



University of Saskatchewan
Graduate Students' Association
GSA Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday June 18 2019. GSA Commons

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*

1. Call to Order

The Chair of Council called the meeting to order at 5:11pm.

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

2. Approval of the agenda

Motion to approve the agenda as amended. (Rengifo/Alam)

Carried

3. Approval of the minutes from April 9, 2019

Motion to approve the April 9 minutes. (Fansher/Ross)

Carried

4. Information to be received

A. May 4, 2019 Executive Retreat Minutes

B. May 15, 2019 Executive Minutes

Motion to receive agenda items 4A-B. (Ross/Shirley)

Carried

5. Executive reports

A. Report of the President

President Rengifo addressed the gathering for the first time as the president of the GSA. The

president mentioned a few initiatives that she will continue to work on and a few that she would like to pursue. In doing so she has met with International Student and Study Abroad Centre (ISSAC), the Dean of CGPS, the City of Saskatoon and encouraged council members to visit her office with their suggestions or concerns as she continues to carve out an immediate direction for her administration.

There were no questions for the President.

B. Report of the VP Finance and Operations

VP Alam thanked the office manager and past VP of Finance and Operations for assisting with his transition. He also brought to the attention of the gathering that the bursary applications were now opened, and they had only received 15 applicants to date. The June 24th application deadline would be extended if they didn't receive at least 40 applications, so he encouraged the councilors to spread the word to their respective departments.

There were no question for the VP Finance and Operations.

C. Report of the VP Student Affairs

VP Fonseca informed the councilors that she was working on orientation ahead of the start of the 2019/2020 school year and was in the process of contacting vendors to determine what swag they will be using. The orientation was originally scheduled for the 5th of September but had to be moved to the 4th of September because of a conflict in the scheduling. Additionally, she informed the gathering that the GSA Facebook page was being updated and members should stay tuned as she is also collaborating with the student wellness center to come up with activities to help with mental health.

There were no questions for the VP Student Affairs.

D. Report of the VP External

VP Ezekwesili shared that the GSA guppies have continued to be successful and the members can come out and show their support for the sporting arm of the GSA on Mondays at 6:00 pm, the venue changes depending on the sport being played so they should continue to consult the newsletter for specifics.

She added that the GSA was overhauling their social media, so in addition to the Facebook

account, the Instagram account has been reactivated and those who use Twitter can also stay up to date on that platform. The Twitter handle is “GSA USASK” and going forward this will be the name one can look up on all 3 social media platforms listed above.

VP Ezekwesili shared that she attended the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) meeting in Ottawa last week. The VP External ended her contribution with some information that had been discussed in Ottawa, where an international student was facing deportation for working over the 20 hours a week.

Question from councilor: Did the university have the back of the student facing deportation?

Answer from VP External: CFS is in contact with the Immigration minister. As it pertains to that university, they view it as an external situation as the student’s work issue happened off campus.

6. Items for Information/Discussion

A. GSA Newsletter

President Rengifo spoke to this being the first time the GSA have direct contact with the graduate students as per the MOA with the university. The first newsletter will be sent out tomorrow the 19th of June. The GSA will try to put out one issue a month, so students are aware of activities, scholarships and other university related issues the GSA feels needs to be highlighted.

7. Other business/Announcements

Concerning the UPSASS, Ezekwesili wanted to ascertain whether the council members would like to consider getting a UPASS for the Spring and Summer semesters.

President Rengifo followed up her VP External UPass question with a few points. She felt that it seems like about half of the students surveyed are against it, but she wasn’t certain if we had higher participation, if there would be overwhelming interest in obtaining one. Further, she felt that the UPass over the spring/summer term is not just a matter of convenience but also one of safety, as students still continue to work late during this period and not all our graduate students live along well-lit heavily trafficked routes.

Friedrichsen:

We need to understand where students are living during the summer months to see if it's worth it. Secondly, is it all or none? Can we offer the bus pass to the students who feel they need it?

VP Ezekwesili:

The agreement as it stands, is only for the Fall and Winter semesters so the City of Saskatoon offers graduate students a substantial discount on the UPass. However, in order to get this for the Spring/Summer semester there would have to be a referendum. Students would still be able to opt out based on the current eligibility criteria.

It seems that a big concern for some of our students, is the fact that they would be paying for something that they would never use, as a large number of them are committed to field work outside of the city for those months. Something that could be looked at more closely going forward is the opt out language so that those students wouldn't be burdened by a fee that they get no direct benefit from.

Friedrichsen:

Can we start a bursary for a bus pass and if there is a very large number of students and becomes unaffordable then we can push for a bus pass agreement? More truly interested persons would come forward than in the previous poles that have all reached a stalemate.

Fansher:

Since the majority of students who don't want the bus pass are out doing field work we should delay any further discussions on it until they're back to participate.

8. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn (Alam/Fansher) at 6:03pm.

Carried

Appendix A

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| Academic Council | Name of Councillors and (alternates) | Sep.25 2018 | Oct.16 2018 | Nov.20 2018 | Dec.11 2018 | Jan.22 2019 | Feb.26 2019 | Mar.19 2019 | Apr.9 2019 | Jun.18 2019 | Aug.13 2019 |
|--|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| WCVM GSA | Breanne Murray (Narsimha Pujari) | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | |
| Master of Business Admin Representative Council (MBARC) | Tyler Gray (Alli Sparling) | NA | NA | P | R | A | P | A | A | A | |
| Psychology Graduate Student Assoc. | Sarah Mohammed (Farron Wielinga) | P | P | A | R | P | P | A | P | R | |
| AREC | Yerebakia Choro (Ran Sun) | NA | P | P | P | A | A | A | P | P | |
| SENSSA (1) | Peter Friedrichsen (Belizario Carballo) | P | R | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | |
| SENSSA (2) | Laila Balkhi (Belizario Carballo) | NA | P | P | A | P | P | A | P | P | |
| Pharmacy & Nutrition Graduate Students' Council P&N-GSC | Lina Kharabsheh (Riley Devine) | P | P | A | P | P | P | A | P | A | |
| School of Public Health Students' Assoc (SPHSA) (1) | Britanie Thomas (NA) | NA | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | |
| School of Public Health Students' Assoc. (SPHSA) (2) | Chiamaka Ezekwesili (Alejandra Fonseca) | NA | P | P | R | P | P | P | P | NA | |
| Physical Therapy Student Society (PTSS) | Kyla Collins (Katrin Ritchie) | P | P | P | R | P | P | P | R | P | |
| Engineering, Chemical | Khaled Zoroufchi Benis (NA) | P | P | P | A | P | P | A | A | P | |
| Engineering, Mechanical | Bicheng Xing (Stephen Owuamanam) | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | P | |
| Engineering, Electrical | Ozan Gunes (Jose Berkenbrock) | P | P | P | A | P | P | A | P | A | |
| Engineering, Biomedical | Saman Naghieh (Ejalonibu Hammed) | P | P | P | A | P | P | A | A | P | |

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