



Graduate Students' Association - University of Saskatchewan  
 Council Meeting Agenda  
 Tuesday March 16, 2021 - WebEx  
 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	Approval of the Agenda	1	<i>Decision</i>
3	Approval of the Minutes from February 23, 2021	2-11	<i>Decision</i>
4	Information to be received	12-33	<i>Decision</i>
	A. February 11, 2021 Executive Meeting Minutes		
	B. February 12, Budget and Finance Committee Minutes		
	C. February 25, 2021 Executive Meeting Minutes		
5	Executive reports	34-43	<i>Information</i>
	A. Report of the President		
	B. Report of the VP Finance and Operations		
	C. Report of the VP Academic and Student Affairs		
	D. Report of the VP External Affairs		
	E. Report of the VP Indigenous Engagement (Verbal)		
6	<b>Motion: GSA-UPASS fees (details attached)</b>	44	<i>Decision</i>
	Motion to approve the increase to the GSA-UPASS fees from \$114.16/term to \$115.38/term. (Mendoza/Inam).		
7	Other Business/Announcement		<i>Information</i>
8	Adjournment		<i>Decision</i>

*Next Meeting: April 13, 2021.*



University of Saskatchewan  
 Graduate Students' Association  
 Council Meeting Minutes  
 Tuesday, February 23, 2021. 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 February 23, 2021 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 newly elected Chair of Council welcomed the 2020/2021 Members of Councilors to the meeting and called the meeting to order at 5:02 PM after quorum for the meeting had been met. Ms. Asiyah Suchak, the Secretary of Council compiled the meeting minutes. The Chair thanked Member of Council for electing him.

### 2. Approval of Agenda

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

*Motion to approve the Agenda. (Gannon/Gill)*

**Carried**

### 3. Guest: Provost and VP Academic

The Provost and VP Academic, Dr. Airini, thanked the Chair for the introduction and greeted everyone in many of the language's representative of the graduate student body. Dr. Airini thanked the executives for their warm welcome and the good work of the GSA. She introduced with her was, Dr. Patti McDougall the Vice-Provost, Teaching, Learning and Student Experience. Dr. McDougall thanked the executives, for their dedication to the GSA and all the work they have done to look out for the student body.

**Question from Council Member, Proulx-Cullen:**

What do you see the challenges to be for graduate students in the midst of this pandemic and the future with so many uncertainties as well as looking at the UN's suggested sustainability goals?

**Answer from Dr. Airini:**

I am uplifted by her concern and thoughts about the sustainability goals of the UN and the planet amidst all that is happening. I believe that the planet has had a chance to rest and breathe as much as there has been challenges and it has been challenging. There has been a chance as well to think ahead and it is a combination to gather up the stamina we have and being able to be kind and be of community to take that forward in a positive way.

And for the university it looks like taking an expanded view of what it's like to learn in the university world to be sensitive and compassionate and to have a sense of calling to make good of teaching and learning through this pandemic.

It has been year of the challenges and we have to find space and look at rights for ourselves, the health space and to give ourselves the space to switch of and decompress and do what we need to do for ourselves. We have a challenge to honor everything to do with equity, diversity and inclusion and ensuring that we move towards reconciliation in our community. In our university it feels as if we are in the right place, we have four principles that look towards connectivity, diversity, community, and sustainability.

The Chair asked if there were any additional questions. Seeing as there were none, the Chair thanked the Provost and VP Academic and the Vice-Provost, Teaching, Learning and Student Experience for being there.

**Guest: Huskie Athletics**

The Chair introduced guests from Huskie Athletics: Libby Epoch who plays for the women's basketball is the president of the Huskie Athletic Council. Epoch shared that student athletes and volunteers act as a voice between athletes and administration who orchestrate a lot of volunteer activities. Epoch hoped to build a relationship between the GSA and Huskie Athletics by giving an idea of who they are and what they do.

Tanner Lischynsky who plays men's hockey, works in community engagement for the Huskie Athletic Council. Lischynsky went over the various community engagement programs and charities they work with. Micha Strueby talked about Huskie Athletics grass root programming and summer camps and gave statistics on attendance. Strueby shared that Huskie Athletics provides an opportunity for students and community to come together and celebrate.

In the field of play they have a role in the community such as volunteering, coaching, fundraising, mentoring, and advocating for charities. Looking at financials they can give us specifics and connect us with their chief financial officer. Strueby added that they bring in around \$20 million dollars which goes back into the community. Within alumni and philanthropy there are some major donors as well as corporate sponsors. As well Huskie Athletics has one of the premier sports

programs in the country with a large number of All Academic Athletes.

Addison Dewar the VP of student engagement of Huskie Athletic Council presented options for collaboration between the GSA and Huskie Athletics to take a productive step in furthering their relationship with the GSA in the future after going over a list of potential ways to collaborate.

**Question from President Inam:**

Are there any statistics on graduate student attendance and participation as you went over student engagement?

**Answer from Huskie Athletics, (Epoch):**

It is hard to reach graduate students, as we don't have the numbers on hand. We did have numbers about graduate student employment, but we also want to increase graduate student engagement.

**Question from Council Member, Harris:**

Are there any Huskie athletes who are graduate students?

**Answer from Huskie Athletics (Epoch):**

Being both is very time consuming, but I know of a couple of students in dentistry and medicine.

**Question from President Inam:**

What do the Huskie Athletics look like with the pandemic as games are on hold. Where are the fees we are paying going?

**Answer from Huskie Athletics (Epoch):**

We were practicing as if the season was still on and then they were shut down in December. We are now on hold since March, but some are still allowed training and physiotherapy is still opened.

The Chair thanked the members from Huskie Athletics for their presentation and wished them the best.

**4. Approval of Minutes from January 26, 2021**

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

*Motion to approve the January 26, 2021 minutes. (Cullen/Gill).*

**Carried**

## 5. Information to be received

- a. January 28, 2021 Executive Meeting Minutes

*Motion to receive agenda item 5a (Gannon/Sajid)*

Carried

## 6. 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 new Vice President Finance and Operations presented her report to Council. There were no questions for VP Mendoza.

### 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 Marquez Mellidez.

### d. Vice President External Affairs Report

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

### e. Vice President Indigenous Engagement (Verbal Report)

The Vice President Indigenous Engagement was not in attendance and the President issued apologies on her behalf.

## 7. Motion: Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) fees (details attached)

VP Mendoza was invited to speak on the motion after which the Chair opened the floor for questions and discussion.

### Question from Council Member, Sajid:

Why is it being increased?

### Answer from VP Mendoza:

It increases every year based on the cities expenses and the consumer price index (CPI).

The Chair asked if there were any other questions. There were no questions.

*Motion to approve the increase to the CFS fees from \$6.35 to \$6.44 per term (Mendoza/Inam)*

**Carried**

**8. Student with Disabilities: Academic, Accommodation and Access (AES) Policy Review (details attached)**

President Inam asked for anyone interested in consulting to email her as it is a review of policies that impacts students with disabilities on campus.

The Chair asked if there were any questions.

**Question from Council Member, Proulx-Cullen:**

When the term disability is used, is it all encompassing? This word is meant to include all categories, right? There is no one being excluded?

**Answer from President Inam:**

That is correct.

The Chair asked for any other questions, there were none.

**9. GSA Fees for 2021 – 2022 Academic year**

- a. GSA Membership Fee
- b. Health and Dental Plan Fees

President Inam shared that the GSA membership fee and the health and dental plan fees will not be changing.

**10. Graduate Research Conference (GRC)**

President Inam informed Council that the GRC was discussed, and it is cancelled due to the transition period of waiting to fill the VP Finance and Operations position, who had resigned. Thus the conference could not be arranged and organized in time.

The Chair opened the floor for questions.

**Question from Council Member, Sajid:**

Will there be any event to make up for this conference?

**Answer from President Inam:**

Apologies for that, there will be nothing to replace it, but it can be related to the Three Minute Thesis (3MT) competition.

The Chair asked if there are any more question. None were raised.

**11. Other Business/Announcement**

No other business was brought up.

**7. Adjournment**

*Motion to adjourn at 6:04 pm. (Sajid/Holt)*

**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	P	P				
ARCHAIA	Taylor Eagle (Angela Burant)	N/A	N/A	N/A	P	A	A				
Biology Graduate Student Association	Mercy Harris (Dylan Baloun) (Joseph Abrams)	P	P	P	P	P	P				
Chemistry Course Council	Iyanu Kumayon Doug Fansher	N/A	P	P	A	P	P				
College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Anatomy, Physiology & Pharmacology	Kayla J. Cropper (Kushagra Parolia)	N/A	P	P	P	A	P				
College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Biochemistry, Microbiology & Immunology	Gabrielle Mercier (Ashley Sutherland)	N/A	P	P	P	P	P				
College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Community Health & Epidemiology	Amanda Gannon (Azadeh Nazeran)	N/A	P	P	P	P	P				
College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Health Sciences	Elyse Proulx-Cullen (Una Goncin)	N/A	P	P	P	P	P				
Computer Science Graduate Council (CSGC)	Fidelia Orji Saikat Mondal (Sristy Sumana Nath)	A	P	P	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	A	P				
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Biomedical	Arman Haghanifar (Alizadeh Sardroud)	N/A	P	P	P	A	P				
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Chemical	Fahimeh Esmi (Khaled, Zoroufchi Benis)	N/A	P	P	P	P	P				
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Civil, Geological & Environmental	Ajay Shrinivas Muthukumar (Hamed Beiranvand Mohammad)	N/A	P	P	P	A	P				
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Electrical & Computer	Karim Shahbazi (Mahdiyar Molahasani)	N/A	P	P	P	A	P				
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Mechanical	Tonye Jack (Alireza Razmavar)	N/A	P	P	P	A	P				
English Course Council	Tricia Monsour (Darius Simonot) (Amanda Burrows)	N/A	P	R	P	P	P				
Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy Students' Association	Brady Kroeker (Ahmed Abunada)	N/A	A	P	P	A	P				
Kinesiology Graduate Student Council	Natalie Houser (KC Hall)	P	P	P	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
Physical and Engineering Physics -PEGASUS	Kimberlee Dube (Nicholas Simonson)	N/A	N/A	N/A	P	P	P				
Pharmacy & Nutrition Graduate Students' Council	Sukanya Pati (Ayat Zagzoog)	N/A	N/A	P	R	P	P				
Physical Therapy Student Society (PTSS)	Matthew Reichert (Cherise Schlekewy)	N/A	N/A	P	P	A	N/A				
Plant Science	Dylan Sjolie (Matthew Wengler)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	P	P				
SENSA	Mostofa Kamal Mariana Campos (Jaclyn Porter) (Rory Wheat)	N/A	P	A	A	P	A				
SPHSA	Aisha Sajid Maha Khan (Maggie Coupland) (Daniel Medina)	N/A	P	P	P	A	P				
Sociology GSA	Connor Morrison Maria Cruz (Alana Demkiw)	P	P	A	P	P	A				
Soil Science Graduate Student Association	Amy Jimmo (Aimée Schryer)	N/A	P	A	P	A	P				
Toxicology Graduate Students' Association	Alana Weber (Jensen Cherewyk)	A	R	P	P	P	P				
Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCVI) GSA	Miranda Zwiefelhofer Michelle Tucker Jennifer Abi Younes	P	P	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
Exec. President	Humaira Inam	P	P	P	P	P	P				
Exec. VP Finance and Operations	Hadi Ramin/Mery Mendoza	P	P	P	P	N/A	P				
Exec. VP Academic and Student Affairs	Carmen Marquez Mellidez	R	P	R	P	P	P				
Exec. VP External Affairs	Qasim Shahzad Gill	P	P	P	P	P	P				
Exec. VP Indigenous Engagement	Tina Alexis	N/A	N/A	N/A	P	P	A				



University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association  
Executive Meeting Minutes  
February 11, 2021 – Online: WebEx

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.

**Present:** Humaira Inam (President), Mery Mendoza (VP Finance and Operations), Carmen Marquez (VP Academic and Student Affairs), and Qasim Gill (VP External Affairs).

**Regrets/Absent:** Tina Alexis (VP Indigenous Engagement).

**Guest:** Raina Kim (Multicultural Students' Association President).

**1. Call to Order / Opening Remarks**

The President called the meeting to order at 5:34 PM.

**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:

1. *MSA funding request - Photo Contest event (action)*
2. *A graduate representative for Academic Accommodation and Access Policy review working group (action)*
3. *Cheque Remittance: Payment of \$1500 to Naheda Sahtout for the Holiday Hangout reimbursement on January 28, 2021 (action)*
4. *Career Centre Initiatives (information)*

*Motion: to approve the agenda as amended.*

*Moved: VP Academic and Student Affairs.*

*Seconded: VP External Affairs.*

*Vote: All in Favour,  
Motion carried.*

### 3. Approval of the January 28, 2021, Executive Meeting Minutes

The President asked whether there were any further amendments to the January 28, 2021 Executive Meeting Minutes as circulated.

*Motion: to approve the January 28, 2021 Executive Meeting Minutes as circulated.*

*Moved: VP Finance and Operations.*

*Seconded: VP External Affairs.*

**Vote: All in Favour  
Motion carried.**

### 4. Items for Action

#### 4.1 Funding Proposal from the Multicultural Students' Association (MSA) - request of \$75.00

The GSA has received a funding request from the MSA and representatives from this association were invited to participate in a GSA Executive meeting. Raina, the President of the MSA, attended on behalf of the association. The President welcomed her to the meeting and asked for a brief description of the event.

Raina explained that the MSA is organizing a photo-contest event where students are invited to submit photos that represent their cultural traditions and/or cultural diversity in their family, school, community, or country. Each participant will be required to submit a story behind their photo (a favourite food, a treasured object, activity in the home country; a family photo, buildings in their current neighborhood, or home country, local festivals, etc.) in a short caption. There are two prizes available to be won (main Prize - \$40 Visa Gift Card, and the 2nd Place- \$20 Visa Gift Card), based on two categories of judging: (1) best cultural diversity winter photo and (2) best cultural representation photo. Furthermore, a committee comprised of 3 members will determine the winners.

MSA is requesting \$75 which includes the prizes (\$60) plus the fees (\$15) to be paid for the electronic activation/use of the gift cards. Discussion around the fees was brought by the President and then included in this request upon the suggestion of the same.

The President thanked Raina for giving details of the event and opened the floor for questions.

The VP Academic and Student Affairs asked the following questions:

1. Is this event only open to graduate students?

Raina responded that this event is mainly for graduate students, but some undergraduate students will be participating.

2. Have MSA representatives sought funding from other places?

Raina responded that they had not.

Then, the President mentioned that funding from the GSA goes towards supporting our graduate students and asked Raina to explain how MSA will ensure that only graduate students benefit from this request. Raina stated that the MSA will make sure that the proposal is modified accordingly to fit and benefit graduate students. The President also asked if there will be a criterion that will be followed for judging. Raina explained that there are no criteria for judging yet, but it will be developed.

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 the MSA representative for providing the proposal and further information. President Inam informed Raina that a decision will be made and communicated to the MSA through email within a week.

*Motion: to approve funding in the amount of \$75 for MSA's photo-contest event.*

*Moved: VP External Affairs.*

*Seconded: VP Academic and Student Affairs.*

***Vote: All in Favour,  
Motion Carried.***

#### ***4.2 Cheque Remittance***

Whereas GSA bylaws 5.4.4 restricts expenditure amounts above \$500, of any budget line, with the exception of salaries and Executive honorariums, without a majority vote of the Executive. Be that the following expenditures be authorized:

1. *Payment of \$8,800 to Buckberger- Baerg & Partners LLP for the service of GSA audit 2019-2020.*
2. *Payment of \$787.50 to USSU for GSA-UPASS for the fall 2020 term.*
3. *Payment of \$1500.00 to Naheda Sahtout for the Holiday Hangout reimbursement on January 28, 2021.*
4. *Payment of \$1811.14 to One-brand partner for the swag items for the winter orientation 2021.*

*Motion: to approve the expenditures outlined in this section above.*

*Moved: VP Academic and Student Affairs.*

*Seconded: VP External Affairs.*

***Vote: All in Favour,  
Motion Carried.***

#### ***4.3 A graduate representative for Students with Disabilities: Academic Accommodation and Access Policy review working group.***

The Chair of this group is looking for a graduate representative to serve on the policy working group. The GSA has appointed Brady Kroeker as a strong candidate to sit on this policy review working group.

*Motion: to approve Brady Kroeker as the graduate student representative for the Academic Accommodation and Access Policy Review working group.*

*Move: VP Academic and Student Affairs.*

*Seconded: VP External Affairs.*

***Vote: All in Favour,  
Motion Carried.***

## **5. Items for Information / Discussion**

### ***5.1 3MT Competition 2021***

The VP Academic and Student Affairs mentioned that this event will soon be updated on the GSA website and applications will be opened for our graduate community. Since professional recordings will disadvantage some students who are out of the country, a decision has been made to not proceed forward with this. Moreover, The VP Academic and Student Affairs has already received confirmation of participation from Laila Balkhi, Matt Wolsfeld, and Fatima Coovadia to act as judges for this competition. More details will be provided as the event unfolds.

### ***5.2 Health Chat Events***

The VP External Affairs mentioned that the "Sleep Workshop" was held on February 1, 2021 at 4:00 PM. The guest speaker was Devan Moxely, who is a mental health nurse. He said that the event was successful, and more than 60 students attended the event. The VP External updated the Executives about the other three events which the GSA will be offering in the winter term. The first event is the "Financial Literacy Seminar", which is the same event that was offered in the fall term; due to the high demand and interest of students, the GSA is bringing back this event. The event will be held on February 22, 2021

at 4:00 PM. The guest speaker will be Professor Brian Lane from the Edwards School of Business, who was also the guest speaker for the fall term event.

The second event we are organizing is the “Resume & Cover Letter Writing Workshop” which will be held on March 10, 2021, at 4:00 PM in collaboration with the Student Employment and Career Centre, where Dawne Warner will be speaking on resume building, cover letter writing, and other skill sets required for the working world.

The VP External talked about the third event which is a “Mental Health & Wellness Workshop”, which will be offered in collaboration with Peer Health from the Student Wellness Center. The guest speaker of this event is Dr. Murray Drew, who will share his journey with mental health. The event will be held via WebEx on March 15, 2021, at 4:00 PM.

The poster and link for all of these events have been created and the GSA will start promoting these on social media.

### ***5.3 Indigenous Students Initiatives***

This item has been postponed because the VP Indigenous Engagement was not present in this meeting.

### ***5.4 Winter Bursaries***

The applications for the need-based bursaries are open until February 25, 2021. The VP Finance and Operations will soon contact members of the Bursary Committee to set up an online meeting. Once the application close, the Bursary Committee will meet to work on the selection process.

### ***5.5 Tax Clinic***

The VP Finance and Operations informed the Executive team that tax clinics will be offered online this year due to the pandemic situation. We will be collaborating with the Canada Agency Revenue Outreach program, where the GSA will hold information sessions for graduate students to help them understand their tax obligations and get the benefits and credits they are entitled to. These tax clinic sessions will be held via WebEx, with one confirmed on April 7, 2021 at 4:30 PM. Prior registration will be required. Further information about other sessions will be released soon.



### 5.6 Career Centre Initiatives

The President informed the Executive team that she has been in discussion with Dawne Warner from the Student Employment and Career Centre, and the GSA will be offering two more workshops on March 17 and 24, 2021 at 4:00 PM focusing on networking, job interviews, and job searching.

The VP External asked the question that could these events be combined into one as we already have the “Resume and Cover Letter Writing Workshop” on March 10, 2021. The President responded that the reason why these workshops are being split up is because there is a lot of information that will be covered by the speaker, and the speaker would like to provide students the to ask questions and have a discussion. The President stated that she will contact Dawne and speak further with her on this.

### 6. Other Business

The President asked if there was other business arising.

The VP Academic and Student Affairs briefly updated the Executives on the Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Workshop which will be held on March 2, 2021 at 4:30 PM.

### 7. Confidential Session

### 8. In-Camera Session

### 9. Adjournment of Meeting

The President asked for the adjournment of this meeting.

*Motion: to adjourn the meeting at 7:26 PM.*

*Moved: VP Academic and Student Affairs.*

*Seconded: VP External Affairs.*

***Vote: All in Favour,  
Motion carried.***



**University of Saskatchewan – Graduate Students’ Association**  
**Budget and Finance Committee**  
**February 12, 2021 – via WebEx**

**Attendees:** Mery Mendoza (VP Finance and Operations), Humaira Inam (President), Mostofa Kamal (Councillor), Aisha Sajid (Councillor), Joyce Reimer (Regular Member), Cameron Choquette (Regular Member), Ebenezer Bediako (Regular Member), Sareh Nazari (Regular Member), Stephane Gerard (Regular Member).

**Absent/Regrets:** None.

**Meeting start:** 3:34 PM

The VP Finance and Operations called the meeting to order at 3:34 PM and asked everyone to introduce themselves and their role at the GSA, as well to state if this was their first time participating in the GSA.

**Items for Action:**

The President asked committee members to appoint a Chair for the Budget and Finance Committee. As per our bylaws, the VP Finance and Operations acts as the Chair of this committee.

*Motion to appoint Mery Mendoza as the Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee.*

*Moved by Mostafa Kamal.*

*Seconded by Ebenezer Bediako.*

*Vote: Passed.*

***All in Favour,  
Motion Carried***

The Chair asked the committee to appoint a recording secretary for the meeting minutes.

*Motion to appoint Humaira Inam, as the recording secretary for the Bursary and Finance Committee.*

*Moved by Cameron Choquette.  
Seconded by Ebenezer Bediako.  
Vote: Passed.*

*All in Favour,  
Motion Carried.*

### **Items for Information / Discussion:**

The Chair informed the committee of the role of the Bursary and Finance committee and explained the importance of the committee. VP Finance also mentioned that the Council will be presented with the minutes for each meeting.

The Chair went onto mention that the financial audit is presented to Council every year and the committee will be working on the new budget proposal, which will also need to approve by Council. The Chair then shared the budget for 2019-2020 with the committee and began reviewing the budget lines with the committee as follows:

#### **1) Revenue**

The Chair explained that the GSA collects 5 different fees, which are the UPASS fee, the GSA Membership fee, and the Health and Dental Plan fee, and CFS fees however four of the five fees are collected on behalf of our providers, therefore all monies are sent back to them. The only revenue the GSA has is from the GSA membership fees which is directed to support our students through bursaries and events.

Committee member Bediako asked the Chair whether they will be provided a copy of the meeting minutes, the Chair responded that the meeting minutes will be provided to Council and to the committee.

The Chair further went onto mention that the GSA Executives reach out to partners within and out of the university in order to fund various events, and this is recognized as flow through (FT) in the budget. Additionally, when the GSA building was open under normal circumstances, the GSA would receive a revenue from GSA building bookings. She also stated that the GSA provides notary services through the Office Manager, which is free for graduate students only, and this is a form of revenue that the GSA also receives. The Chair explained that we will go over the budget again for next year and look at each component.

## **2) Expenses**

The Chair explained that one of the services that the GSA provides is the GSA bursary, which students are probably aware of, and this money goes directly to supporting students. The GSA also contributes to travel awards, UofS Crisis Aid, and student club events.

## **3) Other Expenses**

The Chair stated that GSA has administrative costs and pays fees for transferring money.

## **4) GSA Commons Operations and Expenses**

The Chair mentioned that under normal circumstances the GSA building provides a space for meetings, socializing, and studying. So, the GSA provided free coffee and tea for students, this is why it has been included in the budget. There are also have expenses for maintaining the GSA building as well as technical equipment. As a non-profit organization we have to pay an amount for insurance every year. We also have telephones in the GSA for technical support that needs to be accounted for in the budget. If the GSA Executives need a lawyer, then that needs to be allocated in the budget as well. An example that the VP Finance provided is for e.g. last year for the GSA Executive Board they needed consultation from a lawyer as 25% people are required to be residents of Canada.

## **5) Salary and Honorarium**

The Chair explained that each Executive receives an honorarium each month for their work in the GSA as per the bylaws, this also includes the GSA Chair, recording secretary, office coordinators, and the office manager.

## **6) Executive Expense**

The Chair mentioned that an Executive retreat is held annually which is included in the budget, the Executives also have a discretionary fund. Additionally, there is a budget line that goes towards cards/pictures, etc. for new Executives who join the GSA every year. There is also a budget line for Executive travel, this would normally be used for going to external meetings that may require an Executive to travel, and usually it is only one Executive who is able to go in order to conserve our funds. The Chair further states that the GSA discretionary fund is used to gift speakers who have been invited to the GSA to present and support workshops. An example that was provided by the Chair was that if we invite a guest for the tax clinic then they would be provided a small gift for giving their time to the event.

### **7) Committee and Town Hall Expense**

As per our bylaws, academic councillor associations receive a specific amount every year depending on how many students they represent and how many meetings that they have attended.

### **8) GSA Events**

The Chair explained that we have a budget lines that go towards GSA events – one of the main events it the GSA awards gala, we normally request money from CGPS for this event so we can recognize students for their hard work and appoint them for a GSA award. The 3MT competition and the Graduate Research Conference we do not have the budget line for, so we normally need to raise funds for this. Fall and winter orientation we have a budget line dedicated for their respective events as well, and graduate students who take part in sports events are also provided funding for their event. ThinkGrad membership requires funding as well, since we are part of this group.

### **9) Discussion/Questions**

The Chair opened the floor to questions.

Committee member Bediako asked what “FT” means, the Chair explained that “FT” means there is no money for this event and money needs to be fundraised. Bediako asked what the abbreviation or acronym “FT” stands for specifically. The Chair said she will bring this information at the next meeting. Bediako asked if the budget from previous years will be used, the Chair explained that we will look at the budget for 2020-2021 and then create a new budget for 2021-2022 which will go for approval to Council and the VP Finance will present this budget at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

At the next meeting, the committee will look at the finances that the Executives have used so far. The Chair is expecting there to be a decreased amount that the GSA spent this year due to COVID-19.

Committee member Choquette asked whether the audit has been completed for May 2019-April 2020. The Chair responded that the audit has been completed internally and will be presented to Council at the AGM. Committee member Choquette stated that in the previous years the audit has not been completed on time. The Chair stated that this was true, however the previous executives worked hard to bring up-to-date the audits from previous years and finally we are at the point where it is done once a year as stated.

Councillor Kamal asked whether COVID-19 has impacted the revenue stream of the GSA. The Chair stated that the revenue stream has been affected to some extent. The College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies has provided funding for the Annual Gala, but since the gala did not take place last year, the GSA had to give the money back to the college.

Councillor Sajid asked the question that some funding was used for the Holiday Hangout, but for funding that was not impacted or not used why were the budget lines not re-allocated?

The President responded that Executives were informed that we should not touch the decided budget too much as we need to spend the amount towards what is allocated per each budget line, and if we were to re-allocate budget lines then we would need to go to Council and would need to provide a rationale for every budget line re-allocation. Additionally, this would reduce our financial amount in the bank as well.

The Chair stated that she will provide the draft of the next budget and she will send committee members the definition of each budget line.

Committee member Reimer asked whether we would be going through each budget line again and discussing. The Chair responded that we need to first look at the current budget and how it was spent and then we can move forward from there.

Committee member Reimer further asked when the AGM will be taking place this year. The President responded that it will be taking place on April 13, 2021.

Next meeting will be held on March 12<sup>th</sup> at 3:30PM via WebEx.

### **Adjourn the meeting**

The Chair asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:39 PM, which was moved by Aisha Sajid and seconded by Joyce Reimer.

*All in Favour,  
Motion Carried.*



University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association  
Executive Meeting Minutes  
February 25, 2021 – Microsoft Teams

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.

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

**Regrets/Absent:** None

**Guest:** None

**1. Call to Order/Opening Remarks**

The President called the meeting to order at 5:32 PM.

**2. Approval of the Agenda**

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

The following item for information/action were added:

- Letter to the federal government (information)
- Amendment of Minutes January 28, 2021. Fee motions were approved by the GSA Board of Directors (action)
- Student academic and accommodation policy group (action)

*Motion: to approve the agenda as amended.*

*Moved: VP External Affairs.*

*Seconded: VP Academic and Student Affairs.*

*Vote: All in Favour,  
Motion carried.*

### 3. Approval of the February 11, 2021 Executive Meeting Minutes

The President asked whether there were any further amendments to the Feb 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Executive Meeting Minutes.

*Motion: to approve the February 11, 2021 Executive Meeting Minutes*

*Moved: VP Academic and Student Affairs.*

*Seconded: VP External Affairs.*

***Vote: All in Favour,  
Motion carried.***

### 4. Amendment of Minutes for January 28, 2021.

Fee motions were approved by the GSA Board of Directors. It has been amended accordingly.

*Motion: To approve the January 28, 2021 minutes as amended.*

*Moved: VP External Affairs.*

*Seconded: VP Academic and Student Affairs.*

***Vote: All in Favour,  
Motion carried.***

### 5. Items for Action

#### 5.1 Graduate Student Representative for the Associate Dean Research Review Committee, College of Dentistry.

A graduate student, Fernanda Andre, from the College of Medicine has been contacted to sit on this committee as the graduate student representative.

*Motion to approve Fernanda Andre to sit on Associate Dean Research review committee for the College of Medicine.*

*Moved: VP Academic and Student Affairs*

*Seconded: VP Indigenous Engagement*

***Vote All in Favour,  
Motion Carried (Approved via email)***

#### 5.2 Student Academic and Accommodation Policy Working Group

In 2017, Disability Services for Students underwent a name change to Access and Equity Services. This change was driven to assist students from all protected ground categories in



addition to the area of disability. The protected grounds that are now most commonly accommodated by the office are disability, family status, and religious accommodation. The current policy does not reflect the duty to accommodate all protected grounds and because of this, the policy is being revised to reflect the protected grounds for accommodation that are being requested by students of the University. A revision of this policy will be done to make it more inclusive of all protected ground categories and update procedures for the administration of accommodation requests based on these grounds. Therefore, a GSA representative was called to sit on this review.

*Motion to approve the GSA President to sit on this policy review working group.*

*Moved: VP Academic and Student Affairs.*

*Seconded: VP External Affairs.*

***Vote: All in Favour,  
Motion carried.***

### **5.3 Cheque Remittance**

Whereas GSA bylaws 5.4.4 restricts expenditure amounts above \$500, of any budget line, with the exception of salaries and Executive honorariums, without a majority vote of the Executive. BIRT that the following expenditures be authorized:

5. *Payment of \$24 000 to successful bursary applicants for the winter 2021 bursaries, which amounts to 24 bursaries (\$1000 for each successful applicant).*

*Motion: to approve the expenditures outlined in this section above*

*Move: VP Academic and Student Affairs.*

*Seconded: VP Finance and Operations.*

***Vote All in Favour,  
Motion Carried.***

## **6. Items for Information / Discussion**

### **6.1 3MT Updates**

Registration for this year's 3MT Competition is now open to all graduate students. The VP Academic and Student Affairs is currently working on the slides which will be sent to each registered student who will participate in this competition. Further details will be provided soon.

## 6.2 Indigenous Students' Initiatives

The VP Indigenous Engagement did some consultation with our senior leaders on campus to discuss possible supports for our Indigenous graduate students. The VP Indigenous Engagement explained that some students struggle with the course load in foundation courses within Indigenous studies, and she is working on addressing this issue. Additionally, the VP Indigenous Engagement is communicating with senior leaders to bring awareness to Indigenous student concerns. The VP Indigenous Engagement also mentioned that we could possibly offer a “scholarly publishing and open access” workshop, and she will provide more information on this when it is available.

## 6.3 GSA Annual Awards

The VP External Affairs will continue promoting the call for nominations for the GSA Awards Gala. The number of applications is low therefore, the GSA has decided to formally extend the deadline. The new deadline for the Awards Gala is on March 22, 2021 at 5:00 PM.

## 6.4 Canadian Federation of Students Lobby Week

The VP External Affairs as well as a GSA academic councilor attended the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) lobby week where they were able to communicate with MPs from their district and bring up student issues/concerns. A presentation on the five goals of CFS was also the main topic of discussion during the lobby week. A feedback form was sent by CFS to attendees to provide input on how to improve lobby week.

## 6.5 GSA Budget Update

A financial statement has been sent to each executive with an updated expenses YTD January 31, 2021. This information has to be taken into consideration when future purchases or financial expenses are done.

## 6.6 Tax Clinic

The VP Finance and Operations is organizing tax information sessions in collaboration with Canada Revenue Agency Outreach, the GSA will be providing two sessions to graduate students on March 30, 2021 and April 7, 2021. Further information will be released soon.

## 6.7 Studentcare Agreement

A meeting with a Studentcare Representative, Robyn Pachas, has been held on February 16, 2021 to discuss the renewal of our contract. Studentcare respectfully proposed a renewal of our mandate for another 5-year term from 2021 to 2026 and a modest,

inflationary increase to our service fees. This would provide a mandate and strong service infrastructure during the RFQ process and any operational or benefit changes that may come out of that in-depth analysis. Also, this would allow them the stability to meet their best business practices and guarantees their service fees for the duration of the agreement, providing continued cost-stability for the GSA. The inflationary increase of \$0.54 per plan to \$13.50, from our current level of \$12.96 was proposed. This has been approved by the GSA Executives internally and this increase will not affect any changes on the health and dental fees that are collected from our graduate students. We also reviewed some specific commitments from Student Care, fast forward to the year 2021 (the proposal is attached in these minutes).

### **6.8 ThinkGrad Update**

The President attended the ThinkGrad meeting on February 16, 2021. Discussions on dissolving the association was brought forward by the members, as well as other options were presented if members chose not to dissolve due to the legal implications. A recommendation to eliminate the fee option without the dissolution of the organization was also brought forward. There were issues in the past with the transition of executives and this impacted financial access, which is why the recommendation to remove fees was proposed. The President recommended that the VP Finance advise the Budget and Finance Committee to not include ThinkGrad fees for the next fiscal year.

### **6.9 Letter to the Federal Government**

Incoming and returning international students arriving in Canada have to isolate for three days until they get a result for the COVID-19 test. Those students have to pay up to \$2000 in hotel fees for the mandatory three-day quarantine. We are supporting students and advocating for this fee removal through a letter that has been compiled by the Graduate Student Societies of U15 and will be addressed to the federal government. Conversations with senior leaders at the UofS are also being held on this issue.

### **7. Other Business**

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

### **8. Confidential Session**

### **9. In-Camera Session**

### **10. Adjournment of Meeting**

The President asked for the adjournment of this meeting.

*Motion: to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 PM.*

*Moved: VP External Affairs.*

*Seconded: VP Academic and Student Affairs.*

***Vote: All in Favour,  
Motion carried.***

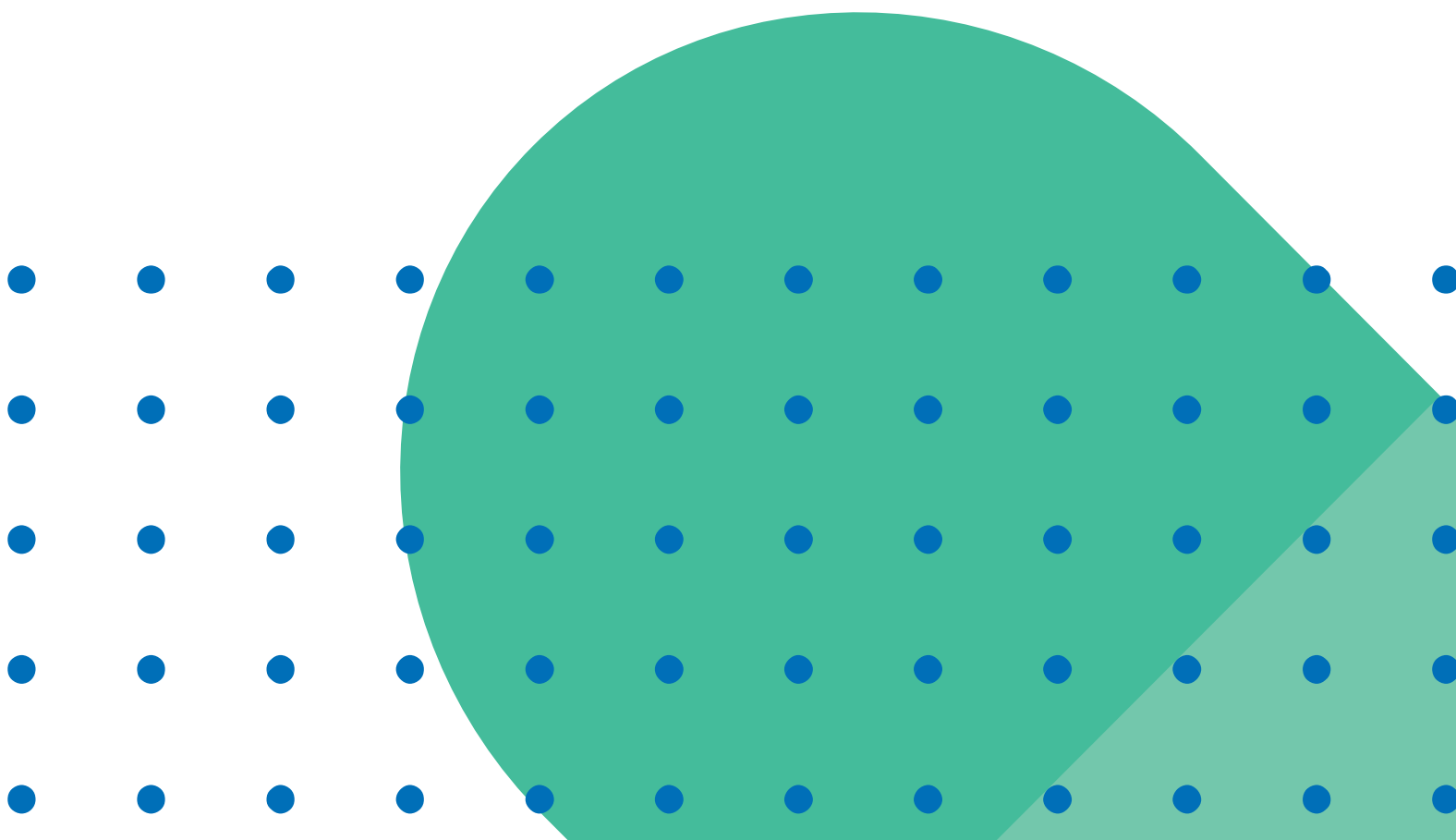


# University of Saskatchewan Graduate Students' Association Health & Dental Plan

## Proposal for Renewed Mandate



February 2021



## GSA & STUDENTCARE: OUR ROOTS AND RELATIONSHIP

The University of Saskatchewan Graduate Students' Association (GSA) and Studentcare has had a strong and successful relationship since 2003. During this time we have shepherded the Plan through periods of volatility, benefit adjustments, and changing usage patterns. At every stage, our partnership has produced tangible results for GSA members. We hope to continue collaborating as the GSA Health & Dental Plan evolves to meet the needs of current and future students.

Studentcare is an organization founded by students, with students, and for students. Today, we are the leading provider of student health care in Canada, serving over 1,000,000 students from 100 partner student associations and post-secondary institutions. Our partners include those at the University of British Columbia, the University of Victoria, the University of Alberta, the University of Toronto, McGill University, and of course—the University of Saskatchewan.

Some highlights of our services and contributions are:

- After identifying the overwhelming need for a graduate student extended health & dental plan, the GSA put out a request for proposals (RFP) in 2003 for a health plan provider. Studentcare responded to this RFP and was selected as the successful partner.
- The GSA unanimously renewed Studentcare's mandate after competitive review processes involving other health plan providers in 2006.
- In the 2006/2007 policy year, Studentcare was able to find significant savings in unnecessary administrative costs due to the strong financial planning of the GSA. These savings were approximately \$70 per member, which allowed the GSA to implement long-requested vision coverage for its members.
- In 2012 Studentcare took the GSA's Plan to market through a process known as a request for quotes (RFQ). Multiple insurance companies provided bids on the Plan, and this competition resulted in a reduction in Plan Premiums.
- Once again, the GSA chose to re-evaluate our mandate in 2014/15. After a review process, Studentcare's mandate was once again unanimously renewed.
- Studentcare introduced our first Pharmacy network in 2015, saving GSA members thousands over the following years.
- Due to the long-standing prudent financial management of the Plan, the GSA was able to, once again, increase benefits for its members while keeping its Plan Fee steady in 2020. Eyeglasses, psychology, and basic dental coverage were all increased in response to student feedback.
- In a nimble response to mental health concerns brought forward from isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic, the GSA implemented Empower Me, a 24/7 365 mental health service that students can access via phone, chat, or video anywhere.

## NEW INNOVATIONS

### Legal Protection Program

A dispute with a landlord, employer, academic institution, or between individuals can be intimidating and difficult for a student, especially since finding and engaging a lawyer is often a lengthy and costly process. For this reason, in addition to facilitating access to health care, Studentcare now offers its partner associations access to a legal counseling service that allows students to consult a lawyer for any legal question. The Legal Protection Program gives students access to legal representation in housing, employment, or academic issues, with services tailored to their needs. For a low annual rate, students' can access unlimited legal counseling via the program's helpline and unlimited representation in covered disciplines.

### Virtual Healthcare

In partnership with Dialogue, Studentcare has launched a virtual healthcare service, which provides students with unlimited 24/7 access to licensed health experts, including doctors, nurse practitioners, and care coordinators who will direct them and their families to the correct specialists and facilities.

Our virtual health solution provides virtual healthcare services to our members through Dialogue's virtual platform, available via the web or through a mobile application. Unlimited access to the following is available:

- 24/7 bilingual care available across all provinces
- Fast access to medical professionals via chat, video, or phone
- Video consultations with licensed doctors and nurses
- Referrals and requisitions with specialists and labs
- Free delivery of prescriptions to a nearby Rexall, another local pharmacy, or a student's door (where available)
- Care navigation and concierge accompanying patients to the right resources
- Proactive follow-up with a member of Dialogue's care team

Students are guaranteed to be able to speak with a medical professional within 10 minutes of completing the questionnaire on the application.

## UPCOMING PROJECTS & COMMITMENTS

Fast forward to the year 2021, and the time has come to review our mandate. Studentcare would be humbled to once again receive a renewed mandate from the GSA as their Health & Dental Plan provider. In this section, we will review some specific commitments we will make, if renewed, to improve the Plan.

### Winter Term & Part-Time Student Auto Enrollment

Studentcare is constantly looking for ways to better serve your members. As of writing, new Winter term graduate students are not automatically enrolled in the Health & Dental Plan. Similarly, part-time students are also not automatically accessed the Health & Dental Fee. This means that these students must manually enroll for their coverage. Over the past few years, we have seen an

increasing number of cases where students were unaware of this need, they believed they had automatic coverage like their Fall-intake or full-time peers. As such, they did not enroll in the Plan. Additionally, we have seen many instances of full-time students dropping to part-time and not realizing they are no longer automatically enrolled. Therefore, they will also unknowingly lose benefits. With the advent of an increased number of distanced learning students moving to part-time during COVID-19, we have seen a sharp increase in this specific case in 2020. As part of our new mandate, we commit to working with the GSA and the University of Saskatchewan to implement automatic enrollment for January-intake and part-time graduate students. This change would positively result in these students not being left without critical health & dental coverage.

### Competitive Marketing: Insurer RFQ Process in 2022

When conditions are optimum, Studentcare supports students' societies by taking their Health & Dental Plan to market through a managed Request For Quotation (RFQ) process. This involves taking the Plan to tender by inviting multiple insurers to provide competitive quotes for premiums, which we analyze thoroughly and transparently with GSA stakeholders. It both stimulates competition and provides a unique opportunity to take a “deep dive” into Plan financials. The GSA last conducted an RFQ in 2012. As it has been 9 years since we feel the time is right to take the Plan to market again.

Conducting an RFQ process requires a significant investment of time and resources, and it is important to time this process to provide an optimum advantage to the GSA. There are several factors to consider, but we tentatively suggest undertaking this process in Spring 2022.

## RENEWAL OF MANDATE & SERVICE FEE GUARANTEE

Studentcare is committed to providing our clients with financial transparency and flat, fixed provider fees to ensure your peace of mind and to avoid any potential conflict of interest. Unlike with traditional percentage-based broker fees, we do not benefit if the GSA Health & Dental Plan premium increases, either through benefit increases or increases in the cost of services. We feel this is important to provide you with comprehensive professional advice and to encourage a high level of awareness and usage on the part of your members while maintaining the strictest standards of impartiality. This structure has served the GSA well: allowing successive improvements to Plan coverage, with no impact on our fee.

However, just as important as our commitment to a fixed fee is our commitment to continually improving and expanding the services we offer, and with that our investment in human resources and information technology. These innovations and efficiencies helped keep costs low and stable over a long period. Our investment in innovation also revolutionized the way your members experience their Health & Dental Plan—from opting out and making claims to our ability to advocate for complicated Drug Exceptions: we are truly proud of where we started and how far we have come.

Given the critical focus and investment in resources that are required at this juncture, Studentcare respectfully proposes a renewal of our mandate for another **5-year term from 2021 to 2026 and a modest, inflationary increase to our service fees**. This would provide a mandate and strong service infrastructure during the RFQ process and any operational or benefit changes that may come out of that in-depth analysis. Also, this would allow us the stability to meet our best business practices,



and **guarantees our service fees** for the duration of the agreement, providing continued cost-stability for the GSA. We propose an inflationary increase of \$0.54 per plan to \$13.50, from our current level of \$12.96.

Studentcare Provider Fees	Health	Dental
Current: Annual Per Enrolled Member	\$12.96	\$12.96
Proposed: Annual Per Enrolled Member 2021 - duration of next agreement	\$13.50	\$13.50



## University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association

### President's Report - GSA Council Meeting, March 2021

Dear Councillors,

The GSA Executives are preparing for the end of the fiscal year and have been focusing on the following initiatives:

1. Tuition
2. Three Minute Thesis Competition
3. GSA Annual Awards
4. Winter Bursaries
5. Graduate Professional Skills

#### **1. Tuition**

On behalf of the GSA Executives, I would like to express my disappointment in regard to the tuition consultation for the 2021-2022 academic year. As of today, March 3, 2021, the GSA Executives did not have any tuition consultations with the Provost's team to discuss the content of the tuition proposal. Additionally, after asking for the tuition proposal for the past 2-3 months, the GSA Executives only learned of specific numbers very recently, when the deadline for Council is fast approaching. This process is far from being transparent, clear, and consultative. The GSA Executives have no place to properly advocate for our graduate students and provide input and feedback in the tuition proposal. We will continue to seek to be included in the conversation and implore senior administration to open the door for conversation.

## **2. Three Minute Thesis Competition**

The Three Minute Thesis Competition is an essential event that allows students to share their outstanding research interests and celebrates our graduate students at the UofS. Therefore, this event will take place virtually on **March 26, 2021**. Videos will be recorded and shared with judges for further evaluation. The recorded 3MT videos will be released on our website once the process has been completed. We would also like to thank the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for their financial support in making this event possible.

## **3. Annual Awards**

Due to the ongoing pandemic situation, the GSA Executives have decided not to hold the Annual Awards Gala in-person this year, which would have been taking place at the Remai Modern Museum under normal circumstances. The GSA will be hosting a virtual event where we will be announcing award winners and delivering or mailing their awards to their place of residence.

## **4. Winter 2021 Bursaries**

The GSA bursary applications closed on February 25, 2021 and successful bursary applicants will be informed by March 10, 2021. We received over 100 applications this term, and we would like to thank the College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for continuing to support our students financially through these bursaries during this difficult time.

## **5. 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. We hosted another “Financial Literacy Seminar” this term where we invited Professor Brian Lane back from the Edwards School of Business. Additionally, we will be hosting a “Resume and Cover Letter Writing” workshop in collaboration with the Student Employment and Career Centre on March 10, 2021, as well as two additional workshops that will focus on interviews, networking, and job search on March 17 & 24, 2021 respectively.

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

### VP Finance and Operations report - GSA Council Meeting, March 2021

Dear GSA Councilors,

Please, find below the two main areas I together with the other GSA executives are working on during the winter term:

- **Need-based bursary, Winter 2021**
- **Free tax clinics 2020, Winter 2021**

#### **1. Need-based Bursary**

The call for bursary applications are closed and the bursary committee is in the process of reviewing. A final decision will be further informed to all applicants by March 10, 2021.

#### **2. Free tax clinics**

The Graduate Student's Association (GSA) University of Saskatchewan, in partnership with the Canada Revenue Agency's Saskatchewan Outreach team, will be hosting the following two virtual Tax and Benefit information sessions in order to support students.

1. Tuesday March 30th 4:30pm to 5:30pm
2. Wednesday April 7th 4:30pm to 5:30pm

A general overview of the benefits and credits the Canada Revenue, agency administers including the Canada Child Benefit (CCB), GST/HST Credit, and Climate Action Incentive. As well we will provide some resources for students to help them file their taxes. This information has already been updated in our website and will be sent via email to all graduate students.

I look forward to working with each one of you and making your voices heard as far as my role allows me to. If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at [gsa.fin@usask.ca](mailto:gsa.fin@usask.ca)

Thank you,

Mery Mendoza

VP Finance and Operations

Graduate Students' Association



## University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association

March 2021

### RE: VP Academic and Student Affairs Report to Council

Dear Council Members:

Please find below my March report to council.

#### 1) 3MT Competition

A reminder to Council that the 3MT competition event will be hosted on March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The prospective judges are being contacted. The deadline for abstracts is March 19<sup>th</sup> at 11:59PM. All 3MT participants will be competing for 1st, 2nd, 3rd place and people's choice prizes at the local level valued at \$1000, \$500, \$250, \$250, respectively. The winner will secure a spot at the Western Regionals hosted on May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2021 by Athabasca University. A recording of each 3MT presentation will be uploaded to the GSA website.

#### 2) Meetings

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

Date	Meeting
February 25, 2021	GSA Executive Meeting
February 26, 2021	GSA Governance Committee Meeting
March 2, 2021	Fall Planning Committee Academic Misconduct Webinar

March 3, 2021	Executives meet with Dr. Debbie Burshtyn USFA Bi-monthly meeting
March 4, 2021	Tuition Townhall CGPS Council
March 8, 2021	GSA Executives meet with Provost Airini
March 9, 2021	Executives meet with Dr. Walker GSA Election Orientation
March 10, 2021	Graduate Academic Affairs meeting
March 11, 2021	GSA Election Orientation Student Forum meeting GSA Executive Meeting
March 12, 2021	GSA Governance Committee Meeting
March 16, 2021	GSA Election Orientation Teaching, Learning and Academic Resources Committee





## University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association

March 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 discuss various topics and events for the fall and winter terms.

#### 2) **Health Chat Events**

The following health chat events will continue to be offered for the fall 2020 term:

##### *2.1 Financial Literacy Seminar*

The Financial Literacy Seminar was held on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021 from 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM, where Professor Brian Lane from the Edwards School of Business presented on several financial topics, provided information on financial investment, how to manage finances, and answered students' questions. This event was well-received by graduate students; more than 15 people attended this event.

##### *2.2 Resume & Cover Letter Writing Workshop*

The GSA will hold another resume and cover writing workshop on March 10, 2021, where we have invited Dawne Warner from Student Employment and Career Centre to speak on resume building, cover letters, and other skill sets required for the working world.

### 2.3 Mental Health & Wellness Workshop

The GSA will be holding 'The Mental Health Workshop' in collaboration with the Student Wellness Center on March 15, 2021, at 4:00 PM via WebEx. The guest speaker of this event is Dr. Murray Drew, who will share his journey with mental health.

The posters and links for upcoming events have been created and GSA is promoting them on social media.

### 3) GSA Standing Committees

The GSA Sustainability Committee and Diversity Committee met first-time last month. During the first meeting of each committee, members unanimously appointed the chairs and discussed the upcoming event which will be organized soon.

### 4) GSA AWARD GALA, 2021

The deadline for the GSA Annual Awards nomination has been extended to March 22, 2021, at 5:00 PM. I am tracking all the nominations package received and sending acknowledgment accordingly and also sending reminders through PAWS every week as well.

### 5) Meetings/Events

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

Date	Meetings/Events
February 11, 2021	GSA Executive Meeting
February 12, 2021	Introductory meeting with Dr. Airini
February 16, 2021	ThinkGrad General Meeting
February 16, 2021	GSA/Student care New Agreement meeting

February 16, 2021	Student Forum Executive Meeting
February 17, 2021	GSA Sustainability Committee Meeting
February 18, 2021	GSA Diversity Committee Meeting
February 19, 2021	PRT/USSU/GSA/President Stoicheff meeting
February 22, 2021	CGPS Equity & International Committee meeting
February 23, 2021	Financial Literacy Seminar
February 25, 2021	GSA Executive Meeting
March 2, 2021	Fall 2021 Planning with Patti McDougall
March 4, 2021	CGPS Tuition Town Hall

**Graduate Saskatoon Transit UPASS Fee:**

WHEREAS the UPASS is available in the fall and winter terms.

WHEREAS our agreement with Saskatoon Transit indicates that the increase in price of the UPASS is correlated to the Saskatoon January CPI.

WHEREAS according to the Saskatchewan Bureau of Statistics, the Saskatoon January 2021 CPI has been determined at 1.1 %.

WHEREAS the increase in fee for the UPASS must account for the Saskatoon January CPI (1.1 %) and a \$3.00 administration fee, which will be used to cover the 1 % University administration charges as well as the USSU charges for administering the UPASS to GSA members.

WHEREAS our current UPASS fee is \$114.16, of which \$111.16 is remitted to Saskatoon Transit.

WHEREAS the added 1.1 % makes the new fee remitted to Saskatoon transit as \$112.38. The added administration fee makes the new UPASS fee as \$115.38.

By recommendation from the Board, and in keeping with our agreement with Saskatoon Transit; BE IT RESOLVED that the new UPASS fee increase from \$114.16 to \$115.38 for the 2021 - 2022 academic year, so as to account for the Saskatoon January CPI.

*Motion moved by Mery Mendoza and seconded by Humaria Inam.*