



University of Saskatchewan-Graduate Students' Association (GSA)

Wednesday, June 26th, 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: Devopriya Tirtho

Recording Secretary: Sara Nath

- **Call to Order**

The Chair, Devopriya Tirtho and the recording secretary, Sara Nath of the GSA officially welcomed all the graduate students, council members and executives to the meeting. The meeting was called to order at 5:07 P.M. after the quorum for the meeting had been met. Recording Secretary of the Council, compiled the meeting minutes.

The GSA chair shared a quote by Martin Luther King Jr., emphasizing the importance of persistence and resilience. The message is about determination, adaptability, and the unwavering pursuit of one's goals despite obstacles.

- **Rules and Regulation**

Before the approval, the GSA recording secretary explained the rules and regulations of the meeting to the council members. She explained that GSA uses the Robert's Rules of Order for its meeting, so for a decision to be passed or approved, a mover and a seconder are needed, and the vote cast is either in favor, opposed or abstain. Agenda items are addressed one at a time with specific time allocations; extended discussions move to the next meeting. Each council member has 3 minutes to speak, with notifications at 1 minute and 30 seconds remaining, and will be muted after their time. Respect and decorum are emphasized, with the Chair and Secretary authorized to mute or stop inappropriate speech. It is advisable for members to have their video on while speaking, but flexibility is allowed.

- **Introduction of Council Members**

The recording secretary requested each council member to introduce themselves by stating their name and the council they represent. The council members then introduced themselves accordingly.

- **Agenda: Approval of Agenda**

The chair announced the next item on the agenda, noting it was circulated via email but not posted on the GSA website, for which he apologized. The agenda package was shared in the chat box. The chair then asked if there were any amendments to the agenda package.

Mr. Mostofa raised a concern about the incorrect agenda package on the GSA website, which was from the previous year. The chair acknowledged the issue, attributing it to new coordinators in their learning phase, and promised to update the website. Mostofa also questioned the circulation of the

meeting notice and quorum. Gwen suggested that additional concerns should be addressed under "other business" at the end of the meeting, and emphasized following the stated agenda order. The chair confirmed that they had quorum and proceeded to request any amendments to the agenda package. Hearing none, the chair called for a mover and a seconder to approve the agenda package.

Motion to approve the agenda of the meeting. (Gwen/Lindsay)

Carried

Yes: 20

No: 0

Abstention: 0

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

After the voting, the chair announced that the Vice President of Student Academics and Affairs is absent due to research work but will attend the next meeting. His report is included in the agenda package for review.

- **Agenda: Approval of Minutes**

- 1. Approval of April 30, 2024, Meeting Minute**

The Chair asked about the approval of the minute from GSA Meeting from April 30, 2024.

Motion to approve the minutes from April 30, 2024. (Shuqi/Landon)

Carried

Yes: 21

No: 0

Abstention: 0

The motion to approve the *April 30, 2024*, minutes was approved by the majority of the council members.

- **Agenda: GSA Executive Reports**

The chair informed that the executive committee members are in a learning phase and have held meetings, but the minutes are not ready for this meeting. They promised that the minutes would be included in the next meeting's agenda package for approval or discussion of amendments.

➤ **VP External Affairs**

Reza, VP of External Affairs for GSA, reported that he received passwords for Instagram and Twitter accounts but had to reset Facebook and LinkedIn passwords as previous executives didn't have access. He submitted files for the GSA Handbook to CFS and secured only two sponsors, from CGPS and Student Care, after contacting last year's sponsors who were not interested.

Afterwards, Mostofa asked if the sponsorship money was enough to cover the handbook expenses. Reza replied that it would cover about 50% and would include all documents in his file. Jeisson asked why sponsors were no longer interested, and Reza replied that they gave no reasons. Jordan asked if there were other potential sponsors, and Reza explained that despite an extended deadline until June 21, he couldn't convince any new sponsors to invest in the GSA Handbook.

➤ **VP Finance and Operations**

Lindsay Carlson, a 3rd-year PhD student in biology, introduced herself and outlined her goals as a new GSA executive. Her key initiatives include creating a transition manual for future executives to ensure continuity and reduce information loss. Also, she extended the spring and summer bursary deadline to July 28 due to low application numbers. Lindsay is also updating the GSA bookkeeping system to facilitate digital funding distribution and improve efficiency and eco-friendliness in bursary distribution. Additionally, she highlighted her support for the two- Spirit and LGBTQ community during Pride Month, expressing her hope that everyone feels safe in the GSA and GSA Commons.

Mostofa thanked Lindsay for initiating the digital payment system and expressed his appreciation. He then raised a concern about the bursary announcement timing, noting that the application opened on May 31st, but the notification was received three weeks later. He suggested that the GSA manager should ensure timely announcements in the future. Lindsay clarified that the first announcement went out on May 31st and a second one about the deadline extension was sent before the initial closing date. She acknowledged the short application period and agreed it should be longer, especially in summer.

Mostofa then mentioned the need to approve the budget for the current year, highlighting that any spending or disbursement of bursary funds would be illegal without budget approval. He suggested calling an emergency AGM to address this. Lindsay confirmed the issue, stating the budget was not

presented or approved by the previous executives, and emphasized the need to meet with the Budget Committee first. She mentioned the lack of budget actuals for 2023-2024 and the necessity to revise the budget to reflect current spending needs due to inflation. Lindsay also addressed an audit delay due to missing executive reports from 2022-2023 and asked for assistance in obtaining these reports.

Mostofa replied that he was working on obtaining the necessary documents and suggested using the previous year's approved budget as a reference for the new budget. Lindsay agreed but noted the need for budget adjustments to reflect actual spending.

Sainey asked if students who had already graduated were given the bursaries under the previous executive. Lindsay clarified that the current executives have not disbursed any bursaries yet as they extended the deadline for spring/summer 2024 applications. She mentioned that any past bursaries were handled by previous executives and that, due to confidentiality bylaws, they cannot access previous identifying information. To prevent future issues, Lindsay stated they are working on an agreement with the university to validate enrollment at the time of application, rather than relying on potentially falsified confirmation documents.

➤ **VP Indigenous Engagement**

Jennifer expressed her gratitude and excitement for her role as Vpie and her temporary duties as VP Financial. She emphasized the importance of transparency regarding the Deb Wewin policy at the University of Saskatchewan, particularly in publishing verification numbers for indigenous status. Jennifer aims to advocate for greater clarity on how many individuals are verified under Deb Wewin and their demographics, stressing the importance of this data in understanding the university's commitment to diversity. Additionally, she discussed her plans to promote indigenous education and stewardship, including efforts to bring blanket exercises to colleges despite challenges in access to facilitators. Jennifer also highlighted her interest in using Juan Esquiman as a resource for indigenous land reclamation and education in Canada.

Jeisson expressed appreciation for Jennifer's ideas and support regarding the university and its history. Mostofa also conveyed his happiness upon hearing Jennifer's plans and extended his best wishes to her and the current GSA executive committee.

➤ **President**

David expressed his gratitude to the council members and executives, emphasizing his philosophy inspired by Robert K. Greenfield that good leaders must first become good servants. He highlighted

his commitment to serve collaboratively rather than commandingly. David thanked past leaders, particularly Abbas and Mustafa, for their support. Celebrating Pride Month, he honored the LGBTQ+ community's resilience and progress. David announced the GSA's 40th anniversary celebration, set to begin this year and extend into next. He shared his efforts since May 1, 2024, which include attending various meetings, securing sponsorships, representing the GSA at convocation, advocating for affordable transportation, planning welcoming activities, and revitalizing past associations. David committed to fostering a collaborative environment and supporting all members to achieve their shared vision, leaving his doors open for discussions to help the GSA grow. He concluded by expressing profound gratitude to everyone involved and emphasized that every voice matters.

After David's report, there were no questions for the President, but Mostofa had questions for the VP Finance. Mostofa raised a concern regarding an email he received from the GSA Manager about correcting his tax receipt from the last academic year. He mentioned that the email stated a new auditor had been appointed, which he questioned, as only the AGM is eligible to approve a new auditor. Lindsay clarified that no new auditor had been appointed and that the same auditor had been in place since at least 2017. She explained that the confusion might stem from the hiring of a new bookkeeping firm after the previous one resigned in December 2023 due to the workload. The new firm is digitizing records, which might be causing the confusion. Mostofa then asked for intervention as the incorrect information was delaying his tax submission. Lindsay asked him to forward the email for her to look into it.

- **Agenda: Other Business**

David reiterated the need for a vice chair and suggested that advertisements should start soon to ensure that there isn't just one person available for emergencies. He asked for this to be worked on promptly. The chair confirmed that the advertisement would be published through the GSA's social media channels and email in the coming weeks. He then asked if there was any other business to discuss. Seeing none, he proceeded with the last agenda item, which was the adjournment of the meeting.

22. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:04 p.m. (Jennifer/Rachel)

Carried

Yes: 17

No: 0

Abstention: 0

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



Appendix A

Academic Council	Name of Councilors and (alternates)	Jun 2024	Jul 2024	Aug 2024	Sep 2024	Oct 2024	Nov 2024	Dec 2024	Jan 2025	Feb 2025
Biology Graduate Student Association	Shuqi Ren Ilsa Griebel (Alternate) Lynsey Bent (Alternate)	P								
Chemistry Course Council	Nasrin Aliasgharlou Vi Phan (Alternate)	A								
College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Anatomy, Physiology & Pharmacology	Mary Lazell Wright Farnoosh Tabatabaieian (Alternate)	P								
College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Biochemistry, microbiology & Immunology	Rachel Harris – Councilor	P								
College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Community Health & Epidemiology	Zoe Schipper – Councilor Tachlima Chowdhury Sunna (Alternate)	A								
College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Health Sciences	Elyse Proulx-Cullen – Councilor Shima Hozhabrimahani (Alternate)	A								
Computer Science Graduate Council (CSGC)	Thulani Hewavithana Norah Ridley Mumtahina Ahmed (Alternate)	P								
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Biological	Pabitra Chandra Das	A								
Engineering Graduate Community Council	Blessing Ekwueme	A								

(EGCC) – Biomedical										
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Chemical	Maliheh Heravi Ehsan Samimi Sohrforozani (Alternate)	A								
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Civil, Geological & Environmental	Ehsan Samimi Sohrforozani Corwyn Shomachuk (Alternate)	A								
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Electrical & Computer	Mohammad Salimi Hossein Nezhadian (Alternate)	A								
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Mechanical	Siddhartha Gollamudi Kathryn Avery (Alternate)	P								
English Course Council	Parastoo Tahmasbi Gwen Rose (Alternate)	P								
Geography & Planning Graduate Council	Emily Ireland Prakash Sapkota (Alternate)	P								
Kinesiology Graduate Student Council	Kevin Mageto Karissa Johnson (Alternate)	A								
Nursing Graduate Student Association (NGSA)	Jordan Sherstobitoff Catherine Lavigne Sarah Karwacki Solie (Alternate) Geneveave Barbo (Alternate)	P								
Plant Science	Sainey Ceesay Suma Ghosh- Alternate	P								

Physical Therapy Student Society (PTSS)	Tyler Blanchette Carter Frerichs (Alternate)	A								
SENSA	Chelsea Ohenewaa Nyarko Aisha Adelah (Alternate)	P								
School of Public Health (SPHSA)	Somayeh Abdi Jaclyn Edwards Ahmed Muftah (Alternate)	A								
Sociology GSA	Meaghan Boily Leah Houseman (Alternate) Kayla Arisman (Alternate)	P								
Soil Science Graduate Student Association	Landon Orenchuk Tristan Chambers (Alternate)	P								
Animal and Poultry Science GSA	Megan Dubois Wyatt Armes	P								
ARE Graduate Student Society	Koal Sammons Josh Bourassa	P								
Toxicology Graduate Student Association (TGSA) Academic Councilor	Alexandra Cullen Emily Kennedy	A								
History Graduate Student Association	Kiegan Lloyd Catlin M. Woloschuk	P								
Physics & Engineering Physics (PEGASUS)	Jeisson A. Vanegas Carranza Nicholas Simonson	P								

Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy Student Association	Harjot Tu Bazal Khalid	A								
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Executive member	Name of executive member	Jun 2024	July 2024	Aug 2024	Sep 2024	Oct 2024	Nov 2024	Dec 2024	Jan 2025	Feb 2025
Exec. President	David Ohene-Amoako	P								
Exec. VP Finance and Operations	Lindsay Carlson	P								
Exec. VP Academic and Student Affairs	Nickson Joseph	A								
Exec. VP External Affairs	Reza Golpayegani	P								
Exec. VP Indigenous Engagement	Jennifer Amarualik-Yaremko	P								