



**University of Saskatchewan  
Graduate Students' Association  
Annual General Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday April 19, 2022. Zoom 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.**

*\*Zoom Meeting: The April 19, 2022, Annual General Meeting took place via Zoom due to the global health pandemic of COVID-19, where the Government of Saskatchewan along with University Administration has put social guidelines in place to curb the spread of the virus.*

**Chair: Sadia Afrin Lema**

**Recording Secretary: Nicole Pasloski**

**Participants:** Jory Litt-Jukes, Amy Jimmo, Kimberlee Dubé, Devin Wittow, Kayla Arisman, , John Malyk, Jensen Cherewyk, Rachel Harris, Natasha Boyes, Maddie Stewart, Abbas Fazel, Nichole Stoll, Michelle Ross, Ozra Mohammadi, Elysa Proulx-Cullen, Behdad Saed, Luis Alejandro Recalde Rosero, Fidelia A. Orji, Amanda Gannon, Kamiar Ghoseiri, Sristy Sumana Nath, Ayla Zehtab-Jadid, Amirsaeed Hosseini Jey, KC Hall, Rosmary Martinez, Rodeen Omar, Irini Soubry, Shamse Tasnim Cynthia, Grace Rath, Olsa Griebel, Ninu Kallingal, Shuqi Ren, Richa Tikoo, Riel Castro-Zunti, Jennifer Le, Pezhman, Iyanu Kumayon, Natasha Mostat

**Executives:** Rifat Zahan (President), Mostafa Kamal (VP Academic and Student Affairs), Ehsan Moradi (VP Finance and Operations), Devin Cherneski (VP External Affairs).

### **1. Call to Order/Opening remarks**

The agenda package was emailed with the Zoom meeting link for online participation. The Chair welcomed members of the council and called the meeting to order at 5:06 PM. Ms. Nicole Pasloski, the Recording Secretary of the Council compiled the meeting minutes.

### **2. Approval of the Agenda**

The Chair asked for amendments to the agenda as circulated via email.

There was an amendment from the VP Finance and Operations via the President that was added as item **4.6**.

*Motion to approve the amendments and agenda. (Proulx-Cullen/Dubé)*

**Carried**

### **3. Approval of GSA Annual General Meeting 2021 – April 13th, 2021**

The Chair asked if there were any changes before the minutes were called for approval.

*Motion to approve the April 13th, 2021, AGM minutes. (Proulx-Cullen/Cherneski)*

**Carried**

### **4. Motions to receive GSA Standing Committee Reports and Executive Minutes**

#### **4.1.2 Governance committee meeting minutes**

**4.1.2.1 Governance Committee Meeting Minutes - January 21, 2022**

**4.1.2.2 Governance Committee Meeting Minutes - February 1, 2022**

**4.1.2.3 Governance Committee Meeting Minutes - February 9, 2022**

**4.1.2.4 Governance Committee Meeting Minutes - February 16, 2022**

**4.1.2.5 Governance Committee Meeting Minutes - February 23, 2022**

**4.1.2.6 Governance Committee Meeting Minutes - March 2, 2022**

#### **4.1.3 Bursary Selection Committee Meeting Minutes**

**4.1.3.1 Bursary Selection Committee Meeting Minutes – July 21, 2021**

**4.1.3.2 Bursary Selection Committee Meeting Minutes – July 27, 2021**

**4.1.3.3 Bursary Selection Committee Meeting Minutes – November 22, 2021**

**4.1.3.4 Bursary Selection Committee Meeting Minutes – November 28, 2021**

#### **4.1.4 Sustainability Committee Meeting Minutes**

**4.1.4.1 Sustainability Committee Meeting Minutes – February 2, 2022**

#### **4.1.5 Awards Committee Meeting Minutes**

**4.1.5.1 Awards Committee Meeting Minutes – March 8, 2022**

**4.1.5.2 Awards Committee Meeting Minutes – March 28, 2022**

*Motion to receive the GSA Standing Committee Reports and Executive Minutes. (Zahan/Dubé)*

**Carried**

#### **4.2 Motion: Honorary Lifetime Membership**

WHEREAS Section 5.1.4 of the GSA Constitution permits the naming of an Honorary Lifetime Member which is purely symbolic. Such a position shall be awarded by a majority vote at a General Meeting.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Reggie Nyamekye be made an honorary lifetime member in recognition of her diligence, dedication, and years of service to the GSA that served to enhance the image, reputation, and standing of the Association.

Welcome and congratulations were offered by Mostafa Kamal. Kamal spoke of Nyamekye's dedication and abilities, her knowledge and what an asset she is to the GSA.

*Motion to bestow an honorary lifetime Membership on Reggie Nyamekye. (Zahan/Kamal).*

**Carried. 1 opposed. 1 abstained.**

#### **4.3 Motion: Governance Documents**

WHEREAS Section 8.6 of the Constitution of the University of Saskatchewan Graduate Student Association Inc. (GSA) allows a General Meeting of the membership to amend the GSA Constitution, Bylaws, and Polices.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Bylaws and Policies be so amended as recommended by the GSA Governance Committee, as set forth in the following supporting documents (Revised Bylaws, Revised Polices) and take effect May 1, 2022.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the membership consents to the correction of non-substantive corrections, such as numbering, section order and typographical errors, which may arise following these amendments.

The Chair asked for any questions on motion 4.3 at this time. There were none.

*Motion to amend governance documents. (Zahan/Kamal).*

**Carried**

*Proulx-Cullen abstained as she was the Chair (of the Governance Committee) of that meeting.*

#### **4.4 Motion: Approval of the GSA Financial Statements**

WHEREAS Section 8.1.2.1 of the GSA Constitution governs the presentation of Financial Statements to the Membership.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the reviewed financial statements of the University of Saskatchewan Graduate Students' Association Inc. be accepted for the year ended April 30, 2021, and April 30, 2022.

*Motion to approve the GSA 2021-2022 Financial Statements. (Moradi/Zahan).*

**Carried**

*The VP Finance and Operations was indisposed at this point of the meeting and unable to answer questions. Questions may be sent to his email.*

#### **4.5 Motion: Approval of the GSA Auditor for the 2022-2023 Financial Year**

WHEREAS Section 8.1.2.2 of the GSA Constitution and Section 149(1) of the Saskatchewan Non-Profits Corporation Act governs the appointment of an auditor.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Buckberger Baerg and Partners LLP be appointed as auditors for the 2022-2023 Financial Year.

As the VP Finance and Operations was indisposed at this point in the meeting, the President spoke in his stead. This company has been used as auditor for the GSA for many years.

*Motion to approve Buckberger Baerg and Partners LLP as auditors for the 2022-2023 Financial year. (Moradi/Zahan)*

**Carried**

#### **4.6 Motion: Approval of withdrawal of \$40,000 from the GSA account**

WHEREAS GSA executives proposed the withdrawal of \$40,000 from the GSA account to distribute a special GSA bursary due to excessive demands from students which were approved by the GSA Budget and Finance Committee.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT The request for withdrawal of \$40,000 be accepted for the year ended April 30, 2023, and April 30, 2022.

The President, the VP Finance and Operations, and the VP Academic and Student Affairs spoke on the motion and explained the increased need for financial support since the beginning of COVID. This was requested by the Budget and Finance Committee to give more money in the form of needs-based bursaries. The College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (CGPS) will be requested to match the funding. This money previously has not been earmarked for anything.

**Question:** The wording of the motion needed clarification: is the money for students who applied for bursaries in the 2021-2022 academic year but previously did not receive anything?

**Answer:** That is correct. The additional money is going to students who applied to the GSA in the 2021-2022 Academic year and because of the demand, not all students were able to be approved. This withdrawal is going toward current Graduate students who have already applied but did not receive any financial aid from the GSA.

*Motion to approve withdrawal of \$40,000 from the GSA account for Graduate student bursaries due to excessive demand. (Moradi/Kamal)*

**Carried**

## **5. GSA Executives' Annual Report**

### **5.1 President's Report**

Highlights of the report were conveyed to graduate students and was available in the agenda package, as well as posted on the GSA website for review. The President spoke about how much they learned and how much they enjoyed their position, as well as how challenging it was personally and academically. The President also spoke about the importance of the position as a representative of the over 4400 Graduate students. The full report is online and is roughly 40 pages. The President thanked all present including council members, executives, office staff, and other administrative roles.

### **5.2 VP Finance and Operations Report**

The VP Finance and Operations spoke highly of the outgoing President as well as the other executives, thanking all of them and speaking highly of the experience as an executive as well as the difficulties that arose. They emphasized their motivation of always trying to consider what was best for Graduate students and trying to improve student life for them. The goal was always to successfully manage the finances and to financially support students where possible. The full report, including meeting attendance, is available online to view.

### **5.3 VP Academic and Student Affairs**

The VP Academic and Student Affairs thanked everyone including all the Councillors, committee volunteers, and all of the current, and outgoing executives for their dedication and commitment to the GSA. The VP Academic and Student Affairs finds himself incredibly lucky to have worked with such a great group of people and is moving into the position of the GSA President for the coming academic year. He spoke of some highlights included in his report as well as his goals for the coming year in his new position and thanked everyone for their hard work.

### **5.4 VP External Affairs**

The VP External Affairs thanked everyone and shared that he really enjoyed his tenure as a part of the GSA. Enormous responsibilities with all of the VP positions, and he is confident that his tenure was handled and was managed to the absolute best of his abilities. The VP External Affairs shared some highlights from the report that is also available to read online. He was particularly proud of their interactions with MPs and interactions with policy-makers. He thanked everyone for the opportunity and for the year.

### **5.5 Q&A**

**Question:** For all executives: do you think the upcoming challenges are a continuation of current challenges, or what do you think is on the horizon, and what new issues will the incoming GSA Executives face?

**President:** It was difficult when Grad students are working entirely from home, they don't understand what goes into running the Association, there is miscommunication, and Graduate students are disconnected from the campus community.

**Question:** Commendation and congratulations to the outgoing executives. We observed members (Chairs and VP Indigenous Engagement) resign and there is concerns about it. Why did this happen? Is it based on workload? If so, is workload something that should be reassessed?

**President:** We do not want to comment since they all resigned for very specific and different reasons. It could be workload and spreading duties over more positions could be a possibility, but this is a complex issue with many individual opinions involved.

**Question:** Is there anything else in the works to assist students as inflation continues to affect graduate students?

**President:** There will be crisis financial aid available to students as specified by senior leadership at the university. They are pursuing policies with graduate students to ensure a minimum amount of years of funding. This is an ongoing and pressing issue.

The executives have been advocating for graduate students to at least make what someone working at minimum wage would make, as well as four years of guaranteed funding for Ph.D. students.

**Question:** What is the plan for the VP Indigenous Engagement position?

**President:** The Elections Committee often receives zero nominations and it is difficult to get people to put their names forward. It is important that we are aware and look to engage, but people are not putting their names forward.

**Question:** Is there a plan regarding unconditional opt-outs for the Saskatoon Transit Fee?

**President:** This will be a question for the incoming executives, this is an ongoing conversation.

## **6. Election Results**

The Chair acknowledged the work of Candace, the Office Manager and the Elections and Referenda Committee. She also acknowledges all those who voted.

## **7. Introduction of new Executives**

**President: Mostafa Kamal**

**VP Finance and Operations: Ehsan Moradi**

**VP Academic and Student Affairs: Sristy Sumana Nath**

**VP External Affairs: Ozra Mohammadi**

**VP Indigenous Engagement: *Vacant***

## **8. Other Business**

There was no other business put forward at this time.

## **9. Adjournment**

The Chair moved to adjourn at 5:51 PM. (*Dube/Cherneski*)

**Carried**







Academic Council	Name of Councillors and (alternates)	Sep. 2021	Oct.26 2021	Nov.23 2021	Dec.14 2021	Jan. 2022	Feb. 2022	Mar. 2022	Apr. 2022	Jun. 2022	Aug. 2022
Physical and Engineering Physics - PEGASUS	Kimberlee Dube – Councillor Nicholas Simonson - Alternate	N/A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Pharmacy & Nutrition Graduate Students' Council	Jennifer Chami - Councillor Asiyah Suchak - Alternate	N/A	A	A	P	A	P	P	A		
Plant Science	Sandesh Neupane – Councillor Adam Carter - Alternate	N/A		P	P	P	A	A	A		
Physical Therapy Student Society (PTSS)	Michael Tweten - Councillor Devin Wittow – Alternate	N/A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		
SENSA	Tatiana Corello - Councillor Jaclyn Porter - Councillor Rory Wheat - Alternate	N/A	P	A	A	A	P	P	A		
SPHSA		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A			
Sociology GSA	Kayla Arisman – Councillor Ayla Zehtab-Jadid – Councillor Shayla Batty – Councillor Iyesogie Iyiewuare – Alternate Grace Rath -Alternate Kamal Abu-Hena – Alternate	N/A	P	P	A	A	P	P	P		
Soil Science Graduate Student Association	Amy Jimmo Councillor Eric Neil – Alternate	N/A	P	A	P	P	P	P	P		
Toxicology Graduate Students' Association	Jensen Cherewyk – Councillor Hannah Mahoney - Alternate	N/A	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCVM) GSA	Jennifer Abi Younes - Councillor Jade Sands – Alternate Christopher Zinck - Alternate	N/A	A	A	P	A	P	P	A		

<b>Academic Council</b>	<b>Name of Councillors and (alternates)</b>	<b>Sep. 2021</b>	<b>Oct.26 2021</b>	<b>Nov. 2021</b>	<b>Dec. 2021</b>	<b>Jan. 2022</b>	<b>Feb. 2022</b>	<b>Mar. 2022</b>	<b>Apr. 2022</b>	<b>Jun. 2022</b>	<b>Aug. 2022</b>
Exec. President	Rifat Zahan	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Exec. VP Finance and Operations	Ehsan Moradi	P	P	P	P	A	P	P	P		
Exec. VP Academic and Student Affairs	Mostafa Kamal	R	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		
Exec. VP External Affairs	Devin Cherneski	P	P	P	A	P	P	P	P		
Exec. VP Indigenous Engagement	Tina Alexis	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	A	N/A	N/A		