



University of Saskatchewan  
 Graduate Students' Association  
 GSA Council Meeting Minutes  
 Tuesday September 24 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 Acting Chair of Council officially called the meeting to order at 5:11pm.

Mr. Osai Clarke acted as the recording secretary for the meeting.

### 2. Approval of the agenda

The Acting Chair asked if there were any amendments to be made to the as circulated agenda.

VP Fonseca put forward 2 amendments namely:

- Removal of item **10.O**. Plant Sciences Graduate Students Association
- And add the "Indian Student Association" as item **10.O**.

Motion to amend the agenda (Fonseca/Alam)

Carried

*Motion to approve the agenda as amended. (Murray/Alam)*

Carried

### 3. Election of GSA Chair and Chief Electoral Officer

*Motion to elect GSA chair and chief electoral officer. (Rengifo/Fonseca)*

Carried

The Acting Chair (Reggie) handed the floor over to the President Rengifo who mentioned that the former chair Reggie has shown interest in continuing on as the council meeting chair for the new academic year. President Rengifo briefed the councillors on the duties of the GSA Chair and Chief Electoral officer, then shortly opened the floor up to nominations but after 3 attempts no one volunteered themselves or their colleagues.

Reggie was allowed to share a few things about herself so the councilors could understand why she would make a good chair during the 2019/2020 academic year. Once Reggie was done with her speech, she was asked to leave so councilors could vote.

There were 28 votes in support of Reggie as the Chair and Chief Electoral Officer. There were no votes in opposition to Reggie's election.

President Rengifo invited Reggie back into the meeting where she informed her of the result and handed the floor back to her to chair the current meeting.

Reggie thanked Councillors for the vote of confidence and continued with the meeting.

#### **4. Approval of the minutes from August 13th, 2019**

The Chair asked if there were any amendments to be made to the August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019 minutes.

Councillor, Sahtout put forward the following friendly amendment to Item 6B.

Item 6B:

President Rengifo invited former President of the GSA, Sahtout to speak on the University's earlier decision regarding work terms for international students on implied status. This refers to students who are currently in the process of renewing their study documents. According to the Government of Canada these students are seen as no longer holding a valid study permit and may no longer be authorized to work. President Rengifo shared that however, the University's decision now states that international students on implied status will be eligible to engage in on campus employment during this period, which was welcoming news.

Item 6B should now read;

President Rengifo invited former President of the GSA, Sahtout to speak on the University's earlier decision regarding work terms for international students on implied status. Implied status refers to students who are currently in the process of renewing their study documents. Under Implied Status, students can continue to follow the conditions of their original study permit until a decision is made (whether it is approval of renewal or rejection of renewal). While the Government recognized the conditions of the original study permit under Implied Status, the employer may choose to no longer authorize students to work, as was the original decision of the University in the 2018/2019 academic year. President Rengifo shared that the University has reversed this decision and international students on implied status will be eligible to engaged in on campus employment, which was welcoming news.

*Motion to approve August 13th minutes with friendly amendment. (Schulte/Church)*

**Carried**

## 5. Information to be received

- a) July 17, 2019 Executive meeting minutes
- b) August 21, 2019 Executive meeting minutes

*Motion to receive agenda item 5A and 5B. (Murray/Church)*

Carried

## 6. Executive reports

### A. Report of the President

President Rengifo thanked new and continuing councillors for their active participation. The President also thanked her predecessor former president Sahtout for assisting greatly in the current running of the GSA and volunteering to be an academic councillor.

The president kept her report brief, focusing on the following 4 areas:

1. Mental health- the GSA is currently working with PSAC and the Student Wellness Centre to put on an event for mental health awareness.
2. Student-supervisor agreement - there was a meeting with the acting associate dean of CGPS to move forward with it. In the meantime, a student manual is being generated to guide graduate students, so they understand the regulations and policies at the university.
3. Networking and student engagement with community- in collaboration with Random Acts of Green, the GSA held its first workshop centered around tackling man-made climate change. Other networking events to follow are: the graduate research conference, the three-minute thesis competition (3MT) and the student awards gala.
4. Incoming student resource checklist - this 1-page document has been composed to assist students who may have come later on in the semester and missed out on all the orientation activities.

The Chair asked if they were questions for the President.

Question from Ibtisham: What is the GSA doing to help international students cope with the rising tuition cost with no accompanying rise in scholarship?

President Rengifo: We are working with CGPS to see if there are scholarships and financial aid to help decrease this burden, additionally the GSA has its own needs-based bursary to help out the most financially distressed students.

## **B. Report of the VP Finance and Operations**

VP Alam welcomed the councillors and informed them that the GSA executive with the assistance of the Office Manager was able to hire Olatunji Olabiyi as one of the coordinators at the commons. Additionally, VP Alam briefed the councillors on the GSA bursaries letting them know that 10 bursaries were awarded during the Spring/Summer semester and is expecting to be able to award 23 bursaries during the Fall term. He asked all council members interested in assisting with the bursary applications to register to serve on the GSA Bursary Selection committee as soon as possible as the actual bursary application period is expected to open mid-October.

VP Alam ask the councilors to spread the word about the GSA bursaries as it could significantly help those students most in need.

There were no questions for VP Alam.

## **C. Report of the VP Student Affairs and Fall Orientation Report**

VP Fonseca shared with the attendees that the orientation was a success and there were approximately 800 students in attendance at the BBQ. Some of the leftover food was given to PSAC for their BBQ the next day to reduce any wastage. VP Fonseca also reminded councillors of the Fall wine and cheese event to be held at the commons on Friday the 27th of September from 5 to 10 pm. She shared that non-alcoholic beverages will be available at the event.

There were no questions for VP Fonseca.

## **D. Report of the VP External**

VP Ezekwesili briefly addressed the councilors focusing on 3 areas namely:

- 1) Adopt-a-plot program- where approximately 525 pounds of fresh produce was harvested to help feed many families and individuals through the initiative.
- 2) Health chats- there will be 6 events for the Fall, 3 of which are scheduled for October which includes first aid training, self-defense and thirdly consent and dating in Canada chat.
- 3) Zumba classes- the first class will be held on the 4th of October

There were no questions for VP Ezekwesili.

## **7. Checklist for New Graduate Students**

President Rengifo elaborated on the checklist and made note of a few things for example; the last date to opt out of the Health and Dental Plan and asked the gathering to give the document a read and send their suggestions to her so it can be added before forwarding same to CGPS.

### 8. Appointment of 2 GSA Board members as per the GSA Constitution (Section 6.4)

The chair shared with given that all the current GSA executives were international students, two permanent residents or citizens of Canada had to serve on the Board, as per the Saskatchewan Non-profit Corporations Act 1995

Selina Schut and Breanne Murray put their names forward to be appointed.

*Motion to appoint Selina Schut and Breanne Murray as GSA board members. (Rengifo/Koop).*

Carried

### 9. Appointment of 2 Representatives to the University of Saskatchewan Student Forum

The chair explained that the representatives meet 4 to 5 times a year to discuss student concerns and the terms of reference are included in the September agenda document.

Lindsay Church and Mostafa Kamal put their names forward to be representatives.

*Motion to appoint Lindsay Church and Mostafa Kamal as representatives to the University of Saskatchewan Student forum. (Murray/Oldach).*

Carried

### 10. Ratification of Social Clubs for 2019/2020

Each social club was allowed a representative to briefly tell the councilors about their club before ratification.

#### A. ASHRAE

Representative: Hadi Ramin

*Motion to ratify the ASHRAE. (Fonseca/Schut).*

Carried

#### B. Bangladeshi Students' Assoc.

Representative: Husna Rahman

*Motion to ratify the Bangladeshi Students' Assoc. (Fonseca/Oldach).*

Carried

#### C. Brazilian Students' Assoc.

Representative: Jose Alvim Berkenbrock

*Motion to ratify the Brazilian Students Association of the University of Saskatchewan. (Fonseca/Murray).*

Carried

#### D. International Students' Assoc.

Representative: Akinwande Akingbehin

*Motion to ratify the International Students' Assoc. (Schulte/Fonseca).*

Carried

E. Nepalese Students' Assoc.

Representative: Pashupati Bhanddari

*Motion to ratify the Nepalese Students' Assoc. (Imran/Schut).*

Carried

F. Pakistani Students' Assoc.

Representative: Fahar Ibtisham

*Motion to ratify the Pakistani Students' Assoc. (Imran/Fonseca)*

Carried

G. U of S AAPS-American Assoc. of Pharmaceutical Scientists Chapter

Representative: Saniya Shiraz Alwani

*Motion to ratify the U of S AAPS-American Assoc. of Pharmaceutical Scientists Chapter.  
(Fonseca/Schut).*

Carried

H. USASK IEEE PES Student Branch Chapter

Representative: Alireza Zia

*Motion to ratify the USASK IEEE PES Student Branch Chapter. (Fonseca/Murray)*

Carried

I. Let's Talk Science

Representative: Jude Okolie

*Motion to ratify Let's Talk Science. (Fonseca/Rengifo).*

Carried

J. Samadhi Meditation Students' Club

Representative: Jesus Corona-Gomez

*Motion to ratify the Samadhi Meditation Students' Club. (Fonseca/Rengifo.)*

Carried

K. Tox on Tap

Representative: Alana Weber

*Motion to ratify the Tox on Tap. (Oldach/Fonseca).*

Carried

L. Women in Chemistry

Representative: Morallba Dominguez Garcia

*Motion to ratify Women in Chemistry. (Fonseca/Murray).*

Carried.1 Abstention. Rengifo

M. Nigerian Students Association

Representative: Denise Damifiberesima

*Motion to ratify the Nigerian Students Association. (Rengifo/Fonseca).*

Carried

N. Satellite Rotary Club

Representative: VP Fonseca shared some information about the social club in the absence of a representative from the club.

*Motion to ratify the Satellite Rotary Club. (Rengifo/Imran).*

Carried

O. Indian student association

Representative: Dharama Teja Yalamanchili

*Motion to ratify the Indian Students Association. (Oldach/ Fonseca).*

Carried

## 11. Other Business/Announcements

No announcements

## 12. Adjournment

*Motion to adjourn (Fonseca/Rengifo) at 6:59pm.*

Carried





