



Graduate Students' Association - University of Saskatchewan

Council Meeting Agenda

Tuesday January 28th, 2020 - GSA Commons

17:00 – 19:00

The GSA operates on Treaty 6 Territory and the Homeland of the Métis Nation. We pay our respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of our gathering place and reaffirm our relationship with one another.

#	Item	Page	Action
1	Call to Order		
2	Guests: President Peter Stoicheff Provost Tony Vannelli Dean Trever Crowe Professor Loleen Berdahl		
3	Approval of the Agenda	1	<i>Decision</i>
4	Approval of the minutes from December 3, 2019	2-13	<i>Decision</i>
5	Information to be received	14-22	<i>Decision</i>
	A. November 18, 2019, Executive meeting minutes		
6	Executive reports	23-29	<i>Information</i>
	A. Report of the President		
	B. Report of the VP External		
	C. Report of the VP Finance and Operations		
	D. Report of the VP Student Affairs		
7	Other business/Announcements		<i>Information</i>
8	Adjournment		<i>Decision</i>

Next Meeting: February 25th, 2020



University of Saskatchewan
Graduate Students' Association
GSA Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday December 3 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 officially called the council meeting to order at 5:07 pm after quorum had been met.

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

2. Guest from the University's ICT Resources

The Chief Information Officer (CIO) of the university's information and communications technology (ICT) Shari Baraniuk briefed the councillors on a few new developments. Shari started by drawing the councillors' attention to the USASK website. In the main search window, she typed CIO and selected the first link, where all the new initiatives, infrastructure, and other 2025 technology goals can be found.

The aspirations for ICT are geared towards improving student success rates during their tenure as students at USASK. Another goal is to embrace and empower creative learning, which all boils down to a simple question: how we leverage the technology of the future for a student's journey beyond their university life. (Artificial Intelligence (AI), virtual reality tech, etc.)

The University's Technology Plan 2025 was launched at the beginning of November 2019, a big part of that plan is supporting institutional excellence which is why we will be reaching out next year and throughout the 5-year journey for feedback to see how some of those commitments could be modified to better suit the university community.

Office of the ICO also provides ongoing support to our students, for example, we have updated cybersecurity information for the holiday season. There were incidents of people spoofing some of the deans and compromising some of our university colleagues' accounts so pay attention to the several tips and warnings coming from our office.

Canvas and D2L are two vendors tendering to replace blackboard. We will be reaching out to get as many people as possible for feedback as we look to finalize an appropriate replacement.

The information technology catalog is quite complete, so Shari asked councillors to take a look to make sure that the services are clear. She also wanted to know if any of the above information was a surprise to the councillors and if so asked them what a better mechanism would be to build awareness of the above updates.

Q&A:

Comment:

President Rengifo suggested that we can engage some of the students on the GSA's social media platforms, especially given that the council meeting is only a few representatives from the different academic councils and some of the student body is just more prone to social media engagement.

Question from Councillor:

In my research, I need to use high-performance computing so I tried to get help via the way of a ticket and never got a response so I followed up by going to the ICT desk at the Library and they told me the school is limited to Microsoft, so they don't have access to the type of software I was enquiring about. That being said, my question now is where can we get this kind of software?

A: I will fix the communication channel amongst my different groups. Secondly, our research computing area is targeted more to research problems like what you've articulated whereas our IT support folks are typically more for the masses and general IT support. They are supposed to triage those concerns to our research computing group, they support the research across the institution, so they have experience with all levels of software. It's unfortunate that you had that experience but will make sure this triage is better going forward.

Question from Councillor:

Is there a way that ICT services can facilitate quicker access to different software and provide some of the research support over the weekend?

A: When you go through the services catalog, you'll see our research computing support only operates

Monday to Friday. We are trying to get our IT support which operates through the weekend up to a level that they can render some research support. We are always trying to strike that balance between IT and security and what we can allow on campus, this is a work in progress so trust me when I say some of those limitations are actively being worked on.

Comment from Councillor:

As students, we all go through the software center to download the appropriate software. If the software product we're looking for is not available, I'd like to suggest that one could make a request through the software center in addition to the current protocols.

The Chair thanked Shari for her presentation and engaging councillors.

3. Approval of the Agenda

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

VP Ezekwesili asked that item 7 be moved to item 4.

Motion to amend the agenda (Ezekwesili/Fonseca)

Carried

VP Fonseca requested that the "ratification of the Iranian Student council" be added to the agenda as item 8.

Motion to amend the agenda (Fonseca/Ezekwesili)

Carried

President Rengifo requested that a discussion on Tuition be added as item 9.

Motion to amend the agenda (Rengifo/Alam)

Carried

Motion to approve the agenda as amended (Zahan/Kamal)

Carried

4. Canadian Blood Services

Brady Figley addressed the councillors, breaking down the nature of their partnership with the school and a few things about blood donations. He started by letting them know that the organization has made it their duty to reach out to all of the colleges, trying to organize a life-bus to pick up students to drop off at their center, and an hour later those students will be dropped back to school. The Canadian blood services are toying with the following dates in 2020 for a life-bus pick at the GSA: Jan 29th, Feb 19th, and March 26th.

Brady shared that 500ml of blood is taken in a session. There will be a sign-up sheet for the above dates. Brady also informed the councillors that they host blood typing events. However, the more accurate blood typing is offered on one's donor cards as donations are more thoroughly screened.

Blood donation deferrals are as follows:

- After a tattoo, there is a 3-month period before one can donate blood;
- Cannabis, while there is no deferral one has to be able to consent to the donation;
- Travel to certain regions affected by malaria will have a full year wait before they are able to donate;
- After a donation, a man has to wait for 56 days before he is able to make the next donation while a woman has an 84 day wait.

Birth control doesn't affect a woman's ability to donate.

Q & A:

Q: Have you considered collecting donations on campus instead of organizing a life-bus?

A: It's much easier at the moment to collect blood donations in our clinic. We no longer do mobile clinics. Manitoba and Saskatchewan seem to have the best strategy to date with a centralized location.

The Chair thanked Brady for addressing the councillors.

5. Approval of the minutes from November 5, 2019

Motion to approve November 5th minutes. (Badr/Fonseca)

Carried

6. Information to be received

- A) October 21, 2019, Executive meeting minutes
- B) November 4, 2019, Executive meeting minutes
- C) Governance Committee minutes from November 1, 2019
- D) Bursary Selection Committee minutes from November 6, 2019

Motion to receive agenda item 5A-D. (Murray/Katz)

Carried

7. Executive reports

A. Report of the President

President Rengifo addressed the gathering focusing on the following 2 areas:

1)The GSA commons will be open on the 25th, 27th, 30th and 31st of December 2019 to give students (both graduate and undergraduate) left in Saskatoon without the company of their loved ones a place to hang out on the holiday dates mentioned. Food and activities will also be open to the students who stop by the GSA Commons.

2)The president spoke briefly about learning sessions held in collaboration with the library on the topic of intellectual property more specifically copyright legislation. There will be more similar sessions to bolster the support of our students over the course of the winter semester as it also assists in their professional development.

There were no questions for the President.

B. Report of the VP External

VP Ezekwesili asked that councillors to check the sports schedule and cheer the GSA Guppies Volleyball and Basketball teams that are currently playing. Health chats for the month of December are as follows: "Bringing in the Bystander" 17th December from 3-4:30 pm and Zumba on the 1st and 3rd Friday from 6-7 pm. The Annual Gala will be held on the 4th of April 2020 at the Remai Modern and tickets will become available from January 2020. VP Ezekwesili also informed the councillors of the cancellation of the student choice initiative shortly after the Ontario CFS took the Ontario government to court and won.

There were no questions for VP Ezekwesili.

C. Report of the VP Finance and Operations

VP Alam shared that more than 130 bursary applications were reviewed by the Bursary Selection Committee to which 23 bursaries were awarded. Unsuccessful applicants were encouraged to reapply in future Bursary offerings as the GSA Executive continues to lobby the administration for more funding. Think grad conference will be hosted at USASK this year from Jan 23rd to 26th 2020 to discuss but not limited to issues like that of rising tuition cost.

VP Alam closed by thanking all the members who served on the Selection Committee and his fellow Executive members.

There were no questions for VP Alam.

D. Report of the VP Student Affairs

VP Fonseca informed the councillors that the Holiday social was a success and thanked all who came out to the event. Currently, VP Fonseca is working on the Winter Orientation to be held on January

16th, 20220. The goal of which is to introduce newcomers to the different services and faculty members that may be instrumental as they pursue their graduate studies.

There were no questions for VP Fonseca.

8. Ratification of The Iranian student council (ISC) as a GSA Social Club

The representative Arash Mollahosseini informed the council that the past few years the social club wasn't running but they're planning to have their first event on the 27th of December (the longest night of the year). They look forward to sharing their culture with all on campus.

Motion to ratify ISC as a GSA social club. (Fonseca/Badr)

Carried

9. Tuition Discussion

President Rengifo opened the discussion with the following:

Three (3) different bodies are responsible for most of the institution's decisions namely: University council (where a GSA Executive represents all of the graduate students), Senate (where the GSA President is the representative) and lastly, the Board of Governors. We don't have any representation on the Board of Governors, which is the group responsible for deciding tuition increase. Before a decision is made there are consultations with the deans of different colleges. The deans hold forums to engage their students and ascertain their thoughts on increasing tuition. This is then communicated to the Board of Governors so they can decide if there is a tuition increase and by how much that increase will be and what services the added funds will cover to benefit the students.

Basic consultation has just begun, and so far, they've met with the Provost and the Acting Dean of CGPS. The Provost is one of the advocates for graduate students so we can raise our concerns to them. Next year President Rengifo will present on behalf of the GSA Executives as to why tuition cost should be frozen. Every year we have seen a 3% increase, they haven't decided on the increase yet, but we want to ensure that they don't increase it too much and that those added funds actually go towards more scholarships, more funding or the other services that we need.

I may not be able to answer questions you may have but I will be able to bring your concerns up to all the deans.

President Rengifo's main concern is how this increase is going to affect the most vulnerable of our colleagues and those are the graduate students without funding. Most of those students have part-time jobs, how are they supposed to cope with the hike in cost?

Contributions from academic councillors:

Councillor - I came from the University of Toronto and expected to get a job shortly after getting to Saskatchewan to help me service the loan that I have to pay back on my undergraduate degree. I still, haven't been able to find a job. How are we supposed to bridge the gap on the already high tuition cost and the limited amount of scholarships available to me and other students in the school of public health?

President Rengifo - Thank you for your contribution I will be sure to bring up your concerns.

Councillor- Most funding we get is guaranteed for 3 years but the Ph.D. programs are usually 4 to 5 years long, before they consider such an increase, they should look into fixing current funding shortcomings.

Councillor - CGPS doesn't really listen unless you have the statistics. How much is living cost, how much do you have in funding, is the current tuition amount affordable for the average graduate student?

President Rengifo - The university has been compiling its own statistics as to the number of students who don't have funding and the number who apply for the need-based bursaries. We do have a survey that we ran to ascertain some information on the level of financial need from the graduate student community so that will also present to all the deans together with what they've been given.

Councillor- I have been on campus for the past 6 years, we can't directly compare our tuition amounts to the other U15 universities since they give more financial support to their graduate students, and not to mention some of those institutions have abolished the differential fee. Simply put, are we getting the same quality of life as the students from the other U15 universities. You are more unlikely to be able to start a family at USASK than the other Universities.

President Rengifo - I've made a note of all the points you've mentioned and just wanted to add that the University is planning on only accepting students with funding in the future to ease some of the financial instability we currently have on campus.

Councillor- The associate dean discussed two models for increasing tuition. There is the fixed increased and the variable increase. The international ranking of USASK is not comparable to the other U15 universities so why should a student here pay the median tuition cost of the U15 institutions. There is a lot more writing support for students at U-Waterloo than what is currently offered to our students as a former student there. While anecdotal it speaks to the little things that USASK can implement so that our program is on par with the other U15 institutions to legitimately consider the proposed tuition hike.

Councillor- I think the government withheld some of their funds in the last few years but now they are going to start those funds again. My question is how those funds are going to be used, will the university offer more scholarships, or will they offer larger scholarships to better help the graduate student population?

President Rengifo ended the discussions by letting the councillors know that on January 28th the President of the University will be at the GSA commons so please come out and participate in those discussions.

10. Other Business/Announcements

VP Fonseca invited councillors to be a part of the University's wellness project which was seeking graduate student to be a part of a 90-minute informal discussion focused on teaching and learning practices when it comes to mental health and student wellbeing. Food will be provided.

6 or 7 graduate students on 16th Dec (9:00-11:00 am), Tuesday 17th (9:00-12:00 pm), and on Thursday 19th (1:00-4:00 pm).

The Chair thanked all councillors for their participation this term, the Council Secretary for his assistance and the Executives for their leadership. The Chair asked new councillors who had questions to come see her after the meeting.

11. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn (Rengifo/Alam) at 6:33 pm.

Carried

Appendix A

Academic Council	Name of Councillors and (alternates)	Sep.24 2019	Oct.15 2019	Nov.5 2019	Dec.3 2019	Jan.28 2020	Feb.25 2020	Mar.17 2020	Apr.7 2020	Jun. 2020	Aug. 2020
Agricultural and Resources Economics (ARE) Graduate Student Association	Ran San (Valentina Ofori)	N/A	P	P	P						
Animal & Poultry Science Grad Students' Assoc.	Muhammad Imran (Kiana Rieger)	P	A	P	A						
ARCHAIA	Adrienne Ratuszniak (Michelle Gowan)	P	P	A	A						
Biology Graduate Student Association	Rebecca Smith (Ruth Greuel) (Carmen Marquez) (Andrea Wishart)	N/A	P	P	P						
Chemistry Course Council	Naheda Sahtout (Doug Fansher)	P	P	P	P						
College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Anatomy, Physiology & Pharmacology	Kushagra Parolia (Andrew Roebuc)	N/A	N/A	N/A	A						
College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Biochemistry, Microbiology & Immunology	Sampurna Ghosh (Megha Rohamar)	N/A	N/A	N/A	A						
College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Community Health & Epidemiology	Harini Aiyer (N/A)	N/A	N/A	N/A	A						
College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Health Sciences	Michael Zaki (N/A)	N/A	N/A	N/A	A						
Computer Science Graduate Council (CSGC)	Rifat Zahan Muhammad Aminul Islam (Md. Nadim)	N/A	p	p	P						

Academic Council	Name of Councillors and (alternates)	Sep.24 2019	Oct.15 2019	Nov.5 2019	Dec.3 2019	Jan.28 2020	Feb.25 2020	Mar.17 2020	Apr.7 2020	Jun. 2020	Aug. 2020
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Biological	Tumpa Sarker (Peyman Alizadeh)	N/A	N/A	N/A	A						
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Biomedical	Subashree Srinivasan (N/A)	N/A	N/A	N/A	A						
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Chemical	Shahab Minaei (Khaled, Zoroufchi Benis)	N/A	N/A	N/A	P						
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Civil, Geological & Environmental	Ajay Shrinivas Muthukumar (Mohanad Zaghloul)	N/A	N/A	N/A	P						
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Electrical & Computer	Karim Shahbazi (Jose Alvim Berkenbrock)	N/A	N/A	N/A	P						
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Mechanical	Alireza Razmavar (Hadi Ramin)	N/A	N/A	N/A	P						
English Course Council	Lindsay Church (Michelle Kent)	P	P	P	R						
Geography & Planning Grad Council	Selena Schut (Renata Leonhardt)	P	A	P	P						
Graduate Geological Society (GGS)	James Schulte (Brayden McDonald)	P	P	P	R						
Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy Students' Association	Manreet Kaur Nehal (Syed Adnand Khalid)	N/A	N/A	P	R						
Kinesiology Graduate Student Council	Natasha Boyes (Natalie Houser)	P	P	P	P						

Academic Council	Name of Councillors and (alternates)	Sep.24 2019	Oct.15 2019	Nov.5 2019	Dec.3 2019	Jan.28 2020	Feb.25 2020	Mar.17 2020	Apr.7 2020	Jun. 2020	Aug. 2020
MBARC	Alexander Mueller (Megan MacDonald)	N/A	N/A	P	P						
PEGASUS	Kimberlee Dube (Ethan Runge)	P	P	P	P						
Pharmacy & Nutrition Graduate Students' Council	Janine Rover (Mujtaba Badr)	P	P	P	P						
Physical Therapy Student Society (PTSS)	Julia Koop (Brandey Blahut)	P	P	P	P						
Plant Sciences GSA	Asanka Godakanda (Berenice Romero)	P	P	P	P						
Psychology Graduate Students' Association	Farron Wielinga (Josh Katz) (Brandon Sparks)	P	P	R	P						
SENSA	Mostofa Kamal Purbasha Mistry (Layane Moura) (Anita Bhatt)	P	P	P	P						
SPHSA	Aisha Sajid Humaira Inam (Janessa Tom) (Chunbei Liu)	N/A	N/A	P	P						
Sociology GSA	Connor Morrison (Cerah Dube) (Alana Demkiw)	N/A	P	P	A						
Soil Science Graduate Student Association	Rachel Brockamp (Aimee Schryer)	P	P	P	P						

Academic Council	Name of Councillors and (alternates)	Sep.24 2019	Oct.15 2019	Nov.5 2019	Dec.3 2019	Jan.28 2020	Feb.25 2020	Mar.17 2020	Apr.7 2020	Jun. 2020	Aug. 2020
Toxicology Graduate Students' Association	Mikayla Oldach (Alana Weber)	P	P	R	P						
Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCVI) GSA	Breanne Murray (Zeyad El Karsh)	P	P	P	P						
Exec. President	Mery Mendoza Rengifo	P	P	P	P						
Exec. VP Finance and Operations	Mohammad Wajih Alam	P	P	P	P						
Exec. VP Student Affairs	Alejandra Fonseca	P	P	P	P						
Exec. VP External	Chiamaka Ezekwesili	P	P	P	P						



University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association

Executive Meeting Minutes

November 18, 2019

Present: Mery Mendoza (President), Mohammad Wajih Alam (VP Finance and Operations), Chiamaka Ezekwesili (VP External), Alejandra Fonseca (VP Student Affairs).

Regrets: None

Absent: None

Guest: Stephane Kiefer, Jensen Cherewyk

1. Call to Order / Opening Remarks

The President called the meeting to order at 5:04 pm. The President thanked the executives for working hard and for being on top of all the things.

2. Approval of the Agenda

The President asked if there were any additions or amendments to the agenda as circulated.

The President added the following items for action/information:

Holiday Hangout

Vice President's Annual Christmas reception,

Holiday Cards for Staff, Gift for CGPS,

Mental health workshop.

The VP Finance and Operations added:

Tox on Tap funding request

Motion: To approve the agenda as amended.

Moved: President; Seconded: VP External.

Vote All in Favour, Motion carried.

3. Items for Action

3.1 Physical Therapy Student Society (PTSS) funding request

The VP Finance and Operations received a funding request from the PTSS (Physical Therapy Student Society) and invited one of the PTSS executives to join the GSA Executive Meeting. Stephane Kiefer attended on behalf of PTSS. The President welcomed Stephane to the GSA Executive meeting and asked for a brief description of the event. Stephane explained that the Physical Therapy Student Society (PTSS) hosted their annual 2019 Fall Formal at the University of Saskatchewan campus on November 15th, 2019. The event was open to all first and second year Master of Physical Therapy (MPT) students, their guests, and the faculty of the School of Rehabilitation Science, within the College of Medicine. This event fosters relationships between students and their professors, which aids in creating strong connections and communication in the classroom and clinically. It had a strong focus around celebrating the achievements of both the MPT students and professors, as awards were given to those based on their academic and clinical successes, as well as community participation. The overall aim of this event was to express their appreciation for and recognize students who have continually exhibited a strong work ethic and passion for the physical therapy profession both academically and clinically. This will enhance student body morale and promote further involvement, participation, professionalism, and growth within their graduate program. The President thanked Stephane for giving details of the event and opened the floor for questions.

The VP Student Affairs asked how many students attended. Stephane explained 113 students attended in total among which 38 students were graduate students. VP Finance and Operations asked if only students taking their first and second year were allowed to attend, and what would happen if a student is in their third year. Stephane mentioned that this event was only open to first and second year students this year but they will be considering having third year students in next year's event. The President asked if the amount of money request to GSA has changed since the event already took place. Stephane replied that although the event took place already, the funding support from GSA would help cover the cost of this event as they used money that was budgeted for other activities. The President mentioned that when the GSA sponsors an event, the GSA logo is expected to be on the posters and an announcement should be made at the event.

The President indicated that the decision is based on the budget and not on the event and thanked Stephane for providing the proposal and further information. She communicated that the decision will be made and will be communicated via email.

Motion: to approve funding in the amount of \$375 for this event

Moved: VP Finance and Operations; Seconded: VP Student Affairs

Vote All in Favour, Motion carried.

3.2 Tox on Tap funding request

The VP Finance and Operations received a funding request from the Tox on Tap (ToT) social club and invited one of their executives to join the GSA Executive Meeting. Jensen Cherewyk attended on behalf of Tox on Tap. The President welcomed Jenzen to the GSA Executive meeting and asked for a brief description of the event. Tox on Tap (ToT) is a toxicology graduate student group that aims to bring together the scientific community and the community to discuss topics related to toxicology and engage people in subjects such as cannabinoids, environmental spills, pharmaceuticals, water contamination, among others, in a casual setting. ToT is requesting funds for four events that will be held on the current academic year. ToT members organize free Talks every two months (four Talks per year, as summer is quiet). By having these talks in a casual setting, such as a pub, it makes the environment more relaxed for graduate students to learn something new and get away from stress for an evening. The President thanked Jenzen for explaining more about the event and opened the floor for questions.

The VP Finance and Operations asked how long the Talks event is, how they choose the venue and how many people usually attend these Talks. Jenzen explained that these talks are typically 20 minutes long and around 80 people attend each event; the venue varies but they are trying to have a fixed venue. The VP Finance and Operations asked how they select the speakers for these talks. Jenzen explained that there are number of variables that play a role in selecting the speaker. But mostly it comes down to the topic and who is available. The President asked if they have looked for other funding sources. They have asked for funding to GIFS and GIWS and they will be getting

some sort of support from these organization. The VP Student Affairs asked about the frequency of these talks. Jenzen mentioned that they are planning 4 talks per year.

The President mentioned that when the GSA sponsors an event, the GSA logo is expected to be on the posters and an announcement should be made at the event. The President indicated that the decision is based on the budget and not on the event and thanked Jenzen for providing the proposal and further information. She communicated that the decision will be made and will be communicated via email.

Motion: to request details for each event (for example location/date/budget).

Moved: VP Student Affairs; Seconded: President

Vote All in Favour, Motion carried.

3.3 Search for Associate Dean, Research and Faculty Relation for Edwards School of Business

The President mentioned that the Executive Assistant to the Dean of Edwards School of Business is working on the formation of the search committee for the Associate Dean, Research and Faculty Relation for Edwards School of Business. The GSA appoints a graduate student to represent graduate students in this committee. The President mentioned that it is reasonable to appoint an academic councillor from the Edwards School of Business to sit on this committee. As such, she contacted both academic councillors from the Edwards School of Business and Alexander Mueller has agreed to serve on this committee and represent graduate students.

Motion: to approve graduate student Alexander Mueller to sit on this committee.

Moved: VP Student Affairs; Seconded: President

Vote All in Favour, Motion carried.

3.4 GSA retreat

Pertaining to the conversations in previous executive meetings, the VP Finance and Operations wanted to further discuss the purpose of the retreat and the rationale behind hosting it at

Waskesiu Lake. The President mentioned that the retreat is a way of getting all the staff together to reflect on what has worked and what hasn't worked during the year, build strong connections between the coordinators, staff and Executive as well as discuss both short-term and long-term GSA goals among others. We all agreed on the importance of a retreat but the location for the retreat was discussed. Last year it was hold in Waskesiu Lake but the VP Finance and Operations is concerned about expenses and inclusivity. We want to include the GSA Chair and Secretary to the retreat but may not be financially possible if we do a retreat far away from Saskatoon. Therefore, the executives decided to change the location and date of the retreat to the GSA commons. The VP Finance and Operations will contact the Office Manager to book the GSA commons on Feb 15-17 and inform the coordinators about this change. To make this more inclusive and bring more perspective, the President also suggested to invite all six GSA Board of Directors to this retreat. All executives were in favour of inviting them.

Motion: to approve the change of location of the February GSA Retreat from Waskesiu Lake to the GSA Commons.

Moved: VP Finance and Operations; Seconded: VP Student Affairs

Vote All in Favour, Motion carried.

3.5 Funding request Deadlines

The VP Finance and Operations mentioned that there should be a deadline to submit receipts for reimbursement for social clubs/academic councils who have successfully hosted an event sponsored by the GSA. The VP finance and Operations suggested that they can submit receipts within two weeks after the event is held. All executives agreed with the timeline.

Motion: to approve the timeline of up to two weeks to submit a reimbursement receipt after an event sponsored by GSA is hosted.

Moved: VP Finance and Operations; Seconded: President

Vote All in Favour, Motion carried.

3.6 Holiday Hangout event

The President mentioned that the University closes on December during holidays as such, services on campus are also closed and many students and faculty members are affected from it. There is a need within the university community to have open spaces on campus where everyone can join and participate on activities that promote mental health and well-being. The GSA is supporting a collaborative initiative called Holiday Hangout that will take place at the GSA commons on December 25, 27, 30 and 31. The VP External has volunteered to cover the shift on December 25 and on the remaining days, because all executives will be away, a coordinator will be hired but the GSA commons space will be given for free. We will be promoting this event via GSA website, newsletter and social media. The GSA is also sponsoring \$200 to cover expenses of the activities of this initiative.

Motion: to support the holiday hangout in an amount of \$200.

Moved: VP Student Affairs; Seconded: President

Vote All in Favour, Motion carried.

4. Items for Information / Discussion

4.1 GSA Bursaries

The VP Finance and Operations mentioned that the GSA Bursary committee met on Wednesday, November 6, 2019 at 4 PM to evaluate the applications. The GSA received 134 bursaries applications and only a limited number of students received this support due to limited funding available. Both successful and unsuccessful applicants will be contacted by the end of November. The President congratulated the VP Finance and Operations as well as the VP Student Affairs for the work he has done with the bursary selection.

4.2 Canadian Blood Services

The VP External mentioned that the Canadian Blood Services (CBS) contacted her to review the partnership between CBS and the GSA. CBS is a non-profit organization that ensure patients have reliable access to blood and other biological products obtained from and in a safe way. They collect plasma and blood from volunteers from the community including the university community. This

university attracts students and professionals from all over the world which enriches our community in different ways, including the blood type variety. We want to continue our partnership with CBS and add more support by facilitating and connecting the campus community with the CBS. In fact, CBS provides free bus service for volunteers and with the renewal of this partnership, the Commons will act as the centre point at the University of Saskatchewan. The VP External will provide a sign-up sheet to Candace where the students who are willing to donate blood, would be able to drop-by and sign-up to take the bus service for free. The current Executive agreed that this partnership can be renewed every year upon agreement of each Executive team.

4.3 Annual Gala

The VP External mentioned that the tickets for the GSA Annual Gala were already printed. She mentioned that the emcee has been defined and contacted. Discussions about hiring a pianist during the interim of the activities were discussed. The VP Finance and Operations suggested to ask the DJ of the event to play soft music during such breaks as this is more financially beneficial. All executives congratulated her for being on top of the Gala event.

4.4 Author rights session (library)

The President mentioned that she had contacted the Associate Dean of Library, Rachel Sarjeant-Jenkins, to discuss the possibility of hosting a workshop on Author Rights and Copyright at the GSA Commons. The President further mentioned that a workshop session will be scheduled for November 27th at 1PM and another one will possible be hosted next winter term. The President will provide more information as it becomes available.

4.5 Co-Curricular Record (CCR) meeting

The President mentioned that a meeting is scheduled with one of the employment Coordinators of Career Development and Employment, on Monday, November 25, 2019 at the GSA Commons at 4PM to gather more information about CCR. All executives are encouraged to participate and bring their question to this meeting.

4.6 Microphone for the ear

VP External and the VP Student Affairs have asked in previous executive meetings if an on-ear microphone can be purchased for events such as Zumba and 3 minute thesis competition that require frequent movements. The VP Finance and Operations discussed this with the Office Manager who showed safety concerns and explained that, for sanitary purposes, microphones should be personal. As such, the VP Finance and Operations was looking for other alternatives and would be discussing further with the Office Manager to see if, unavailable on the GSA commons, clip-on portable microphones will be purchased.

4.7 Vice President's Annual Christmas reception

The President mentioned that all executives have been invited to the Vice President's Annual Christmas reception which is scheduled for Thursday, 12 December 2019 from 6:30 PM to 10:00 PM (CST) to be held on Sheraton Cavalier Saskatoon Hotel. The president encouraged executives who will still be in Saskatoon to attend this reception.

4.8 Holiday Cards for GSA Staff and CGPS partners

As it is usually done every year, we are looking for alternatives to give appreciation to the GSA staff and coordinators for the hard work they have done throughout the year. Therefore, the GSA would be distributing holiday wish card and gift cards to the coordinators and staff of the GSA. Furthermore, the President also suggested to give gifts to CGPS staff to show appreciation for their collaboration and support towards students.

4.9 Mental health workshop

The President mentioned that the GSA in collaboration with PSAC is provide a Mental Health workshop on November 20th, from 3PM to 6PM at GSA commons for graduate students and post-doctoral fellows. All graduate students and executives are encouraged to attend. Free coffee/snacks will be provided.

5. Other Business

6. Confidential Session

7. In Camera Session

8. Adjournment of Meeting

The President asked whether there was any other business arising. There were none.

Motion: To adjourn the meeting

Moved: VP External; Seconded: VP Student Affairs

Vote All in Favour, Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 PM



University of Saskatchewan Graduate Students' Association

President's Report - GSA Council Meeting, January 2020

Dear GSA Councilors,

I hope you enjoyed your Holiday Season and have all had a great start to 2020. I hope this year brings you success in your studies and research. Please, find below a brief update on some of the recent activities and ongoing projects:

- **Graduate Student Handbook**
- **Holiday Hangout 2019**

1. Graduate Student Handbook

Universities across Canada have developed specific student handbooks for their departments. Following this initiative, we want to implement a student graduate handbook. In the previous month, we have met with senior administration to discuss the next steps to start developing a Graduate Student Handbook for the college of graduate and Postdoctoral studies. We have already selected a group of handbooks to serve as a template to start the work. We want to continue working on this and other initiatives with the CGPS team that ultimately are in the benefit of graduate students.

2. Holiday Hangout 2019

As some you may have heard, the Holiday Hangout was a success. Around 80-100 people showed up every day and we are really thankful for our sponsors, the people who supported and the volunteers who took the time to make this event a success. We want to continue promoting mental health and hope this becomes a permanent fixture at our University.

We will continue working on initiatives that support the academic success of our graduate students and campus community as a whole. We welcome you back to campus and look forward to working together.

Thank you,

Mery Mendoza

President, Graduate Students' Association



Graduate Students' Association
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January 2020

RE: VP External's Report to Council

Dear Council Members,

Please find below my January report to council:

1) **GSA Guppies**

We are excited to report that **the GSA Guppies are working on participating in Futsal and volleyball/basketball. Please watch this space for more information.**

2) **Health chats**

There are plans to increase the number of health chats for the GSA in collaboration with services available on campus and Student wellness centre. The following listed are the health chats available for the Winter Term to be held in the GSA commons.

	Date	Time
Inquiring minds	January 23 rd	1pm – 4pm
Safe TALK	February 11 th	1pm – 4pm
Navigating difficult situations	February 12 th	9am – 11:30am
Mental Health First Aid (2-day training)	TBD	TBD
Zumba (Eventbrite)	TBD	TBD
Naloxone Training	TBD	TBD

3) **Gala Preparations**

The gala preparations are ongoing. It will be held April 4th, 2020 and our venue to be is the Remai Modern and tickets are on sale. You can purchase your tickets from the GSA Office Manager's desk. Also, the nominations are open. Please inform graduate students in your departments. Please visit the GSA website for more information.

4) **Zumba Classes**

The GSA executives have decided to add a little bit of fun while exercising. We are planning a Zumba class to be held Twice a month, usually Fridays (it will be stated in the GSA Events Calendar on the website). This starts from 5pm to 6pm. Please watch out on the newsletter to start registering.

5) **Diversity Committee meeting**

Diversity Committees Projects for the academic year 2019-2020

1. Installation of world maps with the GSA logo and the Diversity Committee's name, where any student can put a pin/dot on their country of origin, to be posted on each grad student lounge all over campus.

- Any student can add a short fun fact about their country of origin.
- The purpose of this activity is for the world map will foster a sense of inclusion among grad students.

2. Preparation of short articles to be posted at the different grad student lounges on campus

- These articles or fact sheets will be about each diverse minority groups on campus.
- Each article will be one page and will be anything from helpful information for a particular minority group to fun facts about a specific country.
- The articles will be changed either bi-weekly or monthly.

3. The Diversity committee is preparing for an event to be held in March 2020

- Event will be a themed potluck, each dish representing a different country.
- There are conversations about having a speaker on the event to present about diversity.
- Music will be provided by volunteers from the different ethnic groups on campus.

6) **Sustainability Committee meeting**

- *Minutes from last meeting*

Discussed measures to make the campus more sustainable;

- How to tackle post-harvest food loss? For instance, measures to reduce food waste from campus culinary services like Marquis hall, Agri cafe etc.
- Reduce the usage of paper - GSA Calendar can be replaced with an app which will be provided with all relevant information.
- Garbage bin should be separated into organic and non-organic bin.
- Measures to reduce the carbon footprint of electricity.

- *Event*

- Decided to conduct a documentary night – documentaries or short films which depicts the reality of climate change and its consequences and importance of sustainability will be featured.
- We are also planning to get a guest speaker to talk about climate change realities.
- The event can also be combined with student poster or one-minute video competitions on sustainability.
- Snacks and drinks will be provided.

7) **Meetings**

The following is a list of some meetings/events since May 2019.

S/N	Meetings
1	GSA Executive Retreat
2	Academic Programs Committee Meeting
3	CGPS COUNCIL
4	Provost advisory Committee
5	Student forum
6	DSC Committee Meeting
7	Grad Academic Affairs Committee Meeting
8	Equity and International Committee
9	University Council Meeting
10	Faith Leaders Council
11	U of S convocation
12	72nd Semi-Annual National General Meeting of the Canadian Federation of Students and Canadian Federation of Students at Ottawa
13	Parents on Campus Meeting
14	GSA Academic Council Meeting
15	GSA Executive Meeting
16	Senate meeting



University of Saskatchewan Graduate Students' Association

Monthly Report from the VP Finance and Operations (January 2020)

Good Evening GSA members,

I am pleased to report you an update on my activities as the current Vice-President Finance and Operations.

I would like to thank the Office Manager and the executives who have done an extraordinary effort during the past months. I would also like to thank Naheda who has been available to answer questions to help me with her past experience in this role. As a team we have done everything, that practically the most essential work in this portfolio is up to date. Additionally, I have actively participated in the selection of the recipients of the Best and Brightest Award for undergraduate students as a committee member of the Scholarships and Awards Committee. Furthermore, a meeting with a representative of StudentCare (our Health and Dental Insurance provider) will take place soon to talk about Health and Dental coverage. Moreover, I am organizing a meeting with the Budget and Finance Committee members to look at next year's budget. Also, the need-based bursary dates for Winter term will be announced soon.

Finally, I would like to invite GSA members to participate in the different activities organized by the GSA that can be looked at the GSA Calendar in our website.

<https://gsa.usask.ca/events/calendar.php>

Please feel free to contact me at gsa.fin@usask.ca or speak to me anytime at the Commons should you have any questions or need any further clarification.

Sincerely,

Mohammad Wajih Alam

Vice-President Finance and Operations

Graduate Students' Association

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Dear Council Members:

Please find below my December-January report to council.

1) Winter Orientation

The GSA Winter Orientation will be hosted January 16th, 2020. The objective of this Orientation is to introduce incoming grad students to the different services and faculty that they might use during or have contact with them during, their journey at the University. The orientation will be conducted from 3:30PM-6:00 PM and all is already planned and ready to go.

2) Graduate Research Conference

This year the Graduate Research Conference theme is "Behaviour, Society & Technology: A glimpse of current research approaches". It will be hosted on February 13 and 14, 2020 at the GSA commons. It has been divided into four very general sessions: Behavior, Society, Health, Technology and Environment. The theme of the conference is very broad in order to include as many fields of research as possible. A call for abstracts was sent in early January and currently I am working on contacting potential keynote speakers.

3) Meetings

The following is an updated list of meetings and workshops I have attended, since the last report to Council:

Date	Meeting
November 29, 2019	Meeting with the Provost and CGPS Dean
December 3, 2019	GSA Council Meeting
December 4, 2019,	Graduate Academic Affairs Committee Meeting
December 6, 2019	USSU-GSA Meeting
December 9, 2019	Executive Meeting
December 12, 2019	Senate Education Committee Meeting
December 19, 2019	University Council Meeting