



Graduate Students' Association - University of Saskatchewan
Council Meeting Agenda
Tuesday January 26th, 2021 – WebEx Meeting
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	Guest: Robyn Paches, Program Manager, Studentcare		
3	Appointment of Temporary Alternate Council Chair		
4	Approval of the Agenda	1	<i>Decision</i>
5	Approval of the minutes from December 8, 2020	2-8	<i>Decision</i>
6	Information to be received	9-17	<i>Decision</i>
	A. December 3, 2020, Executive meeting minutes		
	B. January 14, 2021, Executive meeting minutes		
7	Executive reports	18-25	<i>Information</i>
	A. Report of the President		
	B. Report of the VP Academic and Student Affairs		
	C. Report of the VP External Affairs		
	D. Report of the VP Indigenous Engagement		
8	Appointment of GSA VP Finance and Operations		<i>Decision</i>
9	Election of GSA Chair and Chief Electoral Officer		<i>Decision</i>
10	Other business/Announcements		<i>Information</i>
11	Adjournment		<i>Decision</i>

Next Meeting: February 23rd, 2021



University of Saskatchewan
Graduate Students' Association
Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday December 8 2020. WebEx Meeting*

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

**WebEx Meeting: The December 8th, 2020 Council Meeting took place via WebEx due to the global health pandemic of COVID-19, where the Government of Saskatchewan made directives to practice social distancing in order to curb the spread of the virus.*

1. Call to Order

All Council Members were emailed the Agenda package, as well as the WebEx meeting link with the meeting number and password to participate online. The University of Saskatchewan sustainability strategy was also attached to the same email. The Chair of Council officially welcomed Members of Council to the meeting and called the meeting to order at 5:01 PM after quorum for the meeting had been met. Ms. Asiyah Suchak, the Secretary of Council compiled the meeting minutes.

2. Approval of Agenda

The Chair asked if there were any amendments to the Agenda as circulated. No amendments were put forward.

Motion to approve the agenda. (Gill/Inam)

Carried

3. Guest from Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) – Jesse Todd

The Chair introduced the speaker who gave his presentation.

President Inam: How would students get into contact with PSAC if they had a conflict in regard to their agreement?

PSAC Representative: Email is best. Documents can be unclear so I can help as a resource who can get students through their employment experience.

President Inam: What is the tuition consultation process for the university?

PSAC Representative: Academic and employment is separate so they would not consult PSAC, but it does directly affect us as the more tuition is, the more it takes out of the pockets of graduate students. PSAC acts as a resource because we have organizational power. We were going to host a rally about the tuition increases before Covid-19, but everything got put on pause. My email is toddj@psac-afpc.com so you can reach me here for any future questions.

4. Approval of Minutes from November 10, 2020

The Chair asked if there were any suggested changes before the minutes were approved.

President Imam had a minor amendment, which the Chair assured her would be fixed right away. The Chair asked if there were any other amendments, there was none.

Motion to approve the November 10, 2020 minutes. (Mellidez/Ramin).

Carried

5. Guest from the University of Saskatchewan Office of Sustainability – Sustainability Strategy

Dr. Creed gave her presentation.

Councillor: Are you able to speak to diverse learners?

Dr. Creed: The belief is that to serve that community we need to be much more flexible in the way we deliver our programs, and the learning community is diverse.

Councillor: What are the University's goals for carbon emission reduction? The goals for carbon emissions reduction are easier made than achieved. Has there been thought put into achieving this 40% reduction goal and if there are any concrete strategies?

Dr. Creed: I am quite serious about achieving the commitments when I propose these changes. They have to be approved by the three bodies of government of the university. The first step is to work on an implementation strategy done through hiring a sustainability advisor and everyone has to come together to work with the City, Indigenous people and the Province as a whole. There are small ways such as lighting and fixtures and big ways such as changing the energy source. I have a list of ideas already, but I am also hoping graduate student will become involved.

Councillor: Will there be another round of engagement with the community, the City and the university once it is approved?

Dr. Creed: Of course. We had already planned this but Covid-19, put a pin in that so we decided to look towards approval and then again, the student body community and City once we are able to meet in public again for discussions.

The chair asked if there were any more questions. There were no further questions for Dr. Creed. The Chair thanked her for her presentation.

6. Guest from the College of Graduate and Post-Doctoral Studies (CGPS) – Dean, Debby Burshtyn

The Chair introduced the Dean of CGPS who gave her presentation. There was a question for the Dean.

Councillor: What efforts are going to be made to include people with disabilities as a community in the university?

Dean Burshtyn: This is definitely a systemic issue, but it is not a uniform one. When it comes to Equity Diversity Inclusion (EDI) we talk about training and awareness, which is fundamental, but it is not enough. I need to learn what the barriers are that are being put up, what are the obstacles that need to be pulled down. There has been a shift towards creating an inclusive environment. It has to be a safe place for these problems to come forward and be brought out. I cannot make sweeping judgements, but I do understand that communication is a barrier. One of the strategic priorities for the Associate Dean is to consult with students and employees to find out what these barriers are and what can be done to bring them down.

The Chair asked if there were any other questions for the Dean. As there were none, she thanked the Dean for coming out to present. The Dean asked the GSA to email any problems to her. The Chair thanked her for her time and presentation.

7. Approval of minutes from November 20, 2020 from the Elections and Referenda Committee

Motion to approve the November 20, 2020 minutes of the Elections and Referenda Committee. (Ramin/Kroeker).

Carried

8. Approval of Minutes from November 2020 Bursary Selection committee

Motion to approve the minutes from November 2020, Bursary Selection Committee (Mellidez/Inam)

Carried

9. Information to be received

- a. Executive meeting minutes from November 5, 2020

Motion to receive agenda item 9a (Mellidez/Gill)

- b. Executive meeting minutes from November 19, 2020

Motion to receive agenda item 9b (Gill/Ramin).

Carried

10. GSA Executives Report

a. President's Report

The President presented her report to Council. There were no questions for President Inam.

b. Vice President Finance and Operations Report

The Vice President Finance and Operations presented his report to Council. There were no questions for VP Ramin.

c. Vice President Academic and Student Affairs Report

The Vice President Academic and Student Affairs presented her report to Council. There were no questions for VP Mellidez.

d. Vice President External Affairs Report

The Vice President External Affairs presented his report to Council. There were no questions for VP Gill.

11. Other Business/Announcement

Councillor: It relates to the UPASS. I'm with the Soil Science Student Graduate Association (SSGSA) and my student group feels like there should be a better way to opt out for students in SK.

President Inam: Although it is not ideal, it is the compromise that had to be made in order to serve all students as SaskTransit made it challenging. This was the best compromise that we could come up with. I would be happy to discuss it further over email via gsa.pres@usask.ca

12. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 6:32 pm. (Gill/Sajid)

Carried

Appendix A

Academic Council	Name of Councillors and (alternates)	Sep.22 2020	Oct.10 2019	Nov.10 2020	Dec.8 2020	Jan.26 2021	Feb.23 2021	Mar.16 2021	Apr.6 2021	Jun. 2021	Aug. 2021
Agricultural and Resources Economics (ARE) Graduate Student Association	Darnell Holt (Chloe Smith Lopez)	N/A	N/A	P	P						
ARCHAIA	Taylor Eagle (Angela Burant)	N/A	N/A	N/A	P						
Biology Graduate Student Association	Mercy Harris (Dylan Baloun) (Joseph Abrams)	P	P	P	P						
Chemistry Course Council	Iyanu Kumayon Doug Fansher	N/A	P	P	A						
College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Anatomy, Physiology & Pharmacology	Kayla J. Cropper (Kushagra Parolia)	N/A	P	P	P						
College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Biochemistry, Microbiology & Immunology	Gabrielle Mercier (Ashley Sutherland)	N/A	P	P	P						
College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Community Health & Epidemiology	Amanda Gannon (Azadeh Nazeran)	N/A	P	P	P						
College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Health Sciences	Elyse Proulx-Cullen (Una Goncin)	N/A	P	P	P						
Computer Science Graduate Council (CSGC)	Fidelia Orji Saikat Mondal (Sristy Sumana Nath)	A	P	P	P						

Academic Council	Name of Councillors and (alternates)	Sep.22 2020	Oct.20 2020	Nov.10 2020	Dec.8 2020	Jan.26 2021	Feb.23 2021	Mar.16 2021	Apr.6 2021	Jun. 2021	Aug. 2021
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Biological	Ninu Kallingal Mohandas (Tahereh Najib)	N/A	P	P	P						
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Biomedical	Arman Haghanifar (Alizadeh Sardroud)	N/A	P	P	P						
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Chemical	Fahimeh Esmi (Khaled, Zoroufchi Benis)	N/A	P	P	P						
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Civil, Geological & Environmental	Ajay Shrinivas Muthukumar (Hamed Beiranvand Mohammad)	N/A	P	P	P						
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Electrical & Computer	Karim Shahbazi (Mahdiyar Molahasani)	N/A	P	P	P						
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Mechanical	Tonye Jack (Alireza Razmavar)	N/A	P	P	P						
English Course Council	Tricia Monsour (Darius Simonot) (Amanda Burrows)	N/A	P	R	P						
Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy Students' Association	Brady Kroeker (Ahmed Abunada)	N/A	A	P	P						
Kinesiology Graduate Student Council	Natalie Houser (KC Hall)	P	P	P	P						

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Physical and Engineering Physics -PEGASUS	Kimberlee Dube (Nicholas Simonson)	N/A	N/A	N/A	P						
Pharmacy & Nutrition Graduate Students' Council	Sukanya Pati (Ayat Zagzoog)	N/A	N/A	P	R						
Physical Therapy Student Society (PTSS)	Matthew Reichert Cherise Schlekewy	N/A	N/A	P	P						
SENSA	Mostofa Kamal Mariana Campos (Jaclyn Porter) (Rory Wheat)	N/A	P	A	A						
SPHSA	Aisha Sajid Maha Khan (Maggie Coupland) (Daniel Medina)	N/A	P	P	P						
Sociology GSA	Connor Morrison Maria Cruz (Alana Demkiw)	P	P	A	P						
Soil Science Graduate Student Association	Amy Jimmo (Aimée Schryer)	N/A	P	A	P						
Toxicology Graduate Students' Association	Alana Weber (Jensen Cherewyk)	A	R	P	P						
Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCVM) GSA	Miranda Zwiefelhofer Michelle Tucker Jennifer Abi Younes	P	P	A	P						

Academic Council	Name of Councillors and (alternates)	Sep.22 2020	Oct.20 2020	Nov.10 2020	Dec.8 2020	Jan.26 2021	Feb.23 2021	Mar.16 2021	Apr.6 2021	Jun. 2021	Aug. 2021
Exec. President	Humaira Inam	P	P	P	P						
Exec. VP Finance and Operations	Hadi Ramin	P	P	P	P						
Exec. VP Academic and Student Affairs	Carmen Marquez Mellidez	R	P	R	P						
Exec. VP External Affairs	Qasim Shahzad Gill	P	P	P	P						
Exec. VP Indigenous Engagement	Tina Alexis	N/A	N/A	N/A	P						



**University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association
Executive Meeting Minutes
December 3, 2020**

Present: Humaira Inam (President), Hadi Ramin (VP Finance and Operations), Qasim Gill (VP External Affairs), Carmen Marquez (VP Academic and Student Affairs), Tina Alexis (VP Indigenous Engagement).

Regrets/Absent: None.

Guest: Raina Kim, Multicultural Student Association President

1. Call to Order / Opening Remarks

The President called the meeting to order at 5:40 PM. She also welcomed Raina Kim, the Multicultural Student Association President. The President asked all the executives to introduce themselves to the new Vice President of Indigenous Engagement, Tina Alexis, and welcomed her on board.

2. Approval of the Agenda

The President asked whether there were any additions or amendments to the agenda as circulated. Seeing none, the President asked for a:

Motion to approve the agenda as circulated was moved by the VP Academic and Student Affairs and seconded by the VP Indigenous Engagement. Vote: Passed.

**5 in Favour
Motion Carried.**

3. Approval of the November 19, 2020, Executive Meetings Minutes

The President asked whether there were any further amendments to November 19, 2020 Meeting Minutes. Seeing none, the President asked for a:

Motion to approve November 19, 2020, Executive Meeting Minutes was moved by VP Academic and Student Affairs and seconded by VP External Affairs. Vote: Passed.

**4 in Favour and 1 Abstain.
Motion Carried.**

4. Items for action

4.1 MSA Funding Proposal

The President asked Raina Kim, to present the funding proposal on behalf of the Multicultural Student Association (MSA). Raina stated that Jesus Corona Gomez, previously the VP Finance for the MSA, had previously presented a funding proposal to the GSA, but there have been some changes to the events since the last proposed budget. Then she went over the events outline for the winter 2021 term and what their funding money would be going towards.

President Inam asked whether all of MSA's events would be open to any graduate student at USask. Raina responded that all their events would be open to all graduate students. Then President Inam asked what type of gift cards MSA had planned to buy and how would they be distributed, considering the situation with the pandemic with some students being out of province or out of the country. Raina said she had not planned this yet, but it would be something that MSA's executives would look into.

President Inam then continued, and informed Raina that the GSA Executives would move forward with MSA's proposal once they have resolved the gift card distribution issue and are able to ensure fairness when giving out prizes. President Inam then asked whether MSA had collaborated with the Residence Office as they have also organized events similar to the events being proposed by the MSA. Raina responded, that because of the COVID-19 measures in place, it might not be easy to collaborate with the Residence Office.

The final question asked by President Inam, was whether MSA had contacted any other student organization to collaborate on events. Raina said that they had been in contact with other organizations, but they have not yet planned any events together. The VP Finance asked the MSA to follow the GSA Bylaws, particularly where it says that social clubs must present their expenses' receipts within 14 days after the event's date for reimbursement. The President asked the MSA president to send the poster of each event to the GSA for approval before distributing and posting it on social media.

After Raina exited the meeting, the GSA Executives further discussed the MSA's funding proposal and unanimously agreed to provide funding, on the condition that the gift card situation is clarified.

Motion to approve the sum of \$170 for the MSA event on the condition of clarification for visa gift cards and goodie bags was moved by the VP Academic and Student Affairs and seconded by the VP External Affairs. Vote: Passed.

***5 in Favour
Motion Carried.***

4.2 Winter 2021 Orientation

The President informed the Executives that the items being ordered for the swag bags that will be distributed for the winter 2021 term has been finalized. The additional item that we have decided to order, with input from the Executives, are grey toques with the GSA logo. These toques are the same ones that were given out by the GSA last year as part of their winter orientation.

Motion to approve the purchase of 150 toques with the GSA logo for a total of \$1,811.14 for the Winter 2021 Orientation was moved by the VP External Affairs and seconded by the VP Academic and Student Affairs. Vote: Passed.

***5 in Favour
Motion Carried.***

The President stated that the VP Academic and she were planning for a curbside pickup event for the winter 2021 orientation, similar to what we did for the fall term. We could open the GSA Commons building for one day to distribute swag bags in the lobby, rather than outside, due to the cold weather. The lobby of the building would also allow for students to enter through one door and exit through another, thereby ensuring that there is only one entry and exit. The

President informed the Executive team that she had submitted a request for on-campus activity to the Pandemic Response Team (PRT). Unfortunately, due to the recent spike in COVID cases, the PRT advised us to hold off on the request until January or to proceed with our alternative method of distribution. Therefore, the President suggested that we distribute swag bags by appointment only for the winter 2021 term. Additionally, since the winter break has been extended for students, the President asked the Executives if we should change the date of our virtual orientation presentation. There was some discussion among the Executive team, and it was concluded that changing the date of the virtual orientation and providing swag bag pickup by appointment were good solutions. The President proposed a:

Motion to approve the Winter Virtual Orientation for January 11, 2021 from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm, was moved by the VP Academic and Student Affairs and seconded by the VP External Affairs. Vote: Passed.

***5 in Favour
Motion Carried.***

4.3 Cheque Remittance

The VP Finance and Operations provided a financial report and stated that several items on the November ledger require approval from the Executive team as the amount exceeds \$500. The President asked for a motion to approve these expenses as follows:

Motion to approve the expense of \$17,849.47 for CFS Fall 2020 Remittance moved by the VP Academic and Student Affairs and seconded by the VP External. Vote: Passed.

***5 in Favour
Motion Carried.***

Motion to approve the expense of \$57,358.56 for SaskTransit Fall 2020 Remittance moved by the VP Finance and Operations and seconded by the VP Academic and Student Affairs. Vote: Passed.

***5 in Favour
Motion Carried.***

Motion to approve the expense of \$23,000 for Fall term 2020 Bursaries was moved by the VP Finance and Operations and seconded by the VP Academic and Student Affairs. Vote: Passed.

***5 in Favour
Motion Carried.***

5. Items for Information / Discussion

5.1 Holiday Hangout Reinvented

President Inam informed the Executive team that the Council has agreed to reallocate the budget line #53309 for the Holiday Hangout Reinvented initiative. Additionally, the VP Academic and Student Affairs and she had also reached out to the International Student and Study Abroad Centre (ISSAC) for funding, and they had agreed to provide \$500 to support this initiative. The President stated that so far, we have 200 students who have signed up for a holiday meal, and since a large student turnout was anticipated, the GSA requested additional funding from members of our Faith Leaders. The delivery of meals will be taking place on December 28 and December 29, 2020.

5.2 *College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (CGPS) Associate Dean Candidate Meetings*

The President informed the Executive team that they had all been sent a meeting invitation for the CGPS Associate Dean candidate meetings, where graduate students and the Executives will be able to ask questions from the candidates who have been finalized by the Associate Dean Search Committee. The President encouraged all Executives to attend these meeting, ask questions, and provide input.

5.3 *GSA-UPASS*

The President mentioned that the distribution and processes of the UPASS for the winter 2021 term will be the same as what was done for the fall term. The GSA is awaiting updated links and deadlines from USSU before updating the information for the winter 2021 term on the GSA website. There was some discussion regarding the re-routing of buses to Place Riel as per a few student's request, the President stated that she is still working on this matter.

5.4 *Graduate Research Conference 2021*

The President asked the VP Finance to provide an update to the Executive team in regard to the Graduate Research Conference. The VP Finance proposed that we allocate part of the Graduate Research Conference budget for prizes that can be awarded to the best presenters. There was some discussion among the Executive team, and it was decided that this decision will be made once the VP Finance provides a timeline and detailed plan for the Graduate Research Conference as there was not enough information to make a decision at this time.

5.5 *Canadian Federation of Students (CFS)*

The President asked the VP External to provide an update on the CFS meetings. The VP External stated that he had attended the National Graduate Caucus (NGC) meeting, the Annual General Meeting for CFS, and the U15 SSC meeting in the last couple of weeks. He could not provide a complete update at this time because he had not yet received the meeting minutes from these meeting. In regard to the NGC meeting, the VP External said that he has already shared the pertinent information with the Executive team. He briefly informed the Executives about the main points of the NGC meeting in which student leaders from other Canadian universities discussed the challenges they were facing due to the pandemic, and also discussed the strategies they are utilizing to navigate those challenges.

6. **Other Business**

7. **Confidential Session**

8. **In-Camera Session**

9. **Adjournment of Meeting.**

The President asked if there was any other business to discuss, there was none.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:21 PM was moved by the VP Academic and Student Affairs and seconded by the VP External Affairs. Vote: Passed.

**5 in Favour
Motion Carried.**



**University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association
Executive Meeting Minutes
January 14, 2021**

Present: Humaira Inam (President), Carmen Marquez (VP Academic and Student Affairs), Qasim Gill (VP External Affairs), Tina Alexis (VP Indigenous Engagement)

Regrets/Absent: None.

Guest: None.

1. Call to Order / Opening Remarks

The President called the meeting to order at 5:41 PM. The President reminded all the attendees that since our last meeting the VP Finance and Operations had resigned as of December 29th, 2020. She updated the Executives that the GSA Council Chair and Electoral Officer had also resigned as of January 10th, 2021. The President also reminded the Executives that emails should be responded to within 48 hours, and if you are unable to provide an answer to an email within 48 hours, then to reply to the sender acknowledging the receipt of their email.

2. Approval of the Agenda

The President asked whether there were any additions or amendments to the agenda as circulated. Seeing none the President asked for a:

Motion to approve the agenda as circulated was moved by the VP External Affairs and seconded by the VP Indigenous Engagement. Vote: Passed.

**4 in Favour.
Motion Carried.**

3. Approval of the December 3, 2020, Executive Meeting Minutes

The President informed the Executives that the meeting minutes from December 3rd, 2020 had not been finalized and asked for the delay of approval until the next Executive meeting.

Motion to delay the approval of December 3, 2020, Executive Meeting Minutes was moved by the VP Indigenous Engagement and seconded by the VP External Affairs.

**4 in Favour.
Motion Carried.**

4. Items for Action

4.1 *Motion to approve the purchase of 350 meals for \$1, 200, and chocolates for \$1, 141.98 for the Holiday Hangout Reinvented 2020 initiative. The motion was moved by VP Academic and Student Affairs and seconded by VP External Affairs. Vote: Passed.*

**4 in Favour.
Motion Carried.**

4.2 *Motion to approve Carmen Marquez, the VP Academic, and Student Affairs, as the third co-signer for cheques pertaining to expenditures until a new VP Finance and Operations has been voted in by Council. The motion was moved by VP External Affairs and seconded by VP Indigenous Engagement. Vote: Passed.*

**3 in Favour, 1 Abstain.
Motion Carried.**

4.3 *Motion to approve Mery Mendoza as the graduate student representative for the CGPS Awards Committee for 2021. The motion was moved by the VP Academic and Student Affairs and seconded by VP External Affairs. Vote: Passed.*

**4 in Favour.
Motion Carried.**

4.4 *Motion to approve Tina Alexis, the VP Indigenous Engagement, as the graduate student representative for the Research Scholarly and Artistic Committee. The motion was moved by VP External Affairs and seconded by VP Academic and Student Affairs. Vote: Passed.*

**3 in Favour, 1 Abstain.
Motion Carried.**

4.5 *Motion to approve Qasim Gill, the VP External Affairs, as the graduate student representative for the CGPS Earned D. Lit / D. Sc. Committee. The motion was moved by VP Indigenous Engagement and seconded by VP Academic and Student Affairs. Vote: Passed.*

**3 in Favour, 1 Abstain.
Motion Carried.**

4.6 *Motion to approve the contribution of \$20 from each Executives' discrepancy fund for 4 Tim Horton gift cards that will be given to our Holiday Hangout 2020 volunteers, for a total of \$100. The motion was moved by the VP Academic and Student Affairs and seconded by VP External Affairs. Vote: Passed.*

**4 in Favour.
Motion Carried.**

5. Items for Information / Discussion

5.1 Winter 2021 Events

The President asked the VP Academic and Student Affairs to comment on the events proposed to be hosted this Winter term by the GSA.

The VP Academic and Student Affairs informed the Executive team that she will organize an academic misconduct webinar proposed for February 2021, in collaboration with the Gwenna Moss Centre and the University Library. She also mentioned that this term the events proposed will be focused on academic matters and professional skills. This decision was consulted with the rest of the Executives and the Executives unanimously agreed that due to the poor turnout at virtual social events in the fall term, it would be best to turn our focus to initiatives that are important to graduate students at this time. The VP Academic will also be connecting with the Multicultural Student Association in regard to their social events this term to offer support, as we the VP Academic and External were interested in organizing a cultural event this term, but due to time constraints this will not be possible.

The President asked the VP External Affairs to provide an update on the events he wanted to organize in this term. The VP External informed that Executives that as discussed previously, he

is interested in planning another Financial Literacy seminar and CV/Resume and Cover Letter Writing workshops this term. The VP External proposed that he invites someone from the Career Centre this term as a guest speaker to facilitate the CV/Resume and Cover Letter Writing workshop. In regard to the Financial Literacy seminar, Professor Biran Lane will be invited back to facilitate this event. Both events will be organized virtually this term as well. The VP External Affairs has proposed to hold the seminar and workshop in February and March, respectively.

5.2 3MT Competition

The President asked the VP Academic and Student Affairs to provide any update for this year's 3MT competition. The VP Academic confirmed that the event will be hosted on March 26th, 2021 in remote format. She confirmed that the rules and registration forms are ready, and judges are being contacted.

The President shared some input she received last term regarding the recording and submission of the videos for 3MT, which was suggested to be done using Panopto and to upload participants' videos to YouTube. The President reminded the Executives that the GSA already has a YouTube channel where we could upload such videos. The VP Academic will contact Dean Burshtyn to ask for updates on the possibility of using the University's resources to facilitate the recording and submission of participants' videos.

5.3 Winter 2021 Bursaries

The President provided the update that she will take the responsibility of organizing this term's bursary processes due to the VP Finance and Operations resignation, and until a new VP Finance and Operations has been voted in by Council. She provided a timeline for the bursaries; the application forms will be available to be filled online from January 18th until February 25th, 2021. The final decision and notification to successful applicants will take place no later than March 10th, 2021.

5.4 Graduate Research Conference

The President informed the Executive team that the previous VP Finance and Operations had only completed a poster and compiled emails that were never sent, for the Graduate Research Conference. No speakers list had been compiled. She explained that this is problematic because there is not enough time to organize everything for the Graduate Research Conference this, which was to be held on February 10 and 11, 2021 respectively. Additionally, due to the resignation of the VP Finance as well as the GSA Chair, the President has had to take on additional responsibilities in order to ensure that all tasks are completed on time and the GSA continues to run smoothly. The President stated that if we are to organize the Graduate Research Conference this year, then she will need additional help from the Executives as she is unable to do this on her own.

President Inam further asked the Executives for this input regarding this situation and their thoughts on how we should proceed. The VP Academic and Student Affairs stated that she is preoccupied with organizing the 3MT competition and would not have time to help out either, but she thinks that it is best to postpone the Graduate Research Conference to next year, rather than organize it in a rush just for the sake of holding a conference. The VP External Affairs stated that if we did not hold the Graduate Research Conference then this would be the first time in the GSA that the conference is not taking place, which would in part be a reflection of the Executives. However, he said that he also understood that everyone is under a lot of strain at the moment and it may be difficult to add on more work. The VP External Affairs volunteered to help wherever necessary for the Graduate Research Conference. The VP Indigenous Engagement stated that she also sees both sides of the argument, however it might be too late in the year to contact speakers and ask them to have 20 minute presentations prepared when the event deadline is so close. The

VP Indigenous Engagement further mentioned that it would not be wise to hold a conference for the sake of holding a conference, and if we are to organize this event and everything should be done in a timely manner. After some discussion and since some of the Executives were still undecided on this matter, the President said that we would return to this topic of discussion at the next meeting and make a final decision.

5.5 Health Chats

The President asked the VP External Affairs to provide an update for this term's health initiatives. The VP External Affairs informed the Executive team that he is planning to contact the Student Wellness Centre to collaborate on different events for the winter term focusing on mental health and wellbeing. He indicated that he is still deciding on when the sessions would be held. The Student Wellness Center will be contacted to explore collaborating avenues. The President also asked the VP External Affairs whether Yoga Nidra will continue to be offered this term as well. The VP External responded saying that Peer Health is organizing Yoga Nidra this term as well and proposed collaborating with them, so we are not offering duplicate services. The President said this was a good idea and asked the VP External Affairs to contact Peer Health for collaboration.

5.6 Ministry of Advanced Education Support for Mental Health.

The VP External Affairs brought into the Executive's notice that the Ministry of Advanced Education has some budget available to support post-graduate students for mental health. He will contact them to ask if they can provide more information in regard to their mental health initiatives.

5.7 Canadian Federation of Students (CFS)

The President asked the VP External Affairs to comment on any CFS updates. The VP External stated that there are currently no major events coming up, and he is still waiting for the minutes from past meetings. The VP External Affairs indicated that CFS is organizing a Federal Lobby Week scheduled for February and if the other Executives are interested in attending lobby week then he can assist them in registering for this event. The VP External Affairs indicated that he will be attending Federal Lobby Week.

5.8 Gala 2021

The President asked the VP External Affairs to update the Executives on this year's Awards Gala. The VP External Affairs informed the Executives that he is still working on the details to deliver this year's gala in a virtual environment. He indicated that awards will be given virtually, and the nomination packages are planned to be released this month (January). Further details will be shared by the VP External Affairs in the next Executive meeting.

5.9 Initiatives for Indigenous Students.

The President asked the VP Indigenous Engagement to provide an update on her initiatives for the winter 2021 term. The VP Indigenous Engagement indicated that she has looked for input from other students to scout for ideas and will work on a plan to be presented in the next Executive meeting.

5.10 Studentcare.

The President updated the Executives about Studentcare. She indicated that they will be presenting at the next Council meeting to provide statistics for the GSA Health and Dental Plan. She also informed the Executive team that our contract with them is expiring this year, and we will need to decide on how to proceed on this. A future meeting will be organized with the Studentcare to discuss the terms of our new contract and make an informed decision.

5.11 *Mental Health First Aid Training.*

The President reminded the Executives that it is mandatory to complete the Mental Health First Aid Training as per GSA Bylaw 2.1.3.13. However, we are still waiting to get confirmation from Student Affairs and Outreach on when this training will take place.

6. **Other Business**

The President asked if there was any other business to discuss. There was none.

7. **Confidential Session**

8. **In-Camera Session**

9. **Adjournment of Meeting**

The President asked for the adjournment of the meeting.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 PM was moved by VP Academic and Student Affairs and seconded by the VP External Affairs. Vote: Passed.

***4 in Favour.
Motion Carried.***



University of Saskatchewan
 Graduate Students' Association
 President's Report - GSA Council Meeting, January 2021

Dear Councilors,

I wish you a Happy New Year and hope you had time to relax and recharge during the extended winter break. The GSA Executives have also been busy navigating the start of this term with the following initiatives:

1. Holiday Hangout Reinvented 2020
2. Winter 2021 Orientation
3. Winter Bursaries
4. Graduate Professional Skills

1. Holiday Hangout Reinvented 2020

Holiday Hangout for 2020 was quite different due to the ongoing pandemic. The GSA distributed and delivered meals and goodie bags to graduate students across Saskatoon on December 28, and December 29, 2020 with the support of 20 volunteers and 6 cars. We dedicated 20 hours of preparation, and 50 hours of driving to 200 different locations around the city to deliver 350 meals. Additionally, we also provided more than 30 meals to the Lighthouse Supported Living. This initiative could not have been possible without the support of the International Student and Study Abroad Centre (ISSAC), members of our Faith Leaders, and St. Thomas More College.

2. Winter 2021 Orientation

The GSA conducted a virtual orientation on January 11, 2021 to welcome new graduate students beginning their academic journey at the University of Saskatchewan this term and informed them of the services offered on campus. Additionally, as we were unable to hold a curbside pickup of swag bags, we provided graduate students the option to pick up a swag bag by appointment. We prepared a total of 160 bags and distributed nearly all of them within two weeks.

3. Winter 2021 Bursaries

The GSA will open applications for the Winter 2021 term bursaries on January 18, 2021 to continue supporting our graduate who are in financial need. The applications will remain open until February 25, 2021 and successful bursary applicants will be informed by March 10, 2021.

4. Graduate Professional Skills

One of our goals this academic year was to provide initiatives that will enhance professional skills and assist graduate students in the working world after graduation. Last term, we hosted the "Financial Literacy Seminar" where we invited Professor Lane from the Edwards School of Business, and the "Resume and Cover Letter Writing" seminar where Dr. Janet Hill was the guest speaker. These initiatives were very well received by graduate students, and the GSA Executives are working on organizing them for the winter term as well.

The GSA continues its role to advocate on behalf of graduate students in order to support student success and relay student concerns, organize events to engage students, and collaborate with the USask community to foster an environment of positivity.

Humaira Inam

President

Graduate Students' Association



**University of Saskatchewan
Graduate Students' Association**

January 2021

RE: VP Academic and Student Affairs Report to Council

Dear Council Members:

Please find below my December-January report to council.

1) Winter Orientation

The GSA Winter Orientation was hosted January 11th, 2021. The objective of this Orientation was to introduce incoming grad students to the different services and faculty that they might use during or have contact with during their journey at the University. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, all our events were facilitated online and swag bags were packed. New students can set up an appointment with the GSA Administrator to pick up their goodies.

2) 3 Minutes Thesis Competition

This year the 3MT will be hosted on March 26th, 2021 virtually, following the same format as last year's competition. Judges are being contacted and I am awaiting their confirmation. The rules and guidelines have been finalized and I am currently working on choosing an online platform for the delivery and uploading of this year's participants' videos. A call for applications will be sent in early February.

3) Meetings

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

Date	Meeting
December 1, 2020	Teaching, Learning and Academic Resources Committee
December 2, 2020	Executives meet with Debbie Burshtyn Student Forum Executive Meeting Academic Programs Committee
December 3, 2020	GSA Executives Meeting
December 4, 2020	Friends for Dinner Event Coordination GSA meets with Associate Dean Candidate Parking and Transportation Committee
December 8, 2020	GSA meets with Associate Dean Candidate
December 9, 2020	Friends for Dinner Event Coordination

December 10, 2020	GSA meets with Associate Dean Candidate GSA meets with USFA
December 16, 2020	Annual Claim Report from Studentcare Academic Programs Committee
December 17, 2020	University Council
January 11, 2021	Winter Orientation facilitated by GSA
January 12, 2021	GSA meets with Saskatoon Transit Teaching, Learning and Academic Resources Committee
January 13, 2021	Executives meeting with Pandemic Response Team Student Forum Preparation
January 14, 2021	Tuition Hall A&S GSA Executives Meeting
January 20, 2021	President's Executive Committee



**University of Saskatchewan
Graduate Students' Association**

January 2021

RE: VP External Affairs Report to Council

Dear Council Members,

Please find below my report to Council:

1) GSA Executive meetings

I am attending the executive meetings regularly where we are discussing topics and events for the upcoming winter term.

2) GSA Student welcome Orientation

We organized this year's GSA Winter 2021 orientation through a virtual event on January 11, 2021.

3) Health Chat Events

We are planning to offer a financial literacy seminar and resume and writing workshops again this term. This time we want to invite someone from the Career Centre to provide a guest speaker and any support to facilitate the resume and writing seminar. For the financial literacy seminar, Professor Brian Lane will be invited back to facilitate this seminar. We are proposing to hold these seminars in February and March, respectively. A sleep workshop will be offered with the collaboration of the Student Wellness Center. We are continuing to work and plan other events for the winter term, the details will be shared soon once available.

4) Annual Awards Gala 2021

I am working on Awards Gala for this year, which will be delivered in a virtual format due to ongoing pandemic situation. The nomination package has been released, the GSA website has been updated with this information, and an email has been sent to all graduate students on January 20th, 2021 informing them. I will be sending reminders through PAWS every week as well.

5) Canadian Federation of Students

The Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) is organizing a Federal Lobby Week scheduled for February 2021. I have registered myself for this event and will be attending this event. There are no other major CFS events coming up for the time being.

6) Meetings/Events

The following are a list of meetings I have attended since I submitted the last report to the Council:

Date	Meetings/Events
November 30, 2020	CGPS Equity & International Committee Meeting
December 2, 2020	Student Forum Executive Meeting
December 3, 2020	GSA Executive Meeting
December 8, 2020	GSA Meeting with the AD candidate
December 10, 2020	Interdisciplinary Studies Committee
December 16, 2020	Annual Claims Report Student Care / U of S GSA
January 11, 2021	GSA Virtual Orientation
January 12, 2021	Governance Committee Meeting
January 13, 2021	PRT/PEC/USSU/GSA Meeting
January 14, 2021	GSA Executive Meeting
January 20, 2021	PEC/Student Council Executive Monthly Meeting



**University of Saskatchewan
Graduate Students' Association
VP Indigenous Engagement**

January 2021

Introduction

Da hooja, sa boozi Tina Alexis, sa Uba ink'ez sa uma en Peter and Minnie Alexis, unjan nelh dune, chunalya nya dusni, ink'z unjan keyoh e, treaty 6 inke'z Metis hubildzun, etwa da bai nelh chunalhiya.

As per protocol, I introduced myself and “meaningfully and respectfully” acknowledge that I am on Treaty 6 territory and homeland of the Metis. I am the granddaughter of Peter and Minnie Alexis. Our homelands are 225 kilometres northwest of Williams Lake, in Central British Columbia.

I am a second-year doctoral student in Indigenous studies, with a master’s degree in Education from the University of Saskatchewan and an undergrad degree in Indigenous Studies from the University of British Columbia.

My values lie in community. I understand the importance of relationships and the importance of relationality, thus my goal is to build strong, healthy and respectful relationships throughout my term as VP Indigenous Engagement.

As you may know, this is a new position as of December 1st, 2020, with only one other candidate, Nathan Oakes, the results very were close. I appreciate and extend gratitude to Nathan for putting his name forward. Holding this position is a great opportunity, however I didn’t realize the workload would be this intense. In stating that, I would like to thank my cohorts and the other GSA executives for their support. Although, I am still grasping what the position entails, I can honestly say that the GSA executive are very active and outspoken in the overall university community. The best part of this position is knowing the GSA executives truly have the best interests of graduate students. The passion is felt and heard in the meetings.

Following is a list of meetings and discussions that I have been engaged in since the role began:

1. **Virtual Orientation - January 11th, 2021** - This virtual meeting to welcome all the new students was a success. Although the meeting was only an hour long, there were many students who took part. It was great to see the fresh faces, excited and ready to embark on their journey as graduate students. Again, welcome to all the new and returning students at the University of Saskatchewan.

2. **GSA Executive Meeting – January 14th, 2021** – In this meeting we discussed the annual research conference. This is an annual gathering where graduate students present their research. Due to the lack of time and not having presenters pre-scheduled, the GSA committee members agree that, although a very important event, it is not realistically possible to recruit presenters and faculty, given the timeline. More discussions to take place in the upcoming meeting.

I will sit on the Research Scholarly & Artistic Committee, replacing former VP Finance & Operations Hadi Ramin.

Going Forward:

I will meet with The Dean and Associate Dean of the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, to discuss the plans and ways to support Indigenous graduate students. Meetings have yet to be scheduled.

I will reach out to my cohorts to schedule a weekly event for Indigenous students.

Conclusion:

Given the current circumstances, it has been a great term thus far. I want to thank all the GSA Executive team and my cohorts who have graciously welcomed and supported me in this new position. Thank you and I wish you health and happiness in all your future endeavors.

Awetz'eh,

Tina Alexis, M.Ed
PhD. Student, Indigenous Studies
GSA VP Indigenous Engagement