis (NA)	P	P	P	A	P	P		
Engineering, Mechanical	Bicheng Xing (Stephen Owuamanam)	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Engineering, Electrical	Ozan Gunes (Jose Berkenbrock)	P	P	P	A	P	P		
Engineering, Biomedical	Saman Naghieh (Ejalonibu Hammed)	P	P	P	A	P	P		
Biochemistry, Microbiology & Immunology	Kusum Sharma (Mamata Panigrahi)	P	A	P	P	P	P		
Anatomy, Physiology & Pharmacology	Kushagra Parolia (Sarah Martin)	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Community Health & Epidemiology	Jacob Alhassan (Liliana Rodriguez)	NA	P	P	R	P	P		
Health Sciences	Chelsea Cunningham (Scott Adams)	NA	P	P	P	P	P		

