



University of Saskatchewan- Graduate Students' Association

Wednesday, December 13th, 2023; 17:30-19:00 Meeting

Location: GSA Commons and Online AGENDA

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. Approval of Agenda	1-2	<i>Decision</i>
3. Approval of Meeting Minutes		
3.1 Approval of October 18, 2023, Meeting Minutes	2-10	<i>Decision</i>
3.2 Approval of November 15, 2023, Meeting Minutes	11- 21	<i>Decision</i>
4. GSA Executives Reports	22-32	
4.1 President's Report		<i>Information</i>
4.2 Vice President Finance & Operations Report (Verbal)		<i>Information</i>
4.3 Vice President Academic and Student Affairs Report		<i>Information</i>
4.4 Vice President External Affairs Report		<i>Information</i>
4.5 Vice President Indigenous Engagement Report		<i>Information</i>
4.6 Questions & Answers		
6. Other Business		<i>Information</i>
7. Adjournment		<i>Decision</i>



University of Saskatchewan
Graduate Students' Association
Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 18, 2023. **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

Chair: Sadia Afrin Lema

Recording Secretary: Sara Nath

1. Call to Order/ Opening Remarks

All Council Members were emailed the agenda package. The Chair of the Council officially welcomed Members of the Council to the meeting and called the meeting to order at 5:07 P. M after the quorum for the meeting had been met. Sara Nath, the Recording Secretary of the Council, compiled the meeting minutes.

Before Approval

- The GSA chair explained to council members 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. She further said that only voting members would be allowed to vote and the majority will get a decision to be passed. Also she said, the council members who are ratified for 2023-24 sessions, only they are eligible to vote.

2. Approval of Agenda

The Chair asked about any amendments to the agenda as circulated via email. There were no amendments brought forward.

Motion to approve the amendments and agenda. (Elyse/Mostofa)

Carried

3. Approval of Minutes from September 13, 2023

The Chair asked about any amendments to the minutes from September 13, 2023. There were no amendments brought forward.

Motion to approve the minutes from September 13, 2023, minutes. (Sristy/Tyler)

Carried

4. Motion to receive GSA executive Meeting Minutes

4.1. GSA Executive meeting September 7, 2023

4.2. GSA Executive meeting September 20, 2023

The Chair asked if there were any suggested changes before the minutes were called for approval. There were no changes brought forward.

Motion to receive the GSA executive meeting minutes. (Tyler/Kathryn)

Carried

5. Election of GSA Council Chair

Control of the meeting was handed over to the GSA President Mostofa Kamal since the current Chair was up for re-election. There were two candidates present who expressed interest in the position: Sadia Afrin Lema and Asutosh Dalai. They spoke of their studies and experience, as well as why they are interested in the position, after which they were asked to exit the meeting for a vote to appoint them to the position.

Votes:

Sadia: 5

Asutosh: 6

Abstain: 1

Based on the voting results, Asutosh Dalai was appointed to the position of GSA Council Chair.

After this, previous chair again conducted the remaining meeting.

6. Election of GSA Council Vice Chair

The Chair addressed the requirements and responsibilities for holding the position of Council Vice Chair. There was one interested candidate who expressed interest via email: Devopriya Tirtho.

Devopriya Tirtho expressed his interest for this position. He also briefly talked about his experiences and that he can engage further with the GSA and for graduate students here at Usask. After which he was asked to exit the meeting for a vote to appoint him to the position.

Votes:

Yes: 14

No: 0

Abstain: 0

As the majority of people vote in support, Devopriya Tirtho was appointed to the position of GSA Council Vice Chair.

7. Election of GSA Council Recording Secretary

The Chair addressed the requirements and responsibilities for holding the position of Council Recording Secretary. There was one interested candidate who expressed interest via email: Sara Nath.

Sara Nath expressed her interest for this position. She talked about her studies and experience, as well as why she is interested in the position, after which she was asked to exit the meeting for a vote to appoint her to the position.

Votes:

Yes: 14

No: 0

Abstain: 0

As the majority of people vote in support, Sara Nath was appointed to the position of GSA Council Recording Secretary.

8. Social Club Ratification

- **Tox on Tap**

The presenter talked about Tox on Tap, an organization collaboratively formed by toxicology graduate students. She mentioned that the organization's primary goal is to establish a science cafe that effectively engages both the general public and members of the scientific community. She further said that this initiative operates as a non-profit, which are open to anyone to attend. They were previously ratified, now they again wanted to ratify their club for 2023-24 session.

Questions and Responses

Q: How many members are there in Tox on Tap? R: Currently, we have 8.

Q: Are there any graduate student in the club? R: All are graduate student except 1. So, 88% are graduate student.

Q: This club is for graduate students? R: It's open to both graduate and undergraduate.

Q: How about your executives? You have an executive there? R: Yes, they're listed in our ratification form myself, Hannah Mahoney and Emily Kennedy. The ratification form was sent to the proper email address.

Approval of the Tox on Tap.

The chair called for a motion to approve of the club since all questions were exhausted.

(Mostofa/Ramin)

Carried

Yes: 15

No: 0

Abstention 0

The motion to accept the Tox on Top was approved by the majority of the council members.

- **Let's Talk Science** – No representatives to speak.

9. GSA Executive Report

9.1. President's Report

He started with saying that in the last president executive meeting, the Dean of CGPS informed that this academic year the university allocated 100 case for the paid maternity allowance, and that the announcement will go in the December. He hoped that this would bring a positive change among the

graduate students who are expecting, specially for the international students. Then he also mentioned about hiring new full time office manager who joined GSA at September 26th. He asked everyone to be patient with him as he is going through some training.

9.2. Vice President Finance and Operations Report.

He began by updating members that the GSA fall bursary application began from October 16th and the deadline for this is until November 16th. After the application deadline, each of the application would be evaluated. He asked if any council members are interested to join the bursary committee, they should send an email to the GSA Chair showing interest. This time CGPS is also contributing, so they have a good number of money for the bursary. Also this time they have special section for students who are pregnant. He also announced about hiring new GSA coordinator. They were planning to hire 3 coordinators, because sometimes there are some events in the weekend/holiday. The executive team would help in this hiring process and it would start in the coming week. He also announced about hiring new office manager who completed his phd in public policy in the UofS. For any further queries directed towards the VP of Finance, members are encouraged to reach out via email at gsa.fin@usask.ca at their convenience.

9.3. Vice President Academic and Student Affairs Report.

She has been actively involved in various initiatives. She mentioned that during their tenureship they received some academic misconduct and plagiarism related issues for grad students. So, they were really concerned about that and were trying to improve the awareness. So, she and the USSU Academic affairs worked with Susan Bens, Academic Integrity Strategist, regarding this. They planned to sit for it on a regular basis. Furthermore, they are also trying to improve the structures like how the new AI tools are used, also the awareness related to it and others. She also said that she communicated with the graduate academic affairs committee about improving the policy of the academic integrity online course. She mentioned about arranging event with the ISSAC and other departments in the university to improve awareness. Lastly, she talked about taking new role as the chair of the diversity committee. She was keen on sharing ideas and promoting awareness on a wide range of diversity-related topics. She encouraged people to nominate themselves or their friends as a member of the diversity committee and she was looking forward to organizing some exciting events from this committee.

9.4 Vice President, External Affairs Report.

He was not present at the meeting. President Mostofa said on his behalf that if any council members

have any questions for the VP External Affairs, they can be directed to his email address at gsa.external@usask.ca at any time.

9.5 Vice president Indigenous Engagement

VP Indigenous was not present during the meeting. President Mostofa updated on her behalf about recruiting a Vice Provost in the indigenous engagement. There were three shortlisted candidates and all the executives had the opportunity to meet all of the candidates. They were asked about their background, and their motivation for this position, also what positive changes they would bring at the U of S. Based on the meeting, the GSA sent feedback to the hiring committee about all three candidates. The VP Indigenous Engagement played a very active role on that meet & greet.

10. Other Business

The president informed that he had meetings with faith leaders and student wellness center regarding the holiday hangout. They showed their interest to collaborate with GSA. So, they decided to organize the holiday hangout for four consecutive days starting from December 27th to 30th, which would create good networking opportunities among the students.

Also, he mentioned about the National Day of Action, which is a movement led by the Canadian Federation of Students, would happen in November 2023. The goal of that campaign would be to fight the fee and make post-secondary education free. A training, organized by the Canadian Federation of Students at the University of Regina, was attended by the President, VP finance and the chair of the GSA. The training was to make the campaign successful and they also provided the materials like all the posters and the souvenirs. So, he asked all the council members to join for the National Day of Action and make the movement successful. Lastly, he mentioned that if any members have any feedback regarding this, they could share their opinion.

The GSA president informed council members that the GSA Executive election procedure is posted on the GSA website, so members are encouraged to visit the website for any information. Next council meeting will be sent.

11. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 6:36 p.m. (Elyse)

Carried

Appendix A

Academic Council	Name of Councilors and (alternates)	Oct 2023	Nov 2023	Dec 2023	Jan 2024	Feb 2024	Mar 2024	Apr 2024	Jun 2024
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)	P							
Computer Science Graduate Council (CSGC)	Thulani Hewavithana Norah Ridley Mumtahina Ahmed (Alternate)	P							

Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Biological	Pabitra Chandra Das	P							
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Biomedical	Blessing Ekwueme	P							
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Chemical	Maliheh Heravi Ehsan Samimi Sohrforozani (Alternate)	P							
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Civil, Geological & Environmental	Ehsan Samimi Sohrforozani Corwyn Shomachuk (Alternate)	P							
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Electrical & Computer	Mohammad Salimi Hossein Nezhadian (Alternate)	P							
Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Mechanical	Siddhartha Gollamudi Kathryn Avery (Alternate)	P							
English Course Council	Parastoo Tahmasbi Gwen Rose (Alternate)	A							
Geography & Planning Graduate Council	Emily Ireland Prakash Sapkota (Alternate)	P							
Kinesiology Graduate Student Council	Kevin Mageto Karissa Johnson (Alternate)	P							
Nursing Graduate Student Association (NGSA)	Jordan Sherstobitoff Catherine Lavigne	P							

	Sarah Karwacki Solie (Alternate) Geneveave Barbo (Alternate)								
Plant Science	Sainey Ceesay Suma Ghosh- Alternate	P							
Physical Therapy Student Society (PTSS)	Tyler Blanchette Carter Frerichs (Alternate)	P							
SENSSA	Chelsea Ohenewaa Nyarko Aisha Adelah (Alternate)	P							
School of Public Health (SPHSA)	Somayeh Abdi Jacyn 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	A							
ARE Graduate Student Society	Koal Sammons Josh Bourassa	P							
Toxicology Graduate Student Association (TGSA) Academic Councilor	Alexandra Cullen Emily Kennedy	P							
History Graduate Student Association	Kiegan Lloyd Catlin M. Woloschuk	A							

Academic Council	Name of Councilors and (alternates)	Oct 2023	Nov 2023	Dec 2023	Jan 2024	Feb 2024	Mar 2024	Apr 2024	Jun 2024
Exec. President	Mostafa Kamal	P							
Exec. VP Finance and Operations	Ramin Mohammadi	P							
Exec. VP Academic and Student Affairs	Sristy Sumana Nath	P							
Exec. VP External Affairs	Abbas Fazel Anvari Yazdi	A							
Exec. VP Indigenous Engagement	Kayla Benoit	A							



University of Saskatchewan
Graduate Students' Association
Council Meeting Minutes
Thursday November 15, 2023. 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

Council Chair: Asutosh Dalai
Recording Secretary: Sara Nath

1. Call to Order/ Opening Remarks

All Council Members were emailed the agenda package and posted on GSA website as well. The Chair of Council, Asutosh Dalai officially welcomed Members of Council to the meeting and called the meeting to order at 5:12 PM after quorum for the meeting had been met. Sara Nath, the Recording Secretary compiled the meeting minutes.

Before Approval

- The GSA chair explained to council members 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. She further said that only voting members would be allowed to vote and the majority will get a decision to be passed.

2. Approval of Agenda

The Chair asked for amendments to the agenda as circulated via email. There was an amendment from the former GSA chair, Sadia Afrin Lema, that was added as item 3.

Motion to approve the amendments and agenda. (Sadia/Kiegan)

Total in-person voted in favour: 3

Total online voted in favour: 10

Hence total voted in favour: 13

Since the majority of the votes were in favour, this has been passed as our agenda in that day's meeting as circulated.

Carried

3. Previous Council Chair Election

Sadia Afrin Lema expressed concern about the previous council chair election. During the election of the previous council chair, four council members from one academic council voted. But according to the GSA bylaw, only two voting members are there from each academic council containing 100 or more regular members. If the other two votes are invalid from this election, then this reverses the election result.

As per the discussion, she was suggested to file a complain to the code of ethics committee.

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Some members raised concern about their attendance in the October council meeting, so it was postponed until new meeting minute circulates via email.

5. GSA Executives Report

5.1 GSA President's Report

The President starts his report hoping that all council members got the chance to read the reports. He mentioned about having meeting with different leader including newly appointed Vice Provost teaching and learning regarding their advocacy work getting implemented. Also, the executives had a meeting with the newly appointed Dean of Arts & Science. They raised concern about having different funding structure in different program even though being under the same college. The dean assured she would work on this matter with the university. Moreover, the executives discussed about part-time graduate study opportunities coupled with part-time tuition fee options for part-time students in the PEC meeting. At the end, he mentioned about the two competitions i.e. research elevator pitch competition 2023 and GSA Research Conference 2023; and requested council members to spread the news for these among their own councils.

Any questions for the President may be directed to their email address any time at gsa.pres@usask.ca

5.2 Vice President Finance & Operations Report

He firstly talked about the Fall-Semester CGPS-GSA Need-Based Bursary. The deadline for this bursary will be extended till the end of the November. He also mentioned about hiring two new GSA coordinators and the deadline for this application will be until November 30th. The GSA is scheduled to organize the 2023 Graduate Research Conference on December 14, 2023, for which the registration deadline is December 7th. There will be four prizes in total, \$500 each.

Q: How will people know about these events? We didn't receive any email regarding this. A: In the last GSA newsletter, there was mention about this. Also, we are planning to send separate email to the students reminding about these events.

Q: When will groups be receiving their funding for operations? A: I apologize for the delay, but in the upcoming weeks I will let the councillor know when the funding are ready.

Q: Who can apply for the coordinator post? Is it a full time or part-time job? A: Any graduate student can apply for this post and it is a part-time job.

Any additional questions for the VP Finance may be directed to their email address any time at gsa.fin@usask.ca

5.3 Vice President Academic and Student Affairs Report

The VP Academic and Student Affairs firstly stated about having meeting with Vice Provost of teaching and learning and the faculty members regarding the grad students issues. Apart from that, she mentioned about collaborating with Mitacs to improve the communication skill for the graduate students. They are planning to arrange workshop in the upcoming year January and February. Lastly she informed the council members about the benefits of being an academic council member – Council member can book the GSA common space at free of cost on weekdays from 9 to 7:30. Also, for organizing events they can apply for financial support from GSA.

Any questions for the VP Academic and Student Affairs may be directed to their email address any time at gsa.sa@usask.ca

5.4 Vice President External Affairs Report

He firstly informed the council members that the award gala dinner ceremony is postponed to the April 27th, 2024. He also mentioned that the nomination application for graduate awards is going to be open from December 1st, 2023. As soon as the award selection committee gets one more council member to join, they can start the nomination process immediately.

Any questions for the VP External Affairs may be directed to their email address any time at gsa.external@usask.ca

5.5 Vice president Indigenous Engagement

She was not present during the meeting.

6. Ratification of GSA Standing Committee

The chair stated that they needed few more council members and regular members for some of the committees. A single committee could consist of maximum of 9 members – including one executive member, for all committees.

6.1 Budget and Finance Committee

The committee initially consisted of 5 general members (Sadia Afrin Lema, Rafat Mahbub, Md Shamin Yeasir, Manpreet Singh, Kaneta Eya Lam Lam). The chair called for one council member and one regular member to join this committee. Kiegan Lloyd (council member-History Graduate Student Association) and Sara Nath (Regular member) volunteered to join the committee.

Votes : Yes = 7 (In-person) + 13 (Online) & No = 0

6.2 Bursary Committee

The committee initially consisted of 1 council member (Kiegan Lloyd) and 3 general members (Roya Khoshnoodi, Zahra Ghaderpanah, Jessica Lam). The chair called for three more council member to join this committee. Blessing Ekwueme (council member-Biomedical Engineering) and Tachlima Chowdhury Sunna (council member-community health & epidemiology) volunteered to join the committee.

Votes : Yes = 3 (In-person) + 14 (Online) & No = 0

6.3 Election and referenda Committee

The committee initially consisted of no council member and 7 general members (Nahin Shakurun, Saba Kamran, Md Shamin Yeasir, Rafat Mahbub, Sandhya Chandran, Arash Amanlou, Kaneta Eya Lam Lam). The chair called for one council member to join this committee. However, no one volunteered to join this committee.

6.4 Governance Committee

The committee initially consisted of 1 council member (Suma Ghosh) and 3 general members (Christopher Florizone, Manpreet Singh, Lecia Ellis). The chair called for 2 more members to join this committee. Md Shamin Yeasir & Sadia Afrin Setu volunteered to join this committee.

Votes : Yes = 8 (In-person) + 14 (Online) & No = 0

6.5 Code of Ethics Committee

The committee consisted of 5 general members (Rafat Mahbub, Lecia Ellis, Kaneta Eya Lam Lam, Md Shamin Yasir, Manpreet Singh). The chair called for 1 council member to join this committee. Kiegan Lloyd volunteered to join this committee.

Votes: Yes = 5 (In-person) + 12 (Online) & No = 0

6.6 Awards Selection Committee

The committee consisted of one council member (Kiegan Lloyd) and 5 general members (Samira Khoz, Sai Kumar, Shabnam Abdi, Pezhman Zolfaghari, Jessica Lam). The chair called for 1 council member to join this committee. Somayeh Abdi volunteered to join the committee.

Votes: Yes = 4 (In-person) + 11 (Online) & No = 0

6.7 Sustainability Committee

The committee consisted of one council member (Nasrin Aliasgharlou) and 6 general members (Sadia Afrin Lema, Prince George, Mahesh Rachamalla, Saba Kamran, Sandhya Chandran, Md Shamin Yasir). There was no position left to be filled in this committee.

Votes: Yes = 6 (In-person) + 12 (Online) & No = 0

6.8 Diversity Committee

The committee initially consisted of no council member and 5 general members (Somtochukwu Obiora, Arash Amanlou, Lecia Ellis, Sandhya Chandran, Kennedy Culbertson). The chair called for one council member to join this committee. Meaghan Boily (Council member-SGSA) volunteered to join this committee.

Votes : Yes = 6 (In-person) + 12 (Online) & No = 0

7. Social Club Ratification

- **Bangladeshi Students' Association at the University of Saskatchewan (BSAUS)**

The presenter started by saying that in BSAUS executive body, they have five graduate students and two undergrad students. Including associate member and alumni, it has more than 900 members. BSAUS is an organization that works for the Bangladeshi student's welfare and their all kinds of issues. They also celebrate all the national days of Bangladesh here in Canada. Apart from that, every year they also arrange fresher's reception and graduate farewell.

Questions and Responses

Q: For how long this association has been ratified? R: For more than 5 years.

Approval of the BSAUS.

The chair called for a motion to approve of the club since all questions were exhausted. (Kiegan/Somayeh)

Carried

All in favor: 7 (In-person) + 13 (Online) & No = 0

Abstention 0

The motion to accept the BSAUS was approved by the majority of the council members.

- **Bridges**

The representative said they are a student club serving international graduate students practically, socially and spiritually. They help the students thrive in Saskatoon by holding events like buying winter clothes. They also arrange some weekly suppers for the students to help them build a community by engaging in social activities, etc. Spiritually, they also help students who have any questions about Jesus Christ. He also mentioned that there is no pressure for anyone to attend this event; anyone is welcome to join this club. Currently, they have 15 members in their association.

Questions and Responses

Q: Is it a social club or a religious club? R: It is a social club, everyone is welcome to join.

Q: Is it mentioned in your bylaw? R: Yes.

Approval of the Bridges.

The chair called for a motion to approve of the club since all questions were exhausted.
(Sristy/Kiegan)

Carried

All in favor: 7 (In-person) + 12 (Online) & No = 1

Abstention 2

The motion to accept the bridges was approved by the majority of the council members.

8. Other Business

Kiegan Lloyd raised concern about the communication issue between GSA and its members. He mentioned that it would be very beneficial for all of them if, as a team, they could work together to solve this issue. In response the GSA president apologized for the absence of a full-time office manager all this time, but now that the office manager is here, he is going through the training process. The executives had been advocating for increasing the number of mass mail sent to the students to ensure more frequent and timely communication. Hopefully, this issue will be resolved.

9. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 6:58 pm.

(Sristy/ Kiegan)

Carried

Appendix A

Academic Council	Name of Councilors and (alternates)	Oct 2023	Nov 2023	Dec 2023	Jan 2024	Feb 2024	Mar 2024	Apr 2024	Jun 2024
Biology Graduate Student Association	Shuqi Ren Ilsa Griebel (Alternate) Lynsey Bent (Alternate)	P	P						
Chemistry Course Council	Nasrin Aliasgharlou Vi Phan (Alternate)	A	A						
College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Anatomy, Physiology & Pharmacology	Mary Lazell Wright Farnoosh Tabatabaieian (Alternate)	P	A						
College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Biochemistry, microbiology & Immunology	Rachel Harris – Councilor	P	P						
College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Community Health & Epidemiology	Zoe Schipper – Councilor Tachlima Chowdhury Sunna (Alternate)	A	P						
College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Health Sciences	Elyse Proulx-Cullen – Councilor Shima Hozhabrimahani (Alternate)	P	P						
Computer Science Graduate Council (CSGC)	Thulani Hewavithana Norah Ridley Mumtahina Ahmed (Alternate)	P	P						

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

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

Academic Council	Name of Councilors and (alternates)	Oct 2023	Nov 2023	Dec 2023	Jan 2024	Feb 2024	Mar 2024	Apr 2024	Jun 2024
Exec. President	Mostafa Kamal	P	P						
Exec. VP Finance and Operations	Ramin Mohammadi	P	P						
Exec. VP Academic and Student Affairs	Sristy Sumana Nath	P	P						
Exec. VP External Affairs	Abbas Fazel Anvari Yazdi	A	P						
Exec. VP Indigenous Engagement	Kayla Benoit	A	A						



GSA President's Report (November-December 2023) to GSA Council Members

Dear GSA Council Members,

Please find the GSA President's monthly activity summary from November 15, 2023, to December 11, 2023, as listed below in order of importance of the activities.

1. GSA Led Childcare Centre Establishment Update

The GSA executive team met with the Vice President of University Relations, Cheryl Hamelin, on November 29, 2023, to discuss the funding mechanism for the proposed GSA-led Childcare initiative. The meeting was very successful. Cheryl Hamelin, currently leading the University of Saskatchewan's fundraising campaign, supported the GSA initiative and expressed her office support for GSA's childcare initiative. Cheryl Hamelin also advised the GSA team to meet the University of Saskatchewan's Vice-President of Administration and Chief Operating Officer, Greg Fowler, to discuss potential childcare space needs and existing spare spaces where GSA can immediately start a childcare center. The GSA is scheduled to meet Greg Fowler on December 19, 2023. Deputy Provost Professor Patti McDougall, Vice Provost Teaching and Learning Jerome Cranston, and Associate Vice-President Services Professor Wade Epp agreed to attend the meeting. After this meeting, the GSA executive will sit with the University of Saskatchewan President, Peter Stoicheff. The GSA is hopeful to start opening as a Childcare center by April 2024.

2. GSA Led Endowment Fund Establishment Update

During the meeting with the Vice President of University Relations, Cheryl Hamelin, on November 29, 2023, the GSA executives also requested help to establish a GSA-led Endowment fund. The GSA leadership team informed Cheryl Hamelin about GSA's limited revenue stream and its financial hardship in managing need-based bursary and annual activities, including holiday hangout events, elevator pitch competitions, etc. GSA executives also emphasized the need for increased financial capacity and sustainability to provide graduate students with affordable bus passes and health and dental care services. The Vice President of University Relations assured the GSA leadership team to help start a GSA-led Endowment fund and a spend-down fund to accelerate GSA's annual events.

3. Child Caregiver Service (Connecting Graduate Student with Graduate Family)

The GSA is pleased to inform the council members that GSA will start registering and highlighting

profiles of graduate students who are capable and interested in providing temporary childcare services to fellow graduate families and members of the University of Saskatchewan members. It is to be noted that the GSA will not operate this service but rather provide graduates with a platform where they can list their names as potential child caregivers. Potential Child Caregivers can enroll in their profile [HERE](#).

4. GSA Executive Meeting with Student Care Team (December 6, 2023)

The GSA executive met with the Student Care Team and discussed the graduate student health and dental claim statistics for the 2022-2023 policy years. The team reviewed various statistics from the past policy year and compared them with the trend over the past five years. The GSA executive team recommended the student care team explore opportunities for Vision care coverage expansion from the existing coverage of a maximum of \$350 per policy year to \$500 from the 2024-2025 policy year. The team will meet again at the end of January 2024 to evaluate the possibility and finalize the vision care coverage.

5. Holiday Hangout (December 27, 28, 29, 30, 2023)

The GSA President met with Rita Hanoski and Jocelyn Orb of the Student Wellness Centre on December 5, 2023, to discuss the details of the Holiday Hangout event 2023. It was agreed that the GSA commons door will be open at 2:00 pm each day and close at 7:00 pm. Late afternoon snacks and dinner will be served each day. The GSA will order dinner for December 27 and 28 and snacks for all four days. The Student Wellness Centre will supply dinner food items for December 29 and 30. Each day, dinner will be served between 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm. The Student Wellness Centre will ensure three volunteers are present for each day. The GSA will recruit the remaining necessary volunteers among graduate students. It is to be noted that the 2023 holiday hangout event will be open to both graduate and undergraduate students. However, the event will not be open to students' friends and family members who are not students, as the GSA Commons can only host a maximum of 100 people at a time. Graduate students can register for the Holiday Hangout Event using the following link. [Holiday Hangout Event 2023 Registration](#)

6. GSA Executive's Monthly Meeting with Vice-Provost of Teaching and Learning (October 30, 2023)

The GSA executives met with the Vice-Provost of Teaching and Learning, Professor Jerome Cranston, and discussed various student issues, including students' complaints about the Teaching Assistant's unacceptable behavior, excessive use of non-faculty members for delivering lectures by some departments and lack of proper training for Teaching Assistants about Equity, Diversity and Inclusion principles.

7. Elevator Pitch Speech Competition 2023 (November 30, 2023)

The GSA organized the first Graduate Research Elevated Pitch Competition on November 30, 2023. The competition's goal was to help graduate students share their research in less than one minute in a situation like a family reunion, a dinner party, a bar, conspiracy theorist, or teenagers at a science fair. The GSA president leads in organizing this event. The event details can be found

[HERE](#). Six graduate students were awarded each with \$200 prize money. Nine post-doctoral fellows evaluated each presentation and selected the winners using a standardized rubric. A weighted average was used to select candidates for five positions. Two graduate students obtained the same point; hence, six students were selected for five places in total. University of Saskatchewan President Peter Stoicheff was the chief guest for the event. The GSA provided a pizza lunch for all participating students and judges.





8. Teaching Assistance Rate Negotiation with the University of Saskatchewan

The GSA president is currently serving as a member of the new Teaching Assistance rate negotiation team led by the Public Service Alliance of Canada's local chapter. The negotiation team is expected to send a student survey before the Christmas holiday break. The GSA request all council member to complete the survey and provide their opinion so that the negotiation team can know students' opinion before sitting with the University for the negotiation in January 2024.

9. Search Committee Meeting for the CGPS Associate Dean (December 5, 2023)

The GSA president is currently serving as a search committee member for the Associate Dean of the University of Saskatchewan's College of Graduate and Post-Doctoral Studies. The GSA President attended the meeting on December 5, 2023, and contributed to the discussion to select three short-listed candidates for interview. The search process is ongoing, and selected candidates are invited for a public presentation followed by an interview.

10. World Cup Cricket 2023 Final Match Watch Party (November 19, 2023)

The GSA, in partnership with the Huskies Cricket Club, organized the World Cup Cricket 2023 final match watch party for graduate students on November 19, 2023, at the GSA Commons. The watch party was open to all University of Saskatchewan graduate students. The GSA served food and drink for the attendees.



11. Canadian Federation of Students National General Meeting (November 24-27, 2023)

The GSA president, VP of Finance and Operations, and VP of Indigenous and Engagement attended the Canadian Federation of Students 42nd National General Meeting held in Toronto from November 24 to 27, 2023. The GSA president represented the event as the Saskatchewan Federation of Students representative, while the VP of Finance and Operations and VP of Indigenous and Engagement represented the University of Saskatchewan Graduate Student Association. Over the four days, student leaders from coast to coast discussed the ongoing Canadian post-secondary student issues and prioritized future federal and provincial campaign issues and strategies for various advocacy goals.

12. Meet and greet: City of Saskatoon/Vice-Provost, Students and Learning, and GSA & USSU Executives (November 17, 2023)

The students' leaders met with a City of Saskatoon representative to discuss various students' issues including affordable housing, efficient and affordable public transportation services. The GSA leadership advocated for discounted UPASS for graduate students for Spring and Summer.

13. Consultation Meeting with Graduate Students

The GSA president and VP of Academic and Student Affairs met a graduate student regarding issues regarding recommendation issues. The student was provided with the necessary consultation help to overcome the issues. The meeting details can not be disclosed because of confidentiality.

14. Graduate Research Conference 2023

The GSA is scheduled to organize the 2023 Graduate Research Conference on December 14, 2023, from 10 am to 5 pm. The GSA Vice President of Finance and Operations is leading in organizing the event. Best Poster Awards: Four prizes in total, \$500 each.

15. Winter 2024 Orientation

The winter orientation is scheduled for January 9, 2024, at the GSA Commons. The VP of academic and student affairs will lead the orientation event.

16. GSA-CGPS Need-based Bursary for Fall 2023

The GSA received a record number of GSA-CGPS need-based bursary applications (~ 400) for the Fall 2023. This record number of applications delayed the evaluation process and announced the results. The GSA hopes to announce the results before the Christmas Holiday break.

Regards,
Mostofa Kamal

Mostofa Kamal

President, Graduate Students' Association (GSA)

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I acknowledge that I live and work on Treaty 6 Territory and the homeland of the Métis. I pay my respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of this place and reaffirm our relationship with one another.



Monthly Activity Report from VP Academic and Student Affairs

Dear Council Members,

Please find the VP Academic and Student Affairs monthly activity summary from November 08, 2023, to December 01, 2023, as listed below:

1. GSA Executive Committee Meeting: November 01 and 22, 2023

Please see executive meeting minutes for details.

2. Collaboration with Mitacs:

I met with Zsuzsa Papp, PhD, Senior Advisor, Business Development, Mitacs to organize workshops on career building, grant writing, how to find community and industry partners for funding, with collaboration with GSA. She proposed to organize two sessions:

- 16 January 2024 (natural science and engineering)
- 8 February 2024 (social science, humanities, arts)

3. Meeting with University External Relations Committee: November 09, 2023

We, GSA Executives, met with the USFA External Relations Committee. We discussed the tuition fee hiking each year and low funding issues for grad students.

4. Meeting with Celene Anger, Chief Strategy and Transformation Officer, City of Saskatoon: November 15, 2023

We, GSA Executives, met with the Chief Strategy officer of City of Saskatoon to discuss the grad students transport issues. We requested a new contract for Spring/Summer semester for grad students and need to make it flexible. And we discussed the 81/82 no. bus service needs to be add stop in Place Riel bus stop.

5. Meeting with Cheryl Hamelin, Vice President, University Relations: November 29, 2023

We, GSA executives, met with Vice president Cheryl Hamelin to discuss about the initial plan about opening GSA Childcare. She is managing the leadership to the University Relations team that includes fundraising and development, alumni relations, strategic communications, and operations and services. She promised to help GSA to fundraising for opening childcare. Secondly, we discussed about opening endowment fund for GSA.

6. Monthly Meeting with Vice-provost Teaching and learning: November 22, 2023

We, GSA executives, met monthly with Dr. Jerome Cranston and discussed student issues specifically of Computer Science Department, requesting to establish some sign boards in the roadside for students and guests to find the GSA office easily, requesting to a dedicated notice board or display board in Place Riel for GSA to share the flyer and advertisement for upcoming events.

7. GSA elevator pitch competition:

The GSA executives organized the GSA research elevator pitch competition. It is 60 seconds talk to represent the research without any slides. We designed poster, arranged food for participants and guests. Our university president was chief guest of this event. We shared some pictures of that event.





8. Attended regular meetings of my portfolio:

- a. *PEC/Student Executives monthly meeting: November 08, 2022*
- b. *GSA Council Meeting: November 08, 2022*
- c. *Academic Program Committee: November 29, 2023*
- d. *Academic Program Committee: November 22, 2023*
- e. *University council meeting: November 15, 2023*
- f. *CGPS Faculty council meeting: November 23, 2022*
- g. *Graduate Academic Affairs Committee: November 15 and 29, 2022*

9. Student advocacy related academic and non-academic issues:

- a. **TA related issues: 23 November 2023**
- b. **Bad reference letter receiving from Prof.: 01 December 2023**

Regards,
Sristy Sumana Nath
VP Academic and Student Affairs
Graduate Student's Association, University of Saskatchewan



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November 2023

RE: VP External's Report to Council

Dear Council Members,

Please find below my report to the Council for **November 2023**:

1. GSA executives and I attended a bilateral meeting with USFA and shared our concerns regarding the graduate studies funding, EDI and tuition. GSA and USFA will jointly write a letter to the university president's office and focus on the main issues that faculty and grad students have.
2. The GSA president and I met regarding the GSA Gala event details. Due to a senate meeting on April 20, 2024, the GALA event was postponed to April 27, 2024.
3. Send all USASK university leaders for GSA GALA 2024 invitations and communicate with their office managers.
4. Communication with Award Committee members to set up the regular meeting and ask for confidentiality agreements.
5. Communication with Vanier scholars and MITACS to organize a workshop for writing successful funding applications.
6. On November 17, GSA, I attended a meeting with the City of Saskatoon rep and Vice-Provost, Students and Learning. In this meeting, I discussed the UPASS concerns for graduate students and the possibilities for optional OPT-OUT for grad students without affecting others.
7. On November 22, I attended the Monthly Meeting of the GSA Executive/Vice-Provost, Students and Learning.
8. On November 29, I attended a meeting with the Vice-President University Relations and discussed the Grad Students Day Care fundraising and campaign.
9. On November 30, coordinate the scoring and prepare the winner's minute for the Elevator Speech competition.
10. VP-External actively worked on executives' meeting agenda and prepared the meeting minutes, and also worked on social media to announce the events and responded to messages received by followers.

Regards,

Abbas Fazel Anvari-Yazdi

Vice-President External Affairs

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Update: November 2023 - Vice President of Indigenous Engagement, USASK GSA

Dear Members of the USASK Graduate Students' Association,

I am pleased to share with you the highlights of our activities in November 2023 as the Vice President of Indigenous Engagement at the University of Saskatchewan, Graduate student Association.

1. Meet and Greet with City of Saskatoon:

One of the significant initiatives this month involved a meet and greet session with representatives from the City of Saskatoon, Celene Anger. Our aim was to identify synergies and explore collaboration opportunities between the GSA, USSU and the city. We discussed potential areas of partnership, focusing on how our respective organizations can work together to benefit both the graduate student community and the broader Saskatoon community.

2. Graduate Academic Affairs Committee:

In line with our commitment to advancing the academic interests of graduate students, I actively participated in the Graduate Academic Affairs Committee. This committee plays a crucial role in addressing academic concerns, advocating for the rights of graduate students, and working towards enhancing the overall academic experience.

3. Arts and Science EDI Committee Meeting and "College Conversations" Event:

I was honored to attend the Arts and Science Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee meeting. The committee is dedicated to fostering an inclusive environment within the college, and we discussed strategies to ensure that Indigenous voices are prominently represented in academic and extracurricular activities. Additionally, I am excited to announce the upcoming event, "College Conversations," scheduled for November 29th. This event will provide a platform for open dialogue on EDI matters within the college, promoting a culture of understanding and respect.

4. Canadian Federation of Canadian Students National General Meeting:

I had the privilege of representing USASK GSA at the Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) National General Meeting. It was heartening to witness a warm welcome from the circle of First Nations, Metis, and Inuit students. Engaging with the CFS allowed us to share our perspectives, learn from other student associations, and contribute to discussions on issues affecting Indigenous students nationwide. This experience reaffirmed our commitment to collaborative advocacy and strengthened our stance to Decolonize CFS.

In conclusion, November has been a month of meaningful connections, strategic discussions, and active participation in initiatives that align with our mission of advancing Indigenous engagement at the University of Saskatchewan. I am grateful for the support of the GSA and look forward to continued collaboration in the coming months.

Wishing you all a productive and inspiring December.

Warm regards,

Kayla Benoit

Vice President of Indigenous Engagement