



University of Saskatchewan
Graduate Students' Association
Annual General Meeting
Tuesday April 16, 2019.
GSA Commons

As GSA members gather, 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: Sonia Bataebo, Jose A Berkenbrock, Karim Shahbazi, Khaarza Khabedi, Pouyo Behpawn, Rezs Pourazizi, Khaled Zoroufchi Benis, Frank V. Mao, Janes Schulle, Brittany Laing, Hadi Ramin, Douglas Rasmussen, Elaheh Saberi, Alejandra Fonseca (Incoming VP Student Affairs), Azza Mohammadiozan, Emyimaya Ohaer, Ome Laila Balkhi, Maryam Alyari, Javeniya Q Khan, Mamata Pangreh, Lina Alkharabshel, Doug Fansher, Asanka Godakondn, Matasha Boys, Amirhossein Dehgani, Mohibul Hasan, Rifat Zahan, Pouya Sabikrashie, Ra Su, Carmen Marquez, Dmitry Zukhariov, Tanin Sultana, Mohammed Wajih Alam (Incoming VP Finance and Operations), Abby Debosky, Stephanie Graves, Beth Thiessen, Liliana Rodriguez, Ozon Genes, Viktoria Hinz, Henry Ohalele, Tuan Nguyen, A.M Lynn, S. Noor Fatima, Abigail O. Owusu, Britanie Thomas, Jevor Alham, Emerita Mendoza Rengifo (Incoming President), Amin Islam, Stephen Omamanam, Chiamaka Ezekwesili (Incoming VP External).

Executive: Naheda Sahtout (President), Jesus Corona Gomez (VP Finance and Operations), Edgar Martinez-Soberanes (VP Student Affairs), Somto Ufondu (VP External).

Organization of the meeting:

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

1. Call to Order

The Chair officially called the meeting to order at 5:13 pm.

2. Announcements

2.1 Quorum

The Chair stated that quorum had been reached and while it's important that quorum was reached, it's equally important that it remains for the decision-making elements of the agenda.

2.2 PSAC Representative Address

Isaac Armstrong the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) representative shared a few words with the gathering. Firstly, that PSAC is the union that represents graduate students when it comes to employment matters. PSAC would be the organization advocating on the student's behalf. The collective agreement has a current rate of \$20/hr. PSAC also represents postdocs on campus. It's important to understand that PSAC acts on the wishes of its members and at no time will it impose an external mandate.

PSAC local 40004 is the local that represents TAs and postdocs. The representatives of the local are elected at duly convened meetings. The local's AGM was held a month ago where they elected a new president who actually served on the bargaining team for the postdoc agreement. All representatives for bargaining teams are elected from the local's membership. The current collective agreement for the graduate students expires in August and the current president of the local will also serve on this bargaining team.

PSAC has about 180,000 members across Canada making it one of the largest public service unions in the country. 30,000 of those members work in the university sector. The head of the negotiating team is very experienced and has a master's degree in industrial relations. PSAC members can play a bigger role in the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC). The CLC comprises of about 6 million people and hosts conventions, training and different conferences that our PSAC membership automatically have access to. Similarly, there is the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour (SFL) which most unions in the province fall under their umbrella and ultimately have access to their activities. PSAC members are also members of the Public Services International (PSI) based near Geneva.

Mr. Armstrong represents the graduate student employees concerning grievances and he can be found in room 131 Mclean Hall Monday to Friday.

There were no questions for the PSAC representative.

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve agenda. (Laing/ Zahan)

Carried

4.Approval of Minutes

4.1 GSA Annual General Meeting 2018 – April 24th, 2018

Motion to approve April 24th, 2018 minutes. (Zahan/ Thomas)

Carried

5. GSA Executives Report

5.1 Vice President Finance & Operations Report

VP Gomez shared with the gathering that all the finances are transparent, members can find all invoices/receipts and financial statements outlining all the GSA's expenses. This is consistent with the policy of the GSA that states that any of its members have the right to check and review the finances. GSA finance and budget committee were able to draft a balanced 2019/2020 operations budget that was presented to and approved by the council last month. It focused on student supports and services and provides funds for initiatives, workshops and events. An upgrade of the office computers and the audio system in the commons was included in the approved budget as well as extra funds to increase the number of bursaries. More details can be found in the report.

5.2 Vice President Student Affairs Report

VP Martinez-Soberanes thanked all in attendance and his team for the past academic year. The 3MT and the research conference were very successful. VP Martinez also asked that more people participate in those events going forward and closed by reminding the membership that the GSA was there for them, so no matter the issue from housing, to money, students should feel free to contact the GSA for assistance/ guidance.

5.3 Vice President External Report

VP Ufondu also thanked everyone for attending. He highlighted the success of the first aid sessions that were organized throughout the academic year, informed the gathering that all 4 sessions were well attended and would encourage more students to become first aid certified. In September 2018 they held the first of 5 health chats that wrapped up in February. Pertaining to the sporting activities, the GSA guppies made it to the playoffs for the first time in a long time. Lastly, the gala was good for networking and was also well attended. VP Ufondu thanked the GSA for the opportunity to serve in the past year.

5.4 President's Report

President Sahtout focused her report on few things namely:

- Development of resources to support your academic success. A few memorable outcomes. The students-supervisor agreement being one of those, was promoted and with the help of academic council members we've been able to share with the various colleges the importance of such an agreement.
- Near the end of developing a faculty support manual.
- Conducted an appreciative inquiry session to ascertain from council what other tools we can develop to better this student-supervisor relationship.
- Board of Governors at USASK is the only U15 institution that doesn't have a grad student representative. The biggest win concerning the goal of representation was a passed motion at the university senate. We then met with the board of governors, unfortunately the board was unable to accommodate our request.
- "The good breakfast" was a pilot program started this academic year trying to achieve a sustainable way for students to access their breakfast needs while creating a community between the faculty, staff, students and the community at large.
- Conflict resolution and advocacy program: the hope is that we can develop student leaders that are able to advocate for each other. This initiative was taken on in collaboration with the faculty of law and can be expected to start in September.

President Sahtout thanked her fellow Executive members, the councilors and the volunteers who sat on the council committees.

5.5 Questions and Answers

There were no questions for the Executive.

The Chair thanked the Executive for all their work and tremendous contribution to the GSA.

6. Motions

VP Gomez reiterated the following points for motion 6.1. There was a friendly amendment to the change the title from 2018-19 to 2019-2020 to match the body of the motion. There were no questions from the general membership.

6.1 Motion: Approval of GSA Auditor 2018-19

WHEREAS Section 8.1.2.3 of the GSA Constitution and Section 149(1) of the Saskatchewan Non-Profits Corporation Act govern the appointment of an auditor. BE IT RESOLVED THAT Buckberger Baerg and Partners LLP be appointed as auditors for 2019-2020 Financial Year.

(Gomez/ Sahtout)

Carried

VP Gomez reiterated the following points for motion 6.2, with a friendly amendment to include April 30, 2017 in the body of the motion to match the title of the Motion. There were no questions from the general membership.

6.2 Motion: Receiving GSA Financial Statements for the year ended April 30, 2014, April 30, 2015, April 30, 2016 and April 30, 2017

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 received for the year ended April 30, 2014, April 30, 2015 and April 30, 2016, as presented.

(Gomez/ Sahtout)

Carried

President Sahtout briefed the gathering on motion 6.3 on behalf of the Governance Committee chair. The president highlighted that the amendments made to the documents are for the sake of clarity and to assist us in becoming more in line with the Saskatchewan Non-profit Corporations Act, 1995. Only one minor change to the constitution that came in the way of a clause that was added on the advice of our lawyer. The Non-profit Act requires that a non-profit corporation have at least 25% of its directors be resident Canadian, which means at least a quarter of them should be citizens or permanent residents of Canada. The incoming executives are all international students, so in order to comply we added the amendment to the constitution. The amendment gives council the authority with recommendation from the Elections and Referenda committee to appoint 2 individuals who are resident Canadians to the board. Therefore, the board would consist of the President, the Vice Presidents and the 2 resident Canadians. This is an amendment to the amendment.

Motion to amend the amendment so that the "2 resident Canadian clause" can be added to the constitution.

(Naghieh/ Ufondu)

Carried.1 abstention

Any changes to the bylaws was for the sake of transparency, accountability and insuring we have better information. The last bylaw is the communication bylaw, which was moved from the policies to the bylaws to ensure that we were compliant with our agreement with the university.

The final document is the policies. The most important part would be the addition of a new standing

committee called the “Event Organizing Committee”, and as per the suggestion of the VP Student Affairs this committee would be responsible for organizing the 3MT competition and the research conference under the supervision of the VP Student Affairs. The terms of reference for that committee has been included. The final addition is the procedures for major meetings which was actually developed last year but was excluded from the policies document and now is being officially added.

6.3 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 Policies.

- o BE IT RESOLVED that the Constitution, Bylaws and Policies be so amended as recommended by the GSA Governance Committee, as set forth in the following documents (Revised Constitution, Revised Bylaws, Revised Policies) and take effect May 1, 2019.

- o BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the title of VP Student Affairs officially be adopted as Vice-President Academics and Student Affairs for the election cycle beginning in 2020.

- o BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the title of Vice-President External officially be adopted as Vice-President External Affairs for the election cycle beginning in 2020.

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

(Naghieh/ Ufondu)

Carried

7.Introduction of New Executive

The chair thanked the Election and Referenda committee for ratifying the election results which saw 599 voters. The following are the incoming GSA Executives and were introduced at the meeting.

President- Emerita Mendoza Rengifo.

VP Finance and Operation- Mohammad Wajih Alam.

VP Student Affairs- Alejandra Fonseca.

VP External- Chiamaka Ezekwesili.

8. Other Business

VP Ufondu encouraged people to go through the reports as it impossible for them to be presented in their entirety at the AGM.

The chair thanked the general membership for their attendance.

9. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn (Ufondu/ Ezekwesili) at 6:14pm.

Carried