



Graduate Students' Association

University of Saskatchewan-Graduate Students' Association (GSA)

Wednesday, March 5th, 2024; 17:00-19:00

Meeting Location: Online

“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

Chair: Shaily Tandekar

Recording Secretary: Arman Heydari

- **Call to Order**

The Chair, Shaily Tandekar, welcomed everyone to the Graduate Students Association meeting for February 2025. She expressed her gratitude to the executive team for their support and emphasized her excitement about working with all attendees. She extended a warm welcome to the council members, students, and GSA executives, appreciating their dedication to supporting the graduate student community.

Shaily highlighted the importance of maintaining an environment where everyone feels heard and respected. She encouraged open discussions that acknowledge different perspectives while ensuring a safe and inclusive space for all. She reaffirmed her commitment to fostering collaboration and meaningful discussions to enhance the graduate student experience.

Before proceeding with the agenda, Shaily acknowledged that the meeting was being held on Treaty 6 territory and the homeland of the Métis. She paid respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of this land and reaffirmed the commitment to maintaining relationships with one another.

The meeting was called to order at 5:04 PM after the quorum was met. Attendees were asked to record their attendance

- **Rules and Regulation**

Before proceeding with the agenda, the Chair introduced the rules and regulations for the meeting.

- **Agenda: Approval of Agenda**

The chair stated that today's agenda was emailed to all council members and posted on the GSA website as well. The chair then asked if there were any amendments to the agenda package.

Hearing none, he called for a mover and a seconder to approve the agenda.

As the majority of the council voted in favor, the motion was approved.

- **Agenda: Motion to Receive GSA Council Meeting Minutes**

- **GSA Council Meeting Minutes for November**

The meeting moved to accept the GSA Council Meeting Minutes for November.

A motion was made and seconded.

A vote was held, and the minutes were passed with a majority vote in favor.

➤ **GSA Council Meeting Minutes for December**

The meeting moved to accept the GSA Council Meeting Minutes for December.

A motion was made and seconded.

A vote was held, and the minutes were passed with a majority vote in favor.

➤ **GSA Council Meeting Minutes for January**

The meeting moved to accept the GSA Council Meeting Minutes for January.

A motion was made and seconded.

A vote was held, and the minutes were passed with a majority vote in favor.

• **Agenda: Motion to Receive GSA Executive Meeting Minutes**

➤ **GSA Executive Meeting Minutes for January 3rd, 10th, & 28th, 2025**

The meeting moved to accept the GSA Executive Meeting Minutes for January 3rd, 10th, & 28th.

A motion was made and seconded.

A vote was held, and the minutes were passed with a majority vote in favor.

• **Agenda: Motion to receive first awards committee meeting minutes**

The meeting moved to accept first awards committee meeting minutes.

A motion was made and seconded.

A vote was held, and the minutes were passed with a majority vote in favor.

• **Agenda: Motion to remove Stella Aluko from the Awards 2025 Committee due to lack of participation**

The meeting moved to remove Stella Aluko from the Awards 2025 Committee due to lack of participation.

A motion was made and seconded.

A vote was held, and the minutes were passed with a majority vote in favor.

• **Agenda: Motion to receive Governance committee meeting minutes January 31st and February 14th**

The meeting moved to accept the GSA Executive Meeting Minutes for January 3rd, 10th, & 28th.

A motion was made and seconded.

A vote was held, and the minutes were passed with a majority vote in favor.

- **Agenda: Approval of Amendments to the GSA Policy**

David Ohene-Amoako, Chair of the GSA Governance Committee, addressed the council regarding amendments to the GSA policy. He explained that the committee had received several proposed amendments from the Executive Committee. After reviewing the amendments and discussing them with the executives, the Governance Committee determined that the changes were necessary and beneficial. The committee made a few clarifications and ultimately approved all amendments. David presented the approved amendments to the council for final acceptance, so they could become part of the working document.

Shaily then called for a mover and a seconder to support the approval of the amendments. Lindsay Carlson, VP Finance, requested clarification on what exactly was being voted on. After discussion, David suggested reviewing the amendments one by one, allowing executives responsible for each amendment to provide explanations before proceeding with the vote.

Lindsay Carlson offered to lead the discussion, as she had authored most of the amendments. She proposed sharing the document on-screen and reviewing each amendment individually before voting. Shaily agreed with this approach, and the council proceeded with reviewing and voting on the amendments.

- **Agenda: GSA Policy revision 2025**

Amendment 1: Removal of the Association Student Handbook Policy

The Association Student Handbook Policy is being removed because it is no longer cost-effective. The resources spent on printing and maintaining this policy could be reallocated to more effective digital awareness methods. Additionally, relevant policy information is already available through online resources and GSA communications.

The meeting moved for this policy revision, a motion was made and seconded. A vote was held, and the policy revision was approved with a majority vote in favor.

Amendment 2: Removal of the ThinkGRAD Section

ThinkGRAD is an organization that no longer exists, making this section irrelevant. The removal ensures that outdated references are eliminated from GSA documentation to avoid confusion and maintain clarity in policies.

The meeting moved for this policy revision, a motion was made and seconded. A vote was held, and the policy revision was approved with a majority vote in favor.

Amendment 3: Fee Waiver Approval Process for GSA Commons Bookings

A new requirement mandates that all fee waivers for bookings of the GSA Commons must receive unanimous approval from the GSA Executive. Additionally, fee waiver decisions must be documented and transparently reported. This ensures fairness and accountability in providing fee waivers, preventing potential favoritism or arbitrary decisions.

The meeting moved for this policy revision, a motion was made and seconded. A vote was held, and the policy revision was approved with a majority vote in favor.

Amendment 4: Clarification of Free Booking Privileges for Ratified Groups

Previously, there was ambiguity regarding whether ratified groups could book the GSA Commons for free. This amendment explicitly states that ratified groups can book the space at no cost during regular hours but will be responsible for paying any additional costs associated with extra services, such as security, cleaning, or equipment usage.

The meeting moved for this policy revision, a motion was made and seconded. A vote was held, and the policy revision was approved with a majority vote in favor.

Amendment 5: Fixed Booking Fee for Non-Ratified Groups and Individuals

A fixed rate of **\$75 per hour** has been introduced for non-ratified groups and individuals booking the GSA Commons. This ensures a standardized, predictable pricing model, making it easier for both the GSA and external users to plan and budget for events.

The meeting moved for this policy revision, a motion was made and seconded. A vote was held, and the policy revision was approved with a majority vote in favor.

Amendment 6: BBQ Rental Fee Standardization

To simplify the BBQ rental process, a **flat rate of \$22** is set for ratified groups, while non-ratified groups will pay an **hourly rate of \$15**. This amendment also removes the additional propane charge, making the pricing structure clearer and more predictable.

The meeting moved for this policy revision, a motion was made and seconded. A vote was held, and the policy revision was approved with a majority vote in favor.

Amendment 7: Simplification of Purchasing Approval Process

Previously, GSA policies required two individuals to be involved in any purchases made outside the GSA Commons. This requirement was removed to simplify procurement and avoid unnecessary administrative hurdles while still maintaining accountability through standard financial approval processes.

The meeting moved for this policy revision, a motion was made and seconded. A vote was held, and the policy revision was approved with a majority vote in favor.

Amendment 8: Clarification of Authority Over Health and Dental Insurance

This amendment clarifies that **only the GSA Executive and Council**—not the Board—have the authority to decide on health and dental insurance providers, policies, and fee structures. This ensures that decision-making remains in the hands of those who are directly accountable to graduate students.

The meeting moved for this policy revision, a motion was made and seconded. A vote was held, and the policy revision was approved with a majority vote in favor.

Amendment 9: Standardization of Academic Council Ratification and Funding Distribution

This amendment establishes clear guidelines for the process of **ratifying Academic Councils** and distributing funding to them. The changes help ensure consistency, prevent delays, and provide transparency in funding allocation.

The meeting moved for this policy revision, a motion was made and seconded. A vote was held, and the policy revision was approved with a majority vote in favor.

Amendment 10: Removal of Multi-Council Membership Requirement for Social Groups

Previously, social groups were required to have members from multiple Academic Councils. This amendment removes that restriction, allowing groups to form based on common interests rather than being forced to recruit members from different councils. It also clarifies ratification requirements for such groups.

The meeting moved for this policy revision, a motion was made and seconded. A vote was held, and the policy revision was approved with a majority vote in favor.

Amendment 11: Renaming of the Social Group Funding Policy

The "**Social Group Funding Policy**" has been renamed to the "**Event Funding Policy**" to clarify that funding is available for events organized by any ratified group, not just social groups. This ensures inclusivity and better reflects the funding policy's purpose.

The meeting moved for this policy revision, a motion was made and seconded. A vote was held, and the policy revision was approved with a majority vote in favor.

Amendment 12: Pre-Approval Requirement for Funding Requests

This amendment introduces a requirement that all funding requests for social groups must be submitted **before** event expenses are incurred. This ensures financial oversight and prevents groups from seeking reimbursement for unapproved expenses.

The meeting moved for this policy revision, a motion was made and seconded. A vote was held, and the policy revision was approved with a majority vote in favor.

Amendment 13: Increase in Maximum Funding for Academic Councils

The maximum funding limit for Academic Councils has been raised from **\$500 to \$750** to account for inflation and rising event costs. This allows Academic Councils to better support student activities and engagement.

The meeting moved for this policy revision, a motion was made and seconded. A vote was held, and the policy revision was approved with a majority vote in favor.

Amendment 14: Requirement for Regular Democratic Elections in Academic Councils

Academic Councils must now hold **elections at least once per year** through a fair and democratic process. This amendment ensures that leadership positions remain accountable to council members and are refreshed periodically.

The meeting moved for this policy revision, a motion was made and seconded. A vote was held, and the policy revision was approved with a majority vote in favor.

Amendment 15: Deadlines for Academic Council Ratification and Funding Applications

To improve clarity and efficiency, this amendment sets clear deadlines for when Academic Councils must submit ratification requests and funding applications. This prevents last-minute confusion and ensures that funding is distributed in a timely manner.

The meeting moved for this policy revision, a motion was made and seconded. A vote was held, and the policy revision was approved with a majority vote in favor.

Amendment 16: Compliance with the Event Funding Policy

All event funding applications must now comply with the newly renamed **Event Funding Policy** to ensure consistency, transparency, and fairness in the allocation of financial support for events.

The meeting moved for this policy revision, a motion was made and seconded. A vote was held, and the policy revision was approved with a majority vote in favor.

- **Agenda: GSA Executive Reports**

- **President**

David Ohene-Amoako reported on recent activities, including his participation in Black History Month events, where he represented the GSA on committees and performed at some of the gatherings. He acknowledged incidents during the period, particularly the loss of a community member in January and the subsequent commemoration in February. He also provided an update on the ongoing Child Care Initiative, which is being planned in both short- and long-term phases in collaboration with the Vice President Indigenous Engagement. He emphasized that efforts are being made to establish a committee to ensure the initiative's continuity beyond the current executive term. He directed the council to his written report for further details on meetings attended.

- **VP Finance and Operations**

Lindsay Carlson reported that the search for a new office manager, now titled Operations Manager, has been launched. Interviews for the top candidates are set to begin next week, with the goal of onboarding a new hire before the current executive term ends. She also noted ongoing work related to the fiscal year 2024 audit, tax documentation, and operational matters. Additionally, she announced the opening of the winter bursary application, which will close on March 31st. Within the first few days, 110 applications were received, matching the total number of bursaries awarded for the entire year, highlighting the financial challenges faced by students. She encouraged council members to direct struggling students to apply for bursaries and utilize financial aid and food security resources.

- **VP Academic and Student Affairs**

Nickson Joseph provided an update on his recent activities, beginning with the GC Winter Orientation 2025, which was initially scheduled for January 17th but had to be canceled due to severe weather conditions. He noted that a brief summary of the event is available in his report and that the complete budget details will be published on the website once approved by the Executive Committee.

He also addressed the ongoing revisions to the Student-Supervisor Agreement, highlighting that a Google Form was circulated with assistance from the GSA Chair to collect feedback from graduate students. However, he noted that only one academic council has responded so far and encouraged all members to review the document on the GSA website and provide input via the link included in his report.

Regarding the Co-Curricular Record, Nickson reported that the University of Saskatchewan's Career Services, which administers this program, is planning to discontinue it due to resource constraints. As a result, the GSA will no longer be accepting Co-Curricular Record submissions moving forward.

Nickson also mentioned his involvement in the GSA Governance Committee, where he has been reviewing proposed changes. He expressed confidence that these revisions will enhance the effectiveness of the GSA.

For the discussion item, he sought council members' feedback on merging the Fall and Winter orientation events into a single, larger welcome event. This event would take place sometime between January and April and focus solely on welcoming students rather than providing an orientation. He emphasized that this idea is still in the early stages and welcomed suggestions.

Before concluding, he aligned this discussion with the GSA's plans to update its website, ensuring that more information is accessible to students. He requested council members to review item number two in his report and provide their thoughts.

➤ **VP External Affairs**

Reza Golpayegani reported that he has successfully raised \$33,000 for the GSA Gala, in addition to the \$5,000 allocated from the GSA budget, bringing the total budget to \$38,000. All event seats have been sold out, and no additional sponsorships are being accepted. He also mentioned that the Awards Committee held its second meeting on March 3rd, and he will present the meeting minutes and application updates at the next council meeting. He invited council members to contact him via email regarding any concerns about the gala or the awards process.

Additionally, Reza noted that he sent a calendar invitation for the Gala to all council members but has received responses from less than half of them. He reminded members that the event is scheduled for April 12th from 5:00 PM to 10:00 PM at Marquis Hall. He urged council members to confirm their attendance and let him know if they would like additional invitations sent to other representatives.

➤ **VP Indigenous Engagement**

Jennifer Amarualik-Yaremko brought up a proposed bylaw amendment regarding the verification of candidates for the position of Vice President Indigenous Engagement. She suggested that candidates should be verified through the University of Saskatchewan's policy, which confirms membership in an Indigenous community. She stated that she would share the exact wording for the proposed bylaw amendment in the chat. Following discussion, she acknowledged that bylaw amendments should be approved at the AGM and thanked the council for clarifying the process. She also announced that she has secured a new job and will not be eligible to continue in her role past September. She urged council members to encourage Indigenous graduate students to apply for the position and offered her assistance in navigating the application and verification process in an impartial manner.

- **Agenda: Announcements**

Lindsay Carlson announced that the Fee Review Committee has approved changes to the health and dental fee. However, these changes cannot be publicly shared until after the University's Board of Governors meets in mid-April. She stated that once the approval process is complete, she intends to organize an informative town hall to explain the changes and their rationale. Additionally, the updated information will be made available on the GSA website.

- **Agenda: Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:30.

The motion to adjourn the meeting was approved by the majority of the council members.



Appendix A

Academic Council	Name of Councilors and (alternates)	Oct 2024	Nov 2024	Dec 2024	Jan 2025	Mar 5, 2025	Mar 26, 2025	Apr 2025	May 2025
Biology Graduate Student Association	Portia Mohrbutter Ayicia Nabigon (Alternate)	P	P	P	P	P			
Chemistry Course Council	Marco Justino Loza Taghavi (Alternate) Ozra	P	A	P	A	A			
College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Biochemistry, microbiology & Immunology	Andy Kim - Councilor Shirley Yu - Councilor Samiul Chowdhury - Councilor Sara Dalkilic - Councilor Rylan Bahrey (Alternate) Adrielle Souza (Alternate)	P	P	P	P	P			
Computer Science Graduate Council (CSGC)	Thulani Hewavithana Norah Ridley Mary Fidelma Ndupu Mumtahina Ahmed (Alternate)	P	P	P	P	P			
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Biological	Sumana Majumder Emmanuel Ezechinyelu (Alternate)	A	P	P	A	P			
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Biomedical	Danyil Dmytriiev Bashu Gautam (Alternate)	P	P	P	P	P			
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Chemical	Parvaneh Koranian Sara Nath (Alternate)	A	A	P	A	A			

Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Civil, Geological & Environmental	Anukul Basnet Bashu Gautam (Alternate)	P	P	P	P	P			
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Electrical & Computer	Deepa Upadhyaya Subedi Bashu Gautam (Alternate)	A	P	P	A	P			
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Mechanical	Kiranbir Kaur Faizan Ansari (Alternate)	A	A	P	A	P			
English Course Council	Lydie Hua Gwen Rose (Alternate)	P	P	P	P	P			
Geography & Planning Graduate Council	Emily Ireland Prakash Sapkota (Alternate)	A	A	A	P	P			
Kinesiology Graduate Student Council	Matthew Chapelski Karissa Johnson (Alternate)	P	P	P	P	P			
Nursing Graduate Student Association (NGSA)	Jordan Sherstobitoff Ewurabena Sacky-Forson Hayen Chei Luri (Alternate) Stella Aluko (Alternate) Kristen Witter (Alternate)	P	P	P	P	P			
Plant Science	Luke Dojack	P	P	P	P	P			
Physical Therapy Student Society (PTSS)	Patrick Janzen-Brown Taya Stang (Alternate)	P	A	A	P	A			
SENSSA	Jethro Opara Chelsea Ohenewaa Nyarko	P	P	P	P	A			

	(Alternate)								
School of Public Health (SPHSA)	Wasim Al-Khanati Omar Bardouh Theresa Agbeyei Isfar Chowdhry (Alternate)	A	P	P	P	P			
Sociology GSA	Meaghan Boily Leah PHouseman (Alternate)	P	P	P	P	P			
Soil Science Graduate Student Association	Andrea Cline Chloe Canning (Alternate) Levi Lundell	P	P	P	P	A			
Animal and Poultry Science GSA	Megan Dubois Gus Halibert (Alternate)	P	A	P	P	P			
Toxicology Graduate Student Association (TGSA) Academic Councilor	Chantel De Lange Summer Selinger (Alternate)	A	P	P	A	A			
History Graduate Student Association	Kiegan Lloyd Catlin M. Woloschuk	P	A	A	P	A			
Physics & Engineering Physics (PEGASUS)	Jeisson A. Vanegas Carranza Nicholas Simonson	P	A	P	P	P			
Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy Student Association	Harjot Tur-harjot Bazal Khalid (Alternate)	A	A	A	A	A			

Executive member	Name of executive member	Oct 2024	Nov 2024	Dec 2024	Jan 2025	Mar 5, 2025	Mar 26, 2025
Exec. President	David Ohene-Amoako	P	P	P	P	P	
Exec. VP Finance and Operations	Lindsay Carlson	P	P	P	P	P	
Exec. VP Academic and Student Affairs	Nickson Joseph	P	P	P	P	P	
Exec. VP External Affairs	Reza Golpayegani	P	P	P	P	P	
Exec. VP Indigenous Engagement	Jennifer Amarualik-Yaremko	P	P	P	A	P	

