



Graduate Students' Association - University of Saskatchewan
Council Meeting Agenda
Tuesday March 17th, 2020 - GSA Commons
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	Guest: Peter Hedley, Director- Student Affairs and Services		
3	Approval of Agenda	1	<i>Decision</i>
4	Approval of the minutes from February 25, 2020	2-19	<i>Decision</i>
5	Information to be received	20-31	<i>Decision</i>
	A. July 2, 2019, Bursary Selection Committee minutes		
	B. February 4, 2020, Executive meeting minutes		
	C. February 27, 2020, Governance Committee minutes		
6	Executive Reports	32-38	<i>Information</i>
	A. Report of the President		
	B. Report of the VP External		
	C. Report of the VP Finance and Operations		
	D. Report of the VP Student Affairs		
7	Other Business/Announcements		<i>Information</i>
8	Adjournment		<i>Decision</i>

Next Meeting: April 7, 2020



University of Saskatchewan
Graduate Students' Association
GSA Council Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 25th 2020. 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 officially called the council meeting to order at 5:04 pm after quorum had been met. Mr. Osai Clarke acted as the recording secretary for the meeting.

2. Guests

Paul Rogal (Director of USask Rec), David Hardy (Chief Athletics Officer, Huskie Athletics), Michael Olain (Strategic Business Advisor, Kinesiology & Huskie Athletics) and Kristin Foster (Director of Partnerships & Development)- Studentcare.

Paul Rogal (Director of USask Rec)

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to speak in front of graduate students. We will be brief and try to give you an idea of what we do that impact the fees. We will go through Recreation and Athletic fees, the financial impacts, fee usage, and future needs.

We will provide a brief overview of what the recreation fees are used for and what we provide to students. We offer programming, try to be proactive and offer a wide range of programs that cater to as many students as possible. The fees include Campus Rec and Learn-To's, programs which are mostly subsidized and which we constantly work with students to offer as many as possible. Increasing drop-in opportunities, programs in which even non-students can participate was requested and we have done this with badminton and futsal. We do lots of lane swims and family swim time. We even have a climbing wall. The greatest need is for badminton and futsal, so we try to accommodate within our knowledge of knowing that gym space is highly sought out. Fees also cover the Fit Centre, Education, and PAC gyms, tennis courts, squash court, fitness classes etc. There is a wide variety of programs

available to students. We try to listen to student's desires and concerns and try to accommodate where we can.

Stats: from May 1, 2018 – April 30, 2019. For those who were assessed the fee: 240 times - climbing wall, 1,600 – access to the Education gym, 18,000 – access to the fitness center. 21,000 – access to the PAC.

We have talked about open rec and we have opened other programming. For example, on Saturdays, we run women's only lessons. We also offer women's only programs and we are trying to offer specialized programs to student needs. In the last 5 years, of a 3.6 million budget, 1.5 million came from student fees.

Where we spend our money – a lot of money is spent on staffing (1.4 million on student salaries). Last year, we spent money on the fitness center to replace equipment so that we ensure our equipment is safe and up to date. We have done half a million dollars' worth of renovations (the facility is 16 years old, so we need to ensure safety is accounted for). We look to spending money on the climbing wall, flooring in the education building, basketball hoops, and other projects. The biggest changes in the next few years are the need to create universal change rooms. New change rooms are more user-friendly, open (male, female gender-equitable). We are trying to come up with a plan for male-female dressing rooms. Operational costs will continue to change; we are going through a strategic planning process and we will look at what we want to continue doing and how we want to move forward.

David Hardy (Chief Athletics Officer, Huskie Athletics)

Our role is to be an integral and recognizable part of the university and province. We are an outward-facing organization. We have 15 teams that compete in Canada-West against 17 different universities from Victoria to Winnipeg. We have 6 different facilities, 370 student-athletes, 11 full-time coaches, 77 assistant coaches. We compete in national championships and offer free admission to students to games. Last year 14,206 student tickets were assessed (a 1.6 % marginal increase). Statistics are self-reported, and we can certainly do much better. We would like to lead Canada West in student attendance.

In terms of the financial impact of fees; 35 % of the budget comes from external funding, 30% from the university envelope, and 35 % from student fees. We feel comfortable in saying that typically the athletic fees are below the western Canadian schools (combined athletic and rec fees).

Usage of athletic fees: we provide game entertainment experience for all those that purchase tickets and students that choose to come. We support team athletics and travel costs. We have increased the level of student support in terms of health and academics. We focus on promotion, coaching, and training. We employ over 200 student-athletes to support our game experience. Future leads tied into our request for an increase, including academic support for student-athletes, stronger student body

engagement, in which we are allocating some of our resources to working with University Relations to increase this. We are looking to engage a full-time student engagement coordinator, streamline the ticketing platform so that all students can access tickets via phone, revamp our merchandise so that it is clearly recognizable as huskie athletics. Our goal is to be number 1 in university athletics.

We have a 750k target for championship travel. The further we go along in playoffs, the more it costs us. Working towards number 1 does cost us. Part of our strategic plan, and a very important part, is to develop stronger USask engagement. In our plan, we hope to do campus-wide marketing campaigns, engage a student engagement coordinator, work with university relations, and work with USSU and GSA. Very clearly, when we compare ourselves to other schools, we do quite well with student engagement. We recognize we need to do this much better.

The Chair asked if there were any questions for the guests.

Questions & Answers:

Councilor: How many graduate students are involved in Huskie athletics?

David Hardy: There are 5 graduate students involved in Huskie athletics as student-athletes.

Councilor: We have over 4000 graduate students and we are always contributing to the fees. We have been increasing this fee for 5 % for the past 4 years, with the exception of one year, so how has this increase been used?

David Hardy: I can't comment on this as I have only been in this position for 6 months.

Michale Olain: The Recreation Athletic Advisory Committee (RAAC) approves the increase and then it goes to the fee review committee. We have had to provide a little bit of additional information for that committee.

Councilor: I was surprised to see the increase in fees. The 5 % is not consistent with the funding model. Do you think it is wise to adopt a sustainable funding model (like 2 % every year)?

Michael Olain: One of the things that I didn't explain in the fees last year, the RAAC recommended that we put away a capital fund for capital projects so that we have a fund in case of emergencies and for major capital renovations.

Councilor: Why not follow a consistent model – a certain model that increases at a substantially lower level so that students are not affected?

Michale Olain: It's challenging for us to have a consistent increase every year. Our students have not

had an increase in wage for the past four years so we know this will come. I know this will impact us significantly and it is coming up in January.

Councilor: How many grad students are currently working at the PAC?

Paul Rogal: We can't differentiate between undergraduate and graduate student workers; we can with student access but are unable to pull this information otherwise.

Councilor: How did you determine an increase of 5%?

Paul Rogal: 3 % in operational and 2 % in the capital budget.

Councilor: Did you calculate this based on anything specific?

Paul Rogal: That 2 % will put 25k in the capital budget. We will spend more than that in the next year with capital renewal.

Councilor: Will this fee increase next year?

Paul Rogal: We try to keep the increases reasonable for students.

The Chair asked if there were any additional questions for the guests. Seeing as there were none, the Chair thanked the guests from USask Rec and Athletics for presenting and answering questions.

Kristin Foster (Director of Partnerships & Development)- Studentcare

I have no ask, no decision item. This is purely for me to answer your questions and give you an update.

I will start by explaining about Studentcare. If you were a typical employee organization, HR would take care of enrolling new employees and managing family intakes. In this case, we would be a typical broker. In student health and dental plans, we have evolved to do both. Associations don't have resources and professional staff to mitigate all questions. I act as the consultant and policy analyst and reporting is a much smaller role. I will give more credit to the staff in Place Riel who answer your questions. I can do the benefits research, but at the end of the day, if the members don't use the plan then I'm not doing the job.

At this time of the year, we normally look at the financial aspect of the plan. Typically, in the fall, during orientation, I normally come out for public relations and promotion. Here is a list that captures all the different ways in which we interact with students.

- We have direct relationships with different graduate departments.
- We have promotions and information about health services.
- We do a lot of work with the GSA. We ensure our social media and websites reflect the right information.
- We operate a call center, in addition to the office on campus that can answer questions during the day (live chat, accessible by phone, the self-serve section on website).
- We try to make sure we are using all the technology to ensure the experience of graduate students who want to use the plan is as seamless as possible.
- What we would like to make sure we do: For students who are covered by another plan, we want to make sure the opt-out process is as easy as possible. This also applies to opt-ins.
- We want to make claims as easy as possible – electronically, faster, paperless and easier to track.
- We want to have integrated solutions to help us track member cases so that we can respond to members in an easy fashion so that we have a real-time service for everything a student would need.
- Ensure our website showcases everything we talked about.

As part of my policy role in reporting and surveys, I download data from insurer, cross-reference with peers across Canada, check trends across graduate students across Canada, benefit research for new drugs on market, look for any changes in regulatory requirements and I bring all of that together and make the GSA executives read all of the information. What I provide you is a high-level snapshot about how the plan is evolving and how you are using it. This is important not just for information, but you are all policymakers and I have to give you the science to make those decisions.

Currently, about 2500 students are enrolled in the plan this year. There was 750k claims last year. We are one of the biggest services the GSA offers, and it was established by student referendums. This is a mandatory fee but a student-initiated fee. At any point, there are policies, that as decision-makers, you need to follow and address.

A quick recap: your health plan includes prescription drugs, practitioners and vision care. You don't have to be sick to use the plan, and it is always a good idea to get your eyes checked. You should take advantage of your dental coverage to check your teeth and do a cleaning every year. Your plan also includes travel coverage, an element that is well suited for graduate students. This is automatically part of your plan and can be used when traveling for personal, conference or exchanges. This is a really robust part of the plan and we make it available for all students across Canada. This might be too expensive as an individual association but because we collectively look into this across all associations, we get a good deal. We make it possible for students to be covered whether they need it or not.

We also manage networks – using our position in the market and industry to make discounts with health care practitioners. This is one area of Studentcare that brings you additional value because there is a list of dentists, optometrist, practitioners who have agreed to discount the cost of service at source.

So, it would cost less for you, but also from a financial perspective, we are reducing claims for the plan so this keeps the premiums low. For example, there is an extra 20 % coverage by our network for dental check-ups. It is not required to visit a network as all services are covered no matter where you use them.

Your role on council starts at the beginning of the year; spreading awareness to your members and making sure that new graduate students are aware of the service and gathering feedback that comes to you and bringing it to Council. The plan evolves based on the feedback. The other part is reviewing any recommendations, action items (changes to benefits, changes to the cost of the plan, changes to fees, enrolling graduate students in January automatically) that the Executives may bring forward to you.

Your GSA claims are a well-balanced pie. Nothing alarms me on how the plan has been used. Per-capita claims give us an insight into how the plan is used. This GSA is unique, in that your health claims are higher than your dental claims (other GSA's have the reverse). I have done an internal analysis, accurate to 1 – 2 % points, so I am confident in my projections. I see consistent steady use, no new elements or changes in the landscape that would indicate any increases. There is no need to change any of the benefits or increase the plan cost.

The current plan fee at 459 covers cost of plan (premium) and a contribution to the GSA Health and Reserve fund, which can only be used for purposes for the health and dental plan, an important cushion to have when claims go up, as changes in the way the students use the plan (or in case the government decides to implement another tax on insurance). There may be an opportunity to decrease this contribution. Possibilities include:

- You have an opportunity to increase benefits (although a conservative and steady approach, guarantees the best results).
- We can maintain the plan fee as is.
- It may be possible to decrease the plan fee, although I still recommend contributing to the reserve fund.
- This can be done in any small combinations.

I will go back to do an analysis of potential increases in benefits and will look at member feedback and data that have been pulled over the year. I will bring this forward to the Executive for your consideration. The Executives will need to make a more rushed decision with regards to the plan fee due to university timelines.

Questions & Answers:

Councilor: Do you have any idea about what areas you are thinking of increasing benefits?

Kristin Foster: Currently, health practitioners are all covered at \$20 per visit up to \$400 per year. This hasn't been changed since 2005 and was not a robust mechanism then. We are seeing more students use those benefits. So, I would recommend, that is certainly one of the areas that we can look at. At the end of the day, you have to make the decision to increase the plan while maintaining the plan cost low. We were also asked to look into increasing counseling (which costs significantly more) and perhaps we can look at percentage coverage for that to increase accessibility to graduate students. Increasing all health practitioners, a little, and some health practitioners a lot, increasing dental but at the same time ensuring we are fiscally responsible. I want to do a measured and thoughtful balance of all things.

Councilor: I used the claims app recently, I would like to see a confirmation that the claim has been submitted, or in the process of being reviewed. We should also receive an email that this claim is being reviewed. I have an issue of the black-out period at the beginning of the year because as a new student, I have to pay for prescription drugs during this time and then seek reimbursement later, a cost that comes out of my pocket.

Kristin Foster: In terms of the mobile app, there should be an electronic confirmation (instead of a paper app) – that's a solvable problem. Blackout periods – there is a lengthy delay in getting data from the University of Saskatchewan (U of S) as opposed to other universities. If we can get data faster, we can turn on the taps. When you are a new student and we haven't received your name and student ID, then we don't know you exist. We can manually assist you at the health office if we know you exist. I recognize there are challenges and we are working to try and find ways to alleviate this.

The Chair asked if there were any further questions for the guest. Seeing as there were none, the Chair thanked the guest from Studentcare for presenting and answering questions.

3. Approval of the Agenda

The Chair asked if there were any amendments to be made to the agenda as circulated?

Item 6: addition of changes to the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) and UPass fees for the 2020/2021 academic year.

Motion to amend the agenda (Fonseca/Rengifo)

Carried

Motion to approve the agenda as amended (Fonseca/Rengifo)

Carried

4. Approval of the minutes from January 28th, 2020

Motion to approve January 28th minutes. (Ezekwesili/Fonseca)

Carried**5. Information to be received**

- A. December 2, 2019, Executive meeting minutes
- B. January 20, 2020, Executive meeting minutes
- C. January 28, 2020, Executive meeting minutes
- D. November 20, 2019, Governance Committee minutes
- E. January 30, 2020, Governance Committee minutes
- F. January 17, 2020, Elections and Referenda Committee minutes
- G. February 7, 2020, Elections and Referenda Committee minutes

Motion to receive agenda items 5A-G. (Fonseca/Rengifo)

Carried**6. Fee Changes:**

President Rengifo briefed the councilors on the increase to the CFS fees and shared the suggested increase was 5 cents to each member. The following information was posted to the screen for Councilor review.

The Canadian Federation of Students has indicated the new fee for the 2020/2021 academic year.

- The current CFS fee is \$6.30 / term.
- The new CFS fee will be \$6.35 / term.
- The CFS fee is charged to graduate students, as per our contract with CFS, in the fall and winter terms.
- This increase accounts for increases to the inflation rate, as communicated by CFS.

Motion to approve the increase to the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) fees from \$6:30/ term to \$6:35/term (Rengifo/Fonseca)

Carried (1 abstention)

President Rengifo also addressed the councilors regarding the change to the UPASS fees. The following information was posted on the screen for Councilors to review.

As per our contract with Saskatoon Transit, the UPASS fee is to increase in proportion to the January Saskatoon CPI.

- The Saskatoon January CPI is 2.1 %, as determined by the Saskatchewan Bureau of Statistics.
- The old UPASS fee is \$111.87
 - \$108.87 is remitted to Saskatoon Transit
 - \$3 is collected as administrative fees of which a portion goes to the University and a portion goes to the USSU for UPASS activation
- The new UPASS fee will be \$114.16
 - $\$108.87 \times 2.1 \% = \111.16
 - $\$111.16 + \$3 = \$114.16$
- The UPASS fee is only charged to graduate students in the fall and winter terms.
- There are opt-out criteria outlined in our contract with Saskatoon Transit. Graduate students who fulfill the opt-out criteria may apply for a refund following the timelines and procedures.

Discussion:

Councilor: Can we opt-out of this fee?

Rengiso: There are some criteria that you have to follow to opt-out. That criteria are on the website.

Motion to increase the UPASS fees from \$111.87/term to \$114.16/term (Rengifo/ Fonseca)

Carried (1 abstention)

7. Executive Reports

A. Report of the President

President Rengifo updated the councilors on tuition consultations. She broke down the proposal with a few of the concerns of the GSA Executives. The current proposal is to increase the tuition by 10% every year for the next 5 years in thesis-based programs along with a 6.9% increase to the international differential multiplier, and for course-based graduate students, it's going to increase by 14.75% each year for the next 5 years. Graduate students have had some meetings with the leaders on campus where we presented some of our concerns. Earlier today we had a meeting with the Dean's council where I presented and discussed some of those concerns.

Today I'd like to talk to you about the concerns and what the GSA will be doing in the following days.

Some facts: we have more than 4,000 graduate students currently with about 37% being international students. 2,100 thesis-based graduate students of which, 40% of them don't receive any type of stipend from the university.

By 2024-2025 a domestic student will be paying more than what an international student is currently paying, and an international student will be paying 125% more tuition than current international students. Yes, more than double. So, the question is what type of support will the university be offering? From the meetings that we have had with the Provost these are the 4 points they talked about with respect to support:

- 1) All graduate students will be given a bursary to partially cover the tuition increase guaranteed for 1 year up to a maximum of 4 years for PhD students so they are covered for a 4-year program while masters students are covered for a maximum of 2 years. So a PhD student in their 3rd year would receive 1 year of this bursary but after that in the academic year 2021-2022, those students would not receive any type of support while their tuition would have skyrocketed. For PhD. students currently in their 1st year, they would receive the support till 2022-2023 but after that they would also see a drastic increase, meaning that this proposal is going to financially disadvantage most of our current graduate students.
- 2) Like I said, there is an expected increase to tuition that all graduate students can safely anticipate which historically speaking is less than 3%. While one has the student bursary, they will take on a 3% increase in tuition cost if they are domestic students and a 6.1% increase if that student is international. The expectation is about \$130/year for domestic students and roughly \$200/year for international students but with the proposal as currently written, for domestic students, it will be more than \$400.00 while international student tuition fees will increase by more than \$1000.00.
- 3) It is usually mentioned that those proposals are being created using a few principles namely: transparency, affordability, enabling equality as well as predictability. We told them that this is not predictable for current graduate students. President Rengifo then showed in the PowerPoint all the tuition increases for thesis-based programs over the past 5 years. She then pointed out to the Councilors that the increases to tuition were the same to both international and domestic students over the past 6 years except for 2018-2019 where tuition for domestic students increased by 5% and because of the change to international multiplier, international students were drastically disadvantaged with a tuition increase of 10.63%. If one does the incremental average over the last 5 years, tuition increased by 2.71% for domestic students and by 3.83% for international students and that's including the year 2018-2019 that breaks the trend and is simply a statistical outlier. What the university is

proposing is bursaries that leave students with an incremental increase of 3% and 6.1% for domestic and international students respectively. This drastically disadvantages our students.

- 4) They are also proposing that new domestic students receive a scholarship to cover the tuition difference between the average increase and the proposed increase for 2 years. After that, even new students will be disadvantaged as the increases they were sheltered from for 2 years along with the future increases for every year after the 2 years will all come from the students' pockets.

Another thing they are proposing is a scholarship to cover the differential fee for new international students of scholarship caliber. We asked them to define that, and their response was students who have a GPA of 80% and higher. They didn't say how long the international student will be receiving that support and what happens to that high caliber international student who comes here after a year and doesn't maintain the GPA of a high caliber student at any point in time. Will that student permanently lose that support? If so how will that student pay with those ballooning fees after their 1st year?

Those are the questions that were not answered, and most importantly they also mentioned a new scholarship for new graduate students starting in September 2022 whose supervisors have tri-council agency funding. The problem is that not all faculty members have the opportunity to apply for tri-council funding because some professors have funds from industry or other types of funding. Basically, this will only benefit some graduate students.

One of the things Provost Vannelli mentioned that resonated with me is that all current graduate students will not be disadvantaged meaning that the over 4000 graduate students we currently have will not be disadvantaged which is completely untrue. If we talk about support and implementation, there is no implementation infrastructure in place. They don't have a plan to increase stipends for graduate students because they said this is the responsibility of faculty members, essentially your professor is entirely responsible for stipend increases.

There is no increase in graduate student funding because those bursaries that everybody is going to receive next year will be taken from the money students are paying. We also mentioned there are current graduate students that are struggling to pay tuition and their living cost. In the beginning, I mentioned almost 40% of our thesis-based graduate students don't receive any type of stipend from the university and more than 50% of our graduate students already have a 2nd or 3rd part-time job and that is a huge concern. They have also said this tuition increase is to meet the U15 median but they don't consider the fact that there are other universities in the U15 that waive the differential fee. There are no U15s that are increasing the tuition drastically like what we see in the proposal.

More than 50% of the current and incoming graduate students will be disadvantaged by this proposal. That's why we've started a petition because we don't want this proposal to be approved. This is what we said: "the proposed tuition increases for all graduate programs (thesis-based, project-based, course-based) should not be approved because there is nothing, no implementation, and no support for current graduate students."

President Rengifo closed by thanking those students who have gone to the meetings/consultations and engaged in those discussions. Additionally, we are still not done with this as we want to keep moving and fighting this proposal, with that being said these are our next steps:

- We are working on a media statement from the GSA against this tuition proposal.
- We have an upcoming meeting with Provost Vannelli who is responsible for this tuition proposal. They've heard our concerns, so we want to hear about the changes to the proposal they've made based on those concerns.
- We got invited to a meeting in Regina with the Legislature where we will be talking about our tuition situation. Also, this is an opportunity for us to ask for funding from the provincial government.
- We are working on a letter to the Board of Governors which will be part of a few documents which will include the petition, the comments/ concerns of the students made on the petition.
- We are planning on doing a rally, as you may know, the USSU is already planning on having a rally this Thursday, February 27th, 2020. It starts at 11:30 am. It is going to be in the Bowl, if you would like to join, there will be free hot chocolate.

It is very disappointing that they have painted some of the meetings we've had as consultations because the definition of consultation is not passing information. That is exactly what they have done, they told us to come to a meeting where they informed us of a large tuition increase then the following day, they said they had a consultation with the GSA Executives. We want them to be transparent and think about the consequences this proposal is going to have on research and current graduate students.

The Chair asked if there were any questions for the President.

Questions & Answers:

Councilor: One thing I was thinking whenever I go to one of those meetings, is the fact that this 10% increase is compounding but they present like if it will be a 50% increase after 5 years.

President Rengifo: It's 61% over the next 5 years and for international students, the increase is 124%.

Councilor: How is the university dealing with the principle of transparency on how those funds are being used? I would like to know where every dollar of that new revenue is being spent.

President Rengifo: That is a question we also asked of the university. As the GSA we do represent graduate students at those meetings, we are not the decision-makers we are there to voice the concerns of the graduate students, and one of those big concerns was with respect to transparency. When they gave us those numbers for historical incremental increases and initially told us it was for the last 5 years of increases, it was very evident that transparency was lacking. Not sure if this was intentional but we have graduate students who have been here for the last 7 and 8 years and we can see in their PAWS accounts how much tuition they paid every year and we can easily calculate those numbers. And they actually recognized the fact that they were only using the average for the last 3 years and that the international student tuition expectation over the last 3 years wasn't 6.1%. They said they would look at it. It is hard to get them to change their minds because this proposal was created over a year ago which begs the question, why did we just hear about this in the last few weeks? We are trying our best for them to see the short- and long-term implications of this proposal and hope they seriously take those concerns into consideration with meaningful concessions being made.

Councilor: In the name of consultation, they are just passing information and not actually consulting as they would have met before proposing anything then comeback for feedback on the proposals.

President Rengifo: Thank you for your comment.

B. Report of the VP External

VP Fonseca gave the VP Ezekwesili's report highlighting that the deadline for nominations for the Annual Awards Gala is Friday, March 6th in the following categories: 1. Advising Excellence 2. Excellence in Community Service 3. Mark Kroeker Exceptional Student Leadership Award 4. Professional Excellence 5. Research Excellence in Humanities, Arts, Social Sciences, Law or Education 6. Research Excellence in Indigenous Studies 7. Research Excellence in Interdisciplinary Studies and 8. Research Excellence in STEM.

The Chair asked if there were any questions with regards to the VP External's report. There were no questions.

C. Report of the VP Finance and Operations

President Rengifo gave VP Alam's report. She told the gathering that the need-based Bursary application deadline was pushed to February 27, 2020 and successful recipients will be selected and notified by the 9th of March.

The Chair asked if there were any questions with regards to the VP Finance's report. There were no questions.

D. Report of the VP Student Affairs

VP Fonseca briefed Councilors on the graduate student conference which was successful but did emphasize that they'd like to get even more participation at the three-minute thesis (3MT) competition. The registration deadline for the 3MT is March 15th, 2020 and the competition will be held on March 27th, 2020 and will run the whole day.

The Chair asked if there were any questions for the VP Student Affairs. There were no questions for VP Fonseca.

8. Other Business/Announcements

The Chair on behalf of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee indicated that nominations have been opened for the GSA Executive positions and all information is available online. She mentioned that it is recommended that anyone interested in one of the executive positions should attend an information session to which you can RSVP online. Additionally, the Elections and Referenda committee is looking for 2 new members, 1 Councilor and 1 general member to be part of the Committee. She stated that if this was of interest to anyone, they should please take a look at the website which has the election schedule to see whether their availability works with the Committee's ratification meeting days and send their interest to the Chair's email address.

The Chair added that the next Council meeting will be on the 17th of March 2020.

9. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn (Fonseca/Oldach) at 6:54 pm.

Carried

Appendix A

Academic Council	Name of Councillors and (alternates)	Sep.24 2019	Oct.15 2019	Nov.5 2019	Dec.3 2019	Jan.28 2020	Feb.25 2020	Mar.17 2020	Apr.7 2020	Jun. 2020	Aug. 2020
Agricultural and Resources Economics (ARE) Graduate Student Association	Ran San (Valentina Ofori)	N/A	P	P	P	P	P				
Animal & Poultry Science Grad Students' Assoc.	Muhammad Imran (Kiana Rieger)	P	A	P	A	A	A				
ARCHAIA	Adrienne Ratuszniak (Michelle Gowan)	P	P	A	A	P	A				
Biology Graduate Student Association	Rebecca Smith (Ruth Greuel) (Carmen Marquez) (Andrea Wishart)	N/A	P	P	P	P	P				
Chemistry Course Council	Naheda Sahtout (Doug Fansher)	P	P	P	P	P	P				
College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Anatomy, Physiology & Pharmacology	Kushagra Parolia (Andrew Roebuc)	N/A	N/A	N/A	A	A	R				
College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Biochemistry, Microbiology & Immunology	Sampurna Ghosh (Megha Rohamar)	N/A	N/A	N/A	A	A	A				
College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Community Health & Epidemiology	Harini Aiyer (N/A)	N/A	N/A	N/A	A	P	A				
College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Health Sciences	Michael Zaki (N/A)	N/A	N/A	N/A	A	A	A				
Computer Science Graduate Council (CSGC)	Rifat Zahan Muhammad Aminul Islam (Md. Nadim)	N/A	p	p	P	P	P				

Academic Council	Name of Councillors and (alternates)	Sep.24 2019	Oct.15 2019	Nov.5 2019	Dec.3 2019	Jan.28 2020	Feb.25 2020	Mar.17 2020	Apr.7 2020	Jun. 2020	Aug. 2020
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Biological	Tumpa Sarker (Peyman Alizadeh)	N/A	N/A	N/A	A	A	A				
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Biomedical	Subashree Srinivasan (N/A)	N/A	N/A	N/A	A	A	A				
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Chemical	Shahab Minaei (Khaled, Zoroufchi Benis)	N/A	N/A	N/A	P	P	A				
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Civil, Geological & Environmental	Ajay Shrinivas Muthukumar (Mohanad Zaghloul)	N/A	N/A	N/A	P	A	A				
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Electrical & Computer	Karim Shahbazi (Jose Alvim Berkenbrock)	N/A	N/A	N/A	P	P	A				
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Mechanical	Alireza Razmavar (Hadi Ramin)	N/A	N/A	N/A	P	P	P				
English Course Council	Lindsay Church (Michelle Kent)	P	P	P	R	R	A				
Geography & Planning Grad Council	Selena Schut (Renata Leonhardt)	P	A	P	P	P	P				
Graduate Geological Society (GGS)	James Schulte (Brayden McDonald)	P	P	P	R	P	A				
Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy Students' Association	Manreet Kaur Nehal (Syed Adnand Khalid)	N/A	N/A	P	R	P	R				
Kinesiology Graduate Student Council	Natasha Boyes (Natalie Houser)	P	P	P	P	P	P				

Academic Council	Name of Councillors and (alternates)	Sep.24 2019	Oct.15 2019	Nov.5 2019	Dec.3 2019	Jan.28 2020	Feb.25 2020	Mar.17 2020	Apr.7 2020	Jun. 2020	Aug. 2020
MBARC	Alexander Mueller (Megan MacDonald)	N/A	N/A	P	P	A	A				
PEGASUS	Kimberlee Dube (Ethan Runge)	P	P	P	P	P	P				
Pharmacy & Nutrition Graduate Students' Council	Janine Rover (Mujtaba Badr)	P	P	P	P	P	P				
Physical Therapy Student Society (PTSS)	Julia Koop (Brandey Blahut)	P	P	P	P	P	P				
Plant Sciences GSA	Asanka Godakanda (Berenice Romero)	P	P	P	P	P	P				
Psychology Graduate Students' Association	Farron Wielinga (Josh Katz) (Brandon Sparks)	P	P	R	P	A	A				
SENSA	Mostofa Kamal Purbasha Mistry (Layane Moura) (Anita Bhatt)	P	P	P	P	P	P				
SPHSA	Aisha Sajid Humaira Inam (Janessa Tom) (Chunbei Liu)	N/A	N/A	P	P	P	P				
Sociology GSA	Connor Morrison (Cerah Dube) (Alana Demkiw)	N/A	P	P	A	P	A				
Soil Science Graduate Student Association	Rachel Brockamp (Aimee Schryer)	P	P	P	P	P	P				

Academic Council	Name of Councillors and (alternates)	Sep.24 2019	Oct.15 2019	Nov.5 2019	Dec.3 2019	Jan.28 2020	Feb.25 2020	Mar.17 2020	Apr.7 2020	Jun. 2020	Aug. 2020
Toxicology Graduate Students' Association	Mikayla Oldach (Alana Weber)	P	P	R	P	P	P				
Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCVI) GSA	Breanne Murray (Zeyad El Karsh)	P	P	P	P	P	P				
Exec. President	Mery Mendoza Rengifo	P	P	P	P	P	P				
Exec. VP Finance and Operations	Mohammad Wajih Alam	P	P	P	P	P	R				
Exec. VP Student Affairs	Alejandra Fonseca	P	P	P	P	P	P				
Exec. VP External	Chiamaka Ezekwesili	P	P	P	P	P	P				



University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association
Bursary Selection Committee Meeting Minutes
July 02, 2019

Members Present: Mohammad Wajih Alam (VP Finance and Operations), Alejandra Fonseca (VP Student Affairs), Doug Fansher (Council Member), Kushagra Parolia (Council Member), Jose Alvim Berkenbrock (Council Member).

Regrets: Katrin Ritchie (Council Member).

The VP Finance and Operations called the meeting to order at 5:07 PM and thanked all the committee members for being present on this important selection process despite their busy schedule. It was mentioned that dinner will be provided for the committee members. All members presented signed confidentiality documents to ensure all bursary applicants' privacy rights are protected. It was restated by all present that if anybody knows or has any type of relationship with an applicant, another committee member has to evaluate that application. The confidentiality letters were circulated and signed by the committee members. 5 piles of applications were set on the tables and each committee member decided where to sit as they arrive to the meeting room to make sure the distribution of applications was even. Each member reviewed and ranked the package of applications according to the accepted criteria, then a second revision for high ranked applications was made by another member. It was decided unanimously that incomplete applications will not be revised and any applications that score well-below a minimum threshold will not have a second evaluation. Following the review and cross-checking of all applications, they were sorted according to score. Committee Members finished going through the applications and ensured they get a second review.

It was mentioned that there were many qualified and deserving applicants and those who didn't receive bursaries is due to the limited number of bursaries available. 10 beneficiaries were selected from a total of 72 applications. Both successful and unsuccessful bursary applicants will be notified by July 8, 2019. It is recommended for those who were unsuccessful to apply again for the 2019 Fall Bursary. VP Finance and Operations will circulate the minutes and pending approval will contact the recipients of the bursaries.

The Meeting was adjourned at 6:54 PM.



**University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association
Executive Meeting Minutes
February 04, 2020**

Present: Mery Mendoza (President), Mohammad Wajih Alam (VP Finance and Operations), Chiamaka Ezekwesili (VP External), Alejandra Fonseca (VP Student Affairs).

Regrets/Absent: None

Guest: Mikayla Oldach

1. Call to Order / Opening Remarks

The President called the meeting to order at 5:07 PM. The President thanked the executives for their continued devotion to their roles.

2. Approval of the Agenda

The President asked if there were any additions or amendments to the agenda as circulated. The VP Student Affairs added the following items for action/discussion: Student Wellness Strategy Interviews

Motion: To approve the agenda as amended.

Moved: VP Finance and Operations;

Seconded: VP Student Affairs.

Vote All in Favour, Motion Carried.

3. Approval of the December 02, 2019 Executive Meeting Minutes

The President asked whether there were any further amendments to the December 2nd, 2019 Executive Meeting Minutes.

Motion: to approve the December 02, 2019 Executive Minutes

Moved: VP Finance and Operations

Seconded: VP Student Affairs.

Vote All in Favour, Motion Carried.

4. Approval of the January 20, 2020 Executive Meeting Minutes

The President asked whether there were any further amendments to the January 20, 2020 Executive Meeting Minutes.

Motion: to approve the January 20, 2020 Executive Minutes

Moved: VP Finance and Operations

Seconded: VP Student Affairs.

Vote All in Favour, Motion Carried.

5. Items for Action

5.1 Funding request from Toxicology Graduate Students Association (TGSA)

The VP Finance and Operations received a funding request from TGSA and invited one of the TGSA executives to join the GSA Executive Meeting. Mikayla Oldach attended on behalf of TGSA. The President welcomed Mikayla to the meeting and asked for a brief description of the event. She explained that the purpose of the TGSA is to develop and promote professional and social relationships among students within the toxicology graduate program and among other communities. For over a decade, the TGSA has organized an annual three-day graduate student retreat at Elk Ridge resort in Northern Saskatchewan. For many students this is their first opportunity to experience the beauty that Northern Saskatchewan has to offer, and for all students it is an excellent opportunity to connect and communicate with their peers, meet new colleagues, and create social bonds that lead to academic and professional advancement. The TGSA believes this retreat is an important team-building experience and are prepared to take on what costs may be necessary, but it is an expensive endeavor for a small student body to accommodate. As such, they are hoping to subsidize their budget with external funding to make the trip less expensive, and thereby more accessible to graduate students, particularly those

paying international students' tuition. This academic year's retreat will take place on January 24th-26th, 2020.

The president thanked Mikayla for giving details of the event and opened the floor for questions. The VP Finance and Operations asked how many students are expected to attend the event to which Mikayla replied that about 20 students are expected to participate. He further asked if there would be professors joining the event and how much the cost per individual would be. Mikayla explained that this event is exclusive to graduate students and it would cost \$ 90 for each individual. The VP Student Affairs asked if they have received funding from the GSA in past years. Mikayla mentioned that as far as she knows they did not request funding last year but TGSA has been receiving funding for this event from GSA in prior years. The President asked if they have looked for other sources for funding. Mikayla said that they have organized several fundraising events and the GSA support will offset the food cost.

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 Mikayla for providing the proposal and further information. She informed that a decision will be made and communicated through email within a week.

Motion: to approve funding in the amount of \$250 for this event.

Moved: VP Finance and Operations.

Seconded: VP External.

Vote All in Favour, Motion Carried.

5.2 Rate of advertisement on student handbook

The executives discussed about the rate of advertisement on student handbook. They agreed that it needs to be increased.

Motion: to increase the prices of advertisement by \$10 for each of the categories advertised on handbook.

Moved: President

Seconded: VP External

Vote All in Favour, Motion Carried.

5.3 Student Wellness Strategy Interview

The VP Student Affairs mentioned that she was approached by a representative of the TLARC committee requesting an interview from the GSA executives on their perspective of the Wellness Strategy. When discussed among the executives, the objective of this interview was not clear and the executives were not sure if the GSA executives will be the best suited to be interviewed about the strategy.

Motion: for VP Student Affairs to ask for more information on the goals of conducting interviews of the Wellness Strategy on the GSA executives.

Moved: President

Seconded: VP Finance and Operations

Vote all in Favour, Motion Carried.

5.4 Cheque Remittance

Whereas GSA bylaws 5.4.3 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:

- Payment to Canadian Federation of Students in the sum of \$17,843.73 issued on January 23, 2020 as CFS remittance.

Motion: to approve the expenditures outlined in this section above

Moved: VP External;

Seconded: President

Vote All in Favour, Motion Carried.

6. Items for Information / Discussion

6.1 Student sustainability coalition

The Community Engagement Coordinator for the University Of Saskatchewan Office Of Sustainability and a member of the President's Advisory Circle on a Sustainability Strategy; contacted the GSA to participate on the student sustainability coalition. This coalition will be chaired by members from the USSU and the GSA to cement it as a student-led platform. This body will be critical to galvanizing and synthesizing student voices in the development of a new institutional sustainability strategy at the University of Saskatchewan. The President encourages all the executives to attend this meeting on February 05, 2020.

6.2 Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) Fee Increase

The GSA at the University of Saskatchewan is a voting member of CFS. As such, the GSA membership is required to pay fees set by the CFS. Every year the CFS increases fee which is based on CPI. This year it was informed that the fees will be increased by 1.94% for GSA members.

7. Other Business

8. Confidential Session

9. In Camera Session

10. Adjournment of Meeting

The President asked if there were any other business arising. Since there were none, motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:21 PM.

Moved: VP External

Seconded by: VP Finance and Operations

Vote All in Favour, Motion Carried.



**University of Saskatchewan - Graduate Students' Association
Governance Committee Meeting Minutes
February 27, 2020 (5:00 pm – 7:00 pm).**

Attendance:

Attendees: Mery Mendoza (President), Alejandra Fonseca (VP Student Affairs), Naheda Sahtout (Councillor), (Council Chair), Priya Goundar (Regular Member)

Regrets: Rifat Zahan (Councillor), Phillip Radetzki (Regular Member)

Absent: Emediong Etukudo (Regular Member), Scarlett Ling (Regular Member)

Update from previous meeting:

- Circulate minutes of the meeting scheduled on February 13, 2020.
 - Update: Completed

Agenda for this meeting:

- Review the remaining sections of the GSA Policy Manual

Proposed amendments to the GSA Policy Manual:

Section of the Policy Manual	Amendments
5. Student Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the end of each sentence in this section, periods were changed to semi-colons to ensure consistency. • Section 5.2. – removed “abuse” and “in accordance with the Confidentiality Policy” • Section 5.4 – This section was changed to: “The Executive and Staff will have knowledge of the resources available to graduate students and the Association’s role as a student advocate and will refer students when necessary.”
6. Association Student Handbook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periods changed to semi-colons where appropriate • Section 6.2 – “Vice-President External” changed to “Vice-President External Affairs” • Section 6.3 – removed “events”

7. Bursary Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periods changed to semi-colons where appropriate • Section 7.1 – “Needs-Based” changed to “Need-Based” • Section 7.4.1 “Needs-Based” changed to “Need-Based” • Section 7.4.3 – Council members felt this section should be removed because it has the potential to be abused Executives and/or the Bursary Selection Committee • Section 7.5.2 – changed to: “A completed bursary application form (which shall be made available on the Association’s website). • Section 7.7.3 – changed to: Spring/Summer term • Section 7.10.2: Added – “Those applicants who were not successful in receiving the bursary will be notified within two weeks of the deadline and will be encouraged to apply again.”
8. Affiliations Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 8.1.1 – “Indigenous Liaison” changed to “Vice President Indigenous Engagement”. Two (2) Executives changed to one (1) Executive and “delegates” changed to “designate” to ensure consistency. • Section 8.2.1: added 67% next to (2/3). Also added “upon recommendation from the Executive” at the end of this sentence. • Section 8.2.2 – changed two (2) Executives to one (1) Executive, and changed “delegates” to “designates” • Section 8.2.3 – removed the comma after Vice-President External Affairs
9. Academic Council Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 9.4.3 – added “regular” before Council meetings for the academic year.
10. Social Group Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changed periods to semi-colons where appropriate • Section 10.1 – changed “may” to “can”. Removed “Academic Councils” because Social Groups already includes academic councils. • Section 10.2 – the sentence did not make sense. Therefore, it was changed to “To qualify for funding, a ratified Social Group or Academic Council shall only use the funds towards serving the membership of the Social Groups and the graduate student community in general.” Removed “Academic Councils” from this sentence. • Section 10.6 – changed to “Social Group applications for funding shall be evaluated by the Executive with respect to the following criteria:”

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 10.6.2 and 10.6.3– removed “or Academic Council” • Section 10.6.4 – Removed “Social Group, the Academic Council, the Association” so the sentence now reads: “Whether the general graduate student body will benefit from the event; and,” • A member wanted this section to specify that funding disbursements would be made within 14-15 days following the event. Accordingly, the following new sections were added: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10.3.1 – Applicants will be invited to present to the Executives at one of the Executive Meetings; • 10.3.2 - Applicants will be informed of the decision no later than seven (7) days after the presentation to the Executives; • Similarly, under section 10.4, a new section was added: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10.4.1 – In order to receive approved funding, Social Groups are responsible for submitting expense receipts to the Office Manager within fourteen (14) days of their event. • 10.4.2 – Social Groups will only be reimbursed up to the total of expense receipts received and up to the maximum of approved funding. A cheque will be remitted no later than seven (7) days of receiving the expense receipts. • Added 1.1.1 (regarding logos) to section 10.8 as well
11. Corporate VISA Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members extensively discussed policies surrounding usage of the GSA credit card. The following changes resulted from that discussion: • Deleted 11.1.2 because details regarding usage are provided under 11.2 • Added section 11.2.4 – “The Office Manager and the Vice-President Finance and Operations, and if one of the mentioned is unavailable, another member of the Executive, are required to be together for an approved GSA purchase that is outside the GSA Commons premises.” • Section 11.3.2 – changed “splitting” to “allocating” • Aside:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GSA Bylaws – Section 5.3 – Financial Reports • Changed 5.3.1 – “Every month, a financial report (operating statement, budget, or ledger), including all expenditures and revenues for that month, shall be made available to the Board of Directors.” • Changed 5.3.2 - “Every month, a financial report (operating statement, budget, or ledger), including all expenditures and revenues for that month, shall be made available to any Regular Member upon request”
4. Graduate Students’ Association Commons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 4.1.1 – deleted from this section. • Section 4.1.3 now precedes section 4.1.2 (flows logically this way) • Section 4.2 – Deleted “Commons” • Section 4.2.2 – Deleted “GSA Commons” and “shall” so the sentence now reads “The duties of the Coordinators include...” • Section 4.3.1 – Deleted “as well as” • Section 4.4.4.6 (Social Group events) was placed fore 4.4.4.5 (Graduate student events) • Section 4.4.5 – corrected “ours” to “hours”, added “Association’s website”, changed “may” to “can” • Section 4.4.6 – Added “or individuals” after “Non-ratified groups”, added “Association’s website”, changed “may” to “can” • Section 4.4.8.2 – “GSA Commons Coordinator” changed to “GSA Staff or Executive” • Section 4.4.10.1 and 4.4.10.2 – changed “will be billed” to “may be billed” • Section 4.5 – changed “will” to “may” • Section 4.5.2 – changed to: “Diversity is the priority when selecting artwork for the GSA Commons.”
1. Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 1.1.3 – changed to “Association’s website” • Section 1.2.1.3.1 – hyphenated “up to date” • *NOTE* - Please make sure we use Social Groups instead of Social Clubs throughout the Policy Manual. • Section 1.2.1.4.2 – changed to “Association’s business” • Section 1.2.1.5.2 – changed to “Location of the GSA Commons” • Section 1.2.1.5.4 – changed to “Listing of all Association’s office staff”

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 1.3.1 – changed to “Executive and current staff members shall have access to an email address that is associated with their position.” • Section 1.3.4 – changed to “Individuals with access to an Association email shall not forward Association emails to their own non-Association emails” • Moved section 1.3.5 – “All Association business shall be handled through Association emails” before 1.3.4. • Section 1.3.6 – changed to: “Emails to the entire student body shall follow Bylaws” • Section 1.4.3.1 – changed to: “A document highlighting all section of the Association’s Constitution, Bylaws, and Policy Manuals that directly apply to each individual position.” • Section 1.5.1 – deleted the second sentence. • Section 1.5.3 – added a comma before “with” and after “information” • Section 1.5.4 – changed to “All bursary and award applications will remain confidential and shall be filed until the end of the fiscal year.”
2. Health and Dental Insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 2.1 – Executive added after insurance provider • Section 2.3 – Changed to say, ‘Executive shall discuss health and dental changes and make recommendation(s) to the Board. The Board, via the Vice-President External Affairs shall discuss any changes to the plan to Council. • Section 2.4 – added, ‘the Executive, Board, and Council....’

Conclusion:

- Meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

President's report - GSA Council Meeting, March 2020

**GRADUATE STUDENTS'
ASSOCIATION**
University of Saskatchewan



Emmanuel and St. Chad Chapel
1337 College Drive
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(306)-966-8471
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For Immediate Release
March 5, 2020

Graduate Students' Association against Proposed Tuition Hikes

SASKATOON - The Graduate Students' Association is strongly against the proposed five year graduate tuition hikes of:

- **14.75%** for course-based graduate programs;
- **10%** for project/thesis-based graduate programs;
- **6.9%** in the international differential multiplier.

After 5 years, this proposal will see:

- **Course-based** domestic students pay an additional **99%** tuition, and international students pay an additional **177%** tuition;
- **Project/thesis-based** domestic students pay an additional **61% tuition**, and international students pay an additional **124%** tuition.

Graduate students are critical to scientific discovery, innovation, technology, and play an important role in the research and teaching productivity of our institution. More than 2000 graduate students are in thesis/project-based programs, working in interdisciplinary research, collaborating with facilities and institutions nationally and internationally, and publishing quality research. Unfortunately, close to 40% of those graduate students do not receive any type of stipend for the work they perform, and more than 50% of our graduate students have a second or third part-time job to balance the financial costs of tuition and living expenses.

This proposal creates even more barriers to our graduate students, threatens the quality of research and teaching at the university, and forces students to turn down prospective research supervisors that may have drawn them to the University of Saskatchewan. Furthermore, as a result of these tuition hikes, education becomes increasingly more unaffordable and inaccessible, exacerbating the socioeconomic element with respect to obtaining higher levels of education; thus, impacting career choices, and ultimately adversely influencing the ability of our future generations to contribute to the economy of this province and country.

Let us not focus our attention on increasing tuition to reach the U15 median, but instead realign our goals to increasing supports, stipends, scholarships, teaching assistantship salaries and fellowships so that our graduate students are financially secure.

The University of Saskatchewan Graduate Students' Association represents over 4000 graduate students distributed over the 17 schools and colleges.



Graduate Students' Association
University of Saskatchewan

1337 College Drive, Saskatoon SK S7N 0W6
Phone: (306) 966-8471 Fax: (306) 966-8598
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March, 2020

RE: VP External's Report to Council

Dear Council Members,

Please find below my March report to council:

1) **GSA Guppies**

We are excited to report that **the GSA Guppies are working on participating in Futsal every Thursday 5pm at the REC. Please come let's cheer them.**

2) **Health chats**

There are plans to increase the number of health chats for the GSA in collaboration with services available on campus and Student wellness centre. The following listed are the health chats available for the Winter Term to be held in the GSA commons.

	Date	Time
Zumba (eventbrite)	13th March & 27th March	5pm – 6pm

3) **GSA ANNUAL AWARDS GALA**

The gala preparations are ongoing. It will be held April 4th and our venue to be Remai Modern and tickets are on sale. You can purchase your tickets from the GSA office manager's desk. Please visit the GSA website [HERE](#) for more information.

4) **Sustainability Committee meeting**

The committee had their even March 4th, 2020

5) **Diversity Committee**

This committee will be having their event on March 25th from 4pm till 6:30pm at the GSA commons.

6) **Awards Committee**

The awards committee met on March 7th and 8th to work on the awards

7) **Meetings**

The following is a list of some meetings/events since May, 2019.

S/N	Meetings
1	GSA Executive Retreat
2	Academic Programs Committee Meeting
3	CGPS COUNCIL
4	Provost advisory Committee
5	Student forum
6	DSC Committee Meeting
7	Grad Academic Affairs Committee Meeting
8	Equity and International Committee
9	University Council Meeting
10	Faith Leaders Council
11	U of S convocation
12	72nd Semi-Annual National General Meeting of the Canadian Federation of Students and Canadian Federation of Students at Ottawa
13	Parents on Campus Meeting
14	GSA Academic Council Meeting
15	GSA Executive Meeting
16	Senate meeting



University of Saskatchewan Graduate Students' Association
Monthly Report from the VP Finance and Operations (March 2020)

Good Evening GSA members,

I am pleased to provide you an update on my activities as the current Vice-President Finance and Operations.

1) GSA Winter Bursary Update

The deadline for bursary application was extended until February 28, 2020 as the number of applicants were less than expected. The bursary selection committee met on March 5 to review the applications and select the recipients. This term we received 76 applications for the 2020 GSA winter bursary. Although the deadline for application was increased, the result announcement will not be delayed. Based on the funds that we have available, we will be able to allocate 23 bursaries for this winter term. The successful recipients will be contacted on March 9, 2020. I would like to thank the bursary selection committee members for being very active throughout the year which helped in timely selection of bursary recipients in spring/summer, fall and winter terms.

2) Tax Clinic

This year GSA free tax clinic will be hosted at the GSA Commons on the following dates and times and is hosted in association with the Canada Volunteer Income Tax Program (CVITP) a program of the Canada Revenue Agency.

- March 23rd from 4 PM to 7 PM
- March 30th from 4 PM to 7 PM
- March 31st from 4 PM to 7 PM
- April 1st from 4 PM to 7 PM
- April 6th from 4 PM to 7 PM

I am working hard to ensure that graduate students who need help with tax filing are aware of this service as we want to help as much graduate students as possible. The information related to GSA free tax clinic has been sent to the graduate students via newsletter. In coming days, this will also be circulated via social media and paws. I would like to thank the volunteers who came forward to help other fellow students.

3) Supporting ratified social clubs/Academic Council

The GSA has been actively supporting social clubs/Academic councils throughout the year.

Additionally, I continue to sit on various committees to improve the graduate student's experience on and off campus. Some of the meetings are listed below:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Meeting</i>
<i>February 27, 2020</i>	Financial appeal review committee
<i>February 27, 2020</i>	USSU rally
<i>February 27, 2020</i>	GSA Election orientation/information session
<i>March 02, 2020</i>	GSA Executive Meeting
<i>March 02, 2020</i>	GSA Election orientation/information session
<i>March 04, 2020</i>	GSA Sustainability Event
<i>March 05, 2020</i>	RSAW committee meeting
<i>March 05, 2020</i>	GSA Election orientation/information session
<i>March 05, 2020</i>	Bursary Selection Committee

Please feel free to contact me at gsa.fin@usask.ca or speak to me anytime at the commons should you have any questions or need any further clarification.

Sincerely,

Mohammad Wajih Alam

Vice-President Finance and Operations

Graduate Students' Association

Email: gsa.fin@usask.ca | Web: <https://gsa.usask.ca/>

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Graduate Students' Association
University of Saskatchewan

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March 2020

RE: VP Student Affairs Report to Council

Dear Council Members:

Please find below my January-February report to council.

1) 3MT Competition

The 3MT competition date was changed and the event will be hosted on March 27th, 2020. The prospective judges are being contacted. The deadline for abstracts is March 18th 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 April 21st, 2020 at the University of Alberta, Edmonton. Lunch will be provided during the Usask 3MT Competition. 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 13 th , 2020	Governance Committee Meeting
February 20 th 2020	University Council
February 21 st , 2020	Wellness Strategy Meeting
February 21 st , 2020	Meeting with the Provost
February 25 th , 2020	GSA Council Meeting
February 26 th , 2020	Meeting with the President's Executive Committee
February 26 th , 2020	Student Forum Executive Meeting
February 27 th , 2020	Governance Committee Meeting
February 27 th , 2020	GSA Election Information Session

February 28th, 2020	Graduate Academic Affairs Committee Meeting
March 2 nd , 2020	GSA Election Information Session
March 3 rd , 2020	GSA Executive Meeting
March 5 th , 2020	GSA Election Information Session
March 5 th , 2020	GSA Bursary Committee Meeting