



**University of Saskatchewan- Graduate Students' Association**

**Council Meeting Agenda**

**Wednesday, March 8, 2023; 17:00-19:00**

**Meeting Location: Online Zoom**

**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**

| <b>Item</b>  | <b>Page</b> | <b>Action</b>      |
|--|-------------|--------------------|
| <b>1. Call to Order</b>                                  |             |                    |
| <b>2. Approval of Agenda</b>                             | 1           | <i>Decision</i>    |
| <b>3. Approval of Meeting Minutes</b>                    | 2-10        |                    |
| 3.1 GSA Council Meeting Minutes February 9, 2023         |             | <i>Decision</i>    |
| <b>4. Selection of GSA Standing Committee Members</b>    |             | <i>Decision</i>    |
| <b>5. Social Clubs Ratification</b>                      |             | <i>Decision</i>    |
| 5.1 Deeper Life Campus Fellowship                        |             |                    |
| 5.2 Iranian Student's Council                            |             |                    |
| 5.3 ASHRAE University of Saskatchewan Branch             |             |                    |
| <b>6. GSA Executives Reports</b>                         | 11-19       |                    |
| 6.1 President's Report                                   |             | <i>Information</i> |
| 6.2 Vice President Finance & Operations Report           |             | <i>Information</i> |
| 6.3 Vice President Academic and Student Affairs Report   |             | <i>Information</i> |
| 6.4 Vice President External Affairs Report               |             | <i>Information</i> |
| 6.5 Vice President Indigenous Engagement Report (Verbal) |             | <i>Information</i> |
| 6.6 Questions & Answers                                  |             |                    |
| <b>7. Election of GSA Recording Secretary</b>            |             | <i>Decision</i>    |
| <b>8. Other Business</b>                                 |             | <i>Information</i> |
| <b>9. Adjournment</b>                                    |             | <i>Decision</i>    |



**University of Saskatchewan  
Graduate Students' Association  
Council Meeting Minutes  
Thursday February 09, 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: MD. Abrar Jahin**

**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 officially welcomed Members of Council to the meeting and called the meeting to order at 5:06 PM after quorum for the meeting had been met. MD. Abrar Jahin, the Recording Secretary compiled the meeting minutes.

*Motion to approve agenda without any amendment(s)  
(Mostafa Kamal/Ehsan Moradi)*

**2. Approval of Agenda**

*Motion to approve agenda without any amendment(s)  
(Abbas Fazel / Amanda Gannon)*

**Carried**

**3. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

**3.1 Approval of the GSA Council Meeting Minutes January 12, 2023**

*Motion to approve agenda without any amendment(s)  
(Zahra Teimouri/ Shuqi Ren)  
All in favour – 15*

**Carried**

**4. Discussion and approval of motions**

**4.1 Motion to approve Canadian Federation of Student's Fees increase**

*Motion to approve agenda without any amendment(s)  
(Amanda Gannon/ Elyse Proulx-Cullen)  
All in favour – 14  
Opposed - 1*

**4.2 Motion to approve U-PASS Fees increase**

*Motion to approve agenda without any amendment(s)  
(Abbas Fazel/ Akinola Ogbeyemi)  
All in favour – 15*

### **4.3 Motion to approve health plan Fees increase**

*Motion to approve agenda without any amendment(s)*

*(Amanda Gannon/ Carlene Shaw)*

**Carried**

A question was asked – “Why are all of these fees increasing?” Ehsan Moradi replied – “Basically the first reason is inflation. The second reason is the increase in usage.”

The second question asked was – “Is it fair to have voted on UPASS increases before we know if we can reinstate accessible routes on campus for bus users?” Ehsan Moradi answered, “We every year decide on increases on the fees at this time in February. But our problem is most of the contracts start from September, and we don't know much about the changes either. That's why we consider it the minimum possible, which is the CPI because that could not happen either. Ultimately, we need to have this increase because this is the way university has been going”.

Another question was regarding the increasing on stipends; to which Ehsan Moradi answered, “We have been advocating about this, so there are two things. One, Time is the legal force. We need to follow the increases. On the other hand, the university needs to make a decision. But it's our job to continue putting pressure to increase the stipends and the scholars. So if you vote no, we'll legally stop the contract for next year. And if yes, we'll start negotiating a new contract.”

Moradi adds, “Since 2000s, we have 2 kinds of accounts. A banking account with RVC, and an university account. University gives us fee every year from other accounts or give other eligible students some scholarship based on CGPs. Because some of the money came into our RVC accounts, GSA was going into debt to university sea football account. But we did not quite catch it. Finally, this year we got a letter from university that you're in 100,000\$ debt. But that's not necessarily the case, sometimes we just need to move the money from RBC to CFO to pay off the imbalance.”

Challen Gladman asked “What would the money be used for if we are planning to pay back all the money? Like, there are a lot of motions to approve fee increases but we don't know clearly what we've been losing to pay off the money?”

To which Moradi replied, “GSA income and GSA expenses should be the same balance. So both of these money should be 0 at the end of the year. I completely agree with all of your thoughts but mostly with increasing our stipends. The seniors have the power to shut us out by asking gratefulness for the money, and we have the power of student support. We are using it to find a way.”

Rachel Harris said “So if we pay these interested rates, why do we vote?” and “If GSA has a fund, whether we are using that fund to meet the increased fees or not”, to which Sristy Sumana says “Yes, last year health and dental plan premium was increased 42\$, GSA did not increase it last year, and all the 42\$ students were subsidized from GSA FUND, which was approximately 100K\$”. He added Ebri reserved plan has a limitation, and this year we again receive a premium increase of 41\$ for health and dental plan. As we have to maintain sustainability, this year we decided to cover 50% and churn 50% to the students. We are only increasing 50% in total; so for dental 98.30 cents in total but for the health plan, the real premium would be 256\$. But we will be charging students 240\$, subsidizing 16\$ per student.

The council got approval for 40,000\$ more from the reserve fund. Also, Previous year's executive committee gave 62 bursaries per year whereas our current committee gave 102 bursaries last year, following the number this year as well, next year to be increased more. Due to the budget code, we cannot unfortunately make our own spendings and GSA policy strictly says we cannot use money that is not approved in the agm.

Challen Gladman asks, “Can we not do anything to support the cohort, or pretend that our votes do mean

something?”

To which VP of Academic GSA says, “Probably next year we students won't be so lucky, they would possibly need to subsidize 20 or 30% or maybe they need to pay all of them.

Challen Gladman raised a motion about if another meeting and emergency vote in a couple of days can be possible or not, to which VP said GSA guidelines allow an emergency meeting so indeed they can but is that it or they wanted to postpone a decision because there were motions passed.

Challen Gladman said we'd redo if we have to, but that would go around in democracy, if everyone is on board.

The GSA chair came in the meantime.

Sadia Afrin Lema reviewed the motions, first two being approved and rest (from 4.3 to 4.7) not being appropriate.

Sarah requested to address the motions in the chat at the first half of the meeting.

Vice President proposes to postpone voting on the motion 4.3 to 4.7 for the next week, and also an emergency meeting next Thursday at the same time, 5-7. He urges to share about the cost of the Health and Dental Plan here with the students.

Elyse Cullen says, “What also needs to be understood is where GSA actually has the power to enact any sort of advocacy, where in reality they have very little power to bring advocacy to change”.

To which VP of Academic GSA says, this is related to University of Saskatchewan act path which was approved in 1995, and now the GSA can get a seat at the board of Governors only when the Provincial Government will change the act. The only thing that can give a solution is advocacy and lobbying. He informed that the Canadian Federation of Students approved the Regional chapter just only last week, giving the students of Saskatchewan a new chapter to directly pocket like the GSA. VP also mentions submitting the letter of endorsement to sign from other universities to support Saskatchewan to have a designated seat at the Governors.

Another question was raised in the chat by Maddie about university tuition and other things, he urged to join the Tuition Town Hall to every graduates.

Challen Gladman of English Course Council thanked heartfully and appreciated the work going on, as well as the discussion as a whole. VP reciprocated with humbleness.

Sadia Afrin Lema tuned in to notice about shortening the discussion due to the time constraints, and to move forward to the next agenda items.

It was confirmed to have an emergency meeting and the meeting information will be available on the GSA website. All the Information will also be provided via emails to the executive members and the Council.

## **5. GSA Executives Report**

### **5.1 GSA President's Report**

The President was not present so the VP requested a council member to go through the report. So in January there were two events organized; 1. Winter Rendition and 2. Graduate Resource Conference, which had one of the best executive committee of DSA. Previous record was a maximum of 25 participatory students, whereas this year it was 54. This was also the first time GSA offered price money for registrants to attend the conference. Another big multicultural event is coming and for the first time Graduates Association Diversity Committee is arranging it in 20th January. Updates will be given on 21st International Mother Language day, and with this the report was concluded. The report was presented to council members and there was a question

from one of the GSA common members asking for a little more organization in the morning, for instance having someone at The desk for the entire time of registration. Another issue arose from cropping the photo in the social media of the Research conference. To which the VP answered, “We’re making a survey to collect the feedback of the participatory students for improvements. We’re sorry for the mismanagements because this was the first time there were a lot of people present. In terms of the picture, that was a sheer mistake too, and I wholeheartedly apologize and take the responsibility”. Any questions for the President may be directed to their email address any time at [gsa.pres@usask.ca](mailto:gsa.pres@usask.ca)

## **5.2 Vice President Finance & Operations Report**

The VP Finance & Operation left to attend other matters so someone from GSA commons apologized and urged to proceed the event forward. The report was presented to council members and was available in the agenda package. Any additional questions for the VP Finance may be directed to their email address any time at [gsa.fin@usask.ca](mailto:gsa.fin@usask.ca)

## **5.3 Vice President Academic and Student Affairs Report**

The VP Academic and Student Affairs starts by saying that she is trying to get a meeting to the student recruitment officer to organize an 1 hour webinar for the prospective students of USASK to present the USASK lifestyle and expenses. They planned to organize this webinar in March. She also has a plan to set up a meeting with Graduate career educator to improve the new grad student career services. The report was presented to council members and was available in the agenda package. There were no questions for the VP at this time. Any questions for the VP Academic and Student Affairs may be directed to their email address any time at [gsa.sa@usask.ca](mailto:gsa.sa@usask.ca)

## **5.4 Vice President External Affairs Report**

The VP External Affairs started her report by stating that this month there were 3 committee meetings; Award selection committee - application started from January 30th. Sustainability committee - Planning to have an event on CLS on February 20th. People will receive the announcement by posters and also emails. They also plan to have a competition, updates are to come. Diversity Committee - An event on 21st February, VP Indigenous will further continue talking about it. Most of the work for other events are done and invitations & breakdown of expenses for the gala event will be sent to all the grad and committee students.

The report was presented to council members and was available in the agenda package. There were no questions for the VP at this time. Any questions for the VP External Affairs may be directed to their email address any time at [gsa.external@usask.ca](mailto:gsa.external@usask.ca)

## **5.5 Vice President External Affairs Report**

The VP greeted and started the report saying the current work of the Diversity Committee is doing and ongoing. They are planning an event on 21st February International Mother Language day, and inviting all student societies for representations. This week the invitations will be posted. He also mentioned he went to meetings every single week for Black history month, so they are continuing to support black students across campus. A meeting with the Indigenous initiative coordinator was executed, and they are planning on a couple of things not to be open about, yet. He urged if there's any feedback to what we can do or can't do to support indigenous students, emails may be directed to their email address any time at [gsa.indigenous@usask.ca](mailto:gsa.indigenous@usask.ca)

## **5.6 Questions & Answers**

There were questions about the three minute thesis competition this year, why was the decision to go online for the first round? And a request to have the rounds in-person was given to the board, so everyone can get an equal opportunity. To which VP Sristy replied, “CTPS gave the authority to organize and the President will give more details about it.” To which President Mostofa adds, “To organize the event we're receiving funds from the CTPS. So this time around it has been assisting that it will be organized in the CTPS office and not the GSA, eventually wanting

to organize the event entirely.”

Shuqi Ren asked a question on the update of the progress of Proof enrollment charge issue. To which VP replied, “Previously it was the university's office who did it, but now the university outsources a third party company the contract of 60,000\$ up to confirmation on environment, so 7-10\$ per head. All the services in Canada required the document to be manually printed and sent. But now, all the universities are sharing documents; so with just 10\$ all universities can access the document including immigration and different government services.

Kathryn Chavez from Soil Science President asked a question “Has there been a staff for this office yet? And why aren't people stepping up for the situation for so many things not getting done”. To which VP replied “We have not hired a manager yet, because 1. During holidays we cannot make circulation notices. 2. We just got 2 weeks notice prior to the resignation and we cannot find someone this quickly even if we're trying to. 3. We have to find someone who can smoothly carry out every job responsibility.

For the time being, there are 3 coordinators working part-time to carry out the tasks from September, and we'll find a manager in a reasonable amount of time.

Ehsan Moradi came to give an update to the members of the council that one hour is long exceeded and he asks to extend the meeting to a new meeting. He left, and GSA common addressed the issue of technical difficulties, how the budget allocated is not enough yet they will be trying their level best to keep up with it. He apologized for all the difficulties so far, and urged to accommodate and implement any issues the committee has.

## **6. Selection of the GSA Standing Committee**

As of recently, Abdi has been selected as the VP of Indigenous Engagement. He was involved in 2 Comedy; so due to the conflict he will not be able to continue; and before Madam chair could continue with the announcement, everyone requested to end the meeting.

## **7. Adjournment**

*Motion to adjourn at 7:14 pm.*

*(Elyse Proulx-Cullen/ Challen Gladman)*

*All in Favour - 13*

### Appendix A

| Academic Council  | Name of Councillors and (alternates)                                | Aug. 2022 | Sept 2022 | Oct 2022 | Nov 2022 | Dec 2022 | Jan 2023 | Feb 2023 | Mar 2023 | Apr 2023 | Jun 2023 |
|---|---|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Agricultural and Resources Economics (ARE) Graduate Student Association                 | Oliver Xuan – Councilor<br>Juan-Diego Paspuezan Chafuel – Alternate | P         | N/A       | N/A      | A        | P        | P        | P        |          |          |          |
| Animal and Poultry Science  | Corissa Wilcox – Councilor<br>Erika Cornand - Alternate             | P         | N/A       | P        | P        | A        | P        | P        |          |          |          |
| ARCHAIA   | Sarah Pocha-Tait – Councilor<br>Angela Burant - Alternate           | A         | N/A       | P        | P        | A        | A        | P        |          |          |          |
| Biology Graduate Student Association  | Shuqi Ren – Councilor<br>Kayla Caruso – Alternate                   | A         | P         | P        | P        | P        | P        | P        |          |          |          |
| Chemistry Course Council  | Loza Taghavi – Councilor<br>Srikant Singh - Alternate               | P         | N/A       | N/A      | P        | P        | A        | P        |          |          |          |
| College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Anatomy, Physiology & Pharmacology      | Arshdeep Jagait – Councilor<br>Kundanika Mukherjee (Alternate)      | A         | R         | P        | A        | P        | P        | P        |          |          |          |
| College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Biochemistry, Microbiology & Immunology | Rachel Harris - Councilor<br>Maddie Stewart – Alternate             | A         | R         | P        | Reg      | P        | P        | P        |          |          |          |
| College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Community Health & Epidemiology         | Amanda Gannon – Councilor<br>Nahin Shakurum - Alternate             | P         | N/A       | P        | P        | P        | P        | P        |          |          |          |
| College of Medicine Graduate Students Society – Health Sciences                         | Elyse Proulx-Cullen – Councilor<br>Sara Dalkilic – Alternate        | P         | N/A       | P        | P        | P        | P        | P        |          |          |          |
| Computer Science Graduate Council (CSGC)  | Fidelia A. Orji - Councilor<br>Subroto Nag Pinku - Councilor        | A         | N/A       | N/A      | P        | P        | P        | P        |          |          |          |

| <b>Academic Council</b>   | <b>Name of Councillors and (alternates)</b>  | <b>Aug 2022</b> | <b>Sept 2022</b> | <b>Oct 2022</b> | <b>Nov 2022</b> | <b>Dec 2022</b> | <b>Jan 2023</b> | <b>Feb 2023</b> | <b>Mar 2023</b> | <b>Apr 2023</b> | <b>Jun 2023</b> |
|---|--|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Biological                        | Amin Babaeighazvini<br>Divyapratim Das -Alternate                                      | A               | N<br>/<br>A      | P               | P               | P               | P               | P               |                 |                 |                 |
| Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Biomedical                        | Abbas Fazel Anvari Yazdi<br>Akinola Ogbeyemi -Alternate                                | A               | N<br>/<br>A      | P               | A               | P               | A               | P               |                 |                 |                 |
| Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Chemical                          | Zahra Teimouri<br>Shahab Minaei (Alternate)  | A               | N<br>/<br>A      | A               | P               | A               | P               | P               |                 |                 |                 |
| Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Civil, Geological & Environmental | Emily Cline  | P               | N<br>/<br>A      | N<br>/<br>A     | A               | A               | A               | P               |                 |                 |                 |
| Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Electrical & Computer             | Shahabodin Afrasiabi<br>Sarah Allahmoradi (Alternate)                                  | P               | N<br>/<br>A      | P               | A               | P               | A               | P               |                 |                 |                 |
| Engineering Graduate Community Council (EGCC) – Mechanical                        | Vahid Hosseini<br>Amirreza Mahmoudi- Alternate   | A               | N<br>/<br>A      | P               | A               | A               | P               | P               |                 |                 |                 |
| English Course Council  | Gwen Rose – Councillor<br>Challen Gladman - Councillor<br>Miguel Dela Pena - Alternate | P               | P                | P               | P               | P               | P               | P               |                 |                 |                 |
| Geography & Planning Graduate Council   |  | A               | N/A              | N/A             | A               | A               | A               | A               |                 |                 |                 |
| Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy Students' Association            | Carlene Shaw<br>Candice Minott (Alternate)   | A               | N<br>/<br>A      | N/A             | A               | P               | P               | P               |                 |                 |                 |
| Kinesiology Graduate Student Council  | Danielle Cormier<br>Kevin Mageto (Alternate)   | A               | N/A              | P               | P               | P               | P               | P               |                 |                 |                 |



| <b>Academic Council</b>                           | <b>Name of Councillors and (alternates)</b>   | <b>Aug 2022</b> | <b>Sept 2022</b> | <b>Oct 2022</b> | <b>Nov 2022</b> | <b>Dec 2022</b> | <b>Jan 2023</b> | <b>Feb 2023</b> | <b>Mar 2023</b> | <b>Apr 2023</b> | <b>Jun 2023</b> |
|---|---|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Physical and Engineering Physics -PEGASUS         | Nicholas Simonson – Councillor<br>Yasaman Yousefi - Alternate   | P               | P                | P               | P               | P               | P               | P               |                 |                 |                 |
| Pharmacy & Nutrition Graduate Students' Council   | Sarah Crawford<br>Ayat Zagzoog (Alternate)  | P               | N/A              | P               | P               | A               | A               | P               |                 |                 |                 |
| Plant Science                                     | Brianna Senetza – Councillor<br>Kaylie Krys - Alternate   | A               | P                | P               | Reg             | P               | P               | P               |                 |                 |                 |
| Physical Therapy Student Society (PTSS)           | Joanna Lavoie - Councillor<br>Henry Francisco – Alternate   | A               | P                | P               | A               | A               | P               | P               |                 |                 |                 |
| SENSSA  |   | A               | N/A              | N/A             | A               | A               | A               | A               |                 |                 |                 |
| School of Public Health (SPHSA)                   | Aashana Patel<br>Somayeh Abdi<br>Richa Tikoo (Alternate)  | A               | N/A              | N/A             | A               | P               | A               | P               |                 |                 |                 |
| Sociology GSA                                     | Kayla Arisman - Councillor<br>Grace Rath -Alternate<br>Leah Houseman – Alternate<br>Devin Prachler – Alternate<br>Sara Leavin - Alternate | A               | P                | P               | P               | Reg             | A               | P               |                 |                 |                 |
| Soil Science Graduate Student Association         | Quinn Hlus<br>Catherine Chavez (Alternate)  | regrets         | N/A              | P               | A               | P               | P               | P               |                 |                 |                 |
| Toxicology Graduate Students' Association         | Hannah Mahoney – Councillor<br>Emily Kennedy - Alternate  | A               | P                | A               | P               | P               | P               | P               |                 |                 |                 |
| Western College of Veterinary Medicine (WCVI) GSA | Jennifer Abi Younes - Councillor<br>Jade Sands – Alternate<br>Christopher Zinck - Alternate   | P               | N/A              | N/A             | A               | A               | A               | P               |                 |                 |                 |

| <b>Academic Council</b>               | <b>Name of Councillors and (alternates)</b> | <b>Aug 2022</b> | <b>Sept 2022</b> | <b>Oct 2022</b> | <b>Nov 2022</b> | <b>Dec 2022</b> | <b>Jan 2023</b> | <b>Feb 2023</b> | <b>Mar 2023</b> | <b>Apr 2023</b> | <b>Jun 2023</b> |
|---------------------------------------|---|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Exec. President                       | Mostafa Kamal                               | P               | P                | P               | P               | P               | P               | P               |                 |                 |                 |
| Exec. VP Finance and Operations       | Ehsan Moradi                                | P               | P                | P               | P               | P               | P               | P               |                 |                 |                 |
| Exec. VP Academic and Student Affairs | Sristy Sumana Nath                          | P               | P                | P               | P               | P               | P               | P               |                 |                 |                 |
| Exec. VP External Affairs             | Ozra Mohammadi                              | P               | P                | P               | P               | P               | P               | P               |                 |                 |                 |
| Exec. VP Indigenous Engagement        | Vacant                                      | N/A             | N/A              | N/A             | N/A             | N/A             | N/A             | P               |                 |                 |                 |



## **GSA President's Report (February-March 2023) to GSA Council Members**

Dear GSA Council Members,

Please find the GSA President's monthly activity summary from February 7, 2022, to March 7, 2023, as listed below in order of importance of the activities.

### **1. Health and Dental Plan Coverage Expansion Update (February 22, 2023)**

The GSA executive met with the student care representative on February 22, 2023. The GSA has received a preliminary estimation of the health plan coverage expansion insurance premium. The proposed insurance premium increased at the GSA bi-weekly meeting and shortlisted two potential coverage options.

The GSA is currently reviewing dental plan coverage expansion opportunities. Thus, the GSA executive requested the student care representative to propose dental plan coverage expansion scenarios and potential insurance premium increases at the discussion table for the GSA executive's review. The GSA is expected to receive potential dental coverage expansion scenarios by March 20, 2023. Upon receiving the dental plan coverage scenarios, the GSA executives will conduct the cost-benefit analysis of both health and dental plan coverage and associated premium increase. The current GSA executives are fully committed to expanding health and dental coverage and best serving the graduate students' needs.

### **2. GSA/PSAC Meeting (March 1, 2023)**

The GSA executives met the Public Service Alliance of Canada's (PSAC) Saskatoon representative, Jesse Todd, on March 1, 2023. It is to be noted that PSAC is a labor union, and the GSA is a member of it. The PSAC negotiates the Teaching Assistance payment rate with the University of Saskatchewan. The current University of Saskatchewan TA rate was agreed on in 2022. Thus, the GSA executives requested the PSAC to start a new TA rate with the University of Saskatchewan, considering the skyrocketing inflation rate and tuition fees increase over the last three years. Further, it is agreed that a GSA executive will join the PSAC negotiation team during a discussion with the university. The current GSA president confirmed that he will join the negotiation meeting until April 30, 2023, and after that incoming GSA executive will select a representative or can invite the current GSA president to continue representing the GSA at the negotiation.

### **3. 2<sup>nd</sup> Call for Winter Term GSA-CGPS Need-Based Bursary**

The GSA advertised a second call for applications for the 2023 Winter Term GSA-CGPS need-based bursary. Application Open: Thursday, February 23, 2023, at 9:00 am and Application Close: Wednesday, March 08, 2023, at 4:30 pm.

### **4. GSA Diversity Committee Event Postponement**

Unfortunately, the GSA diversity committee event: International Mother Language Day (February 21, 2023) Celebration has to post-pond because many invited guests reported seasonal flu and COVID-19 illness. The objective of this event is to emphasize the importance of mother language conservation, the marginalization of mother language by colonial rulers across different parts of the world, and the significance of receiving an education using the mother language. The diversity committee is currently working to announce a new date for the event.

#### **5. GSA Annual Awards 2023 – Nominations Period Extended until March 17, 2023**

A call for nominations for the GSA Annual Award 2023 is extended until March 17, 2023, because of an insufficient number of applications under many categories. Graduate students and faculty members are encouraged to nominate themselves or their students for the following awards. The purpose of the GSA Awards is to celebrate graduate students as well as honor faculty that have generously supported graduate students in research, scholarly and artistic pursuits.

**Nominations Open:** January 30, 2023, 9:00 am

**Deadline for nominations:** Friday, March 17, 2023, at 5:00 pm.

**If you have any questions, please contact [gsa.external@usask.ca](mailto:gsa.external@usask.ca).**

Please visit <https://gsa.usask.ca/events/annual-awards.php> for further information regarding the Awards and the nomination process.

#### **6. GSA Executives by-weekly meeting (February 8, 2023)**

Please read the enclosed meeting minutes for details

#### **7. Emergency Executives meeting (February 12, 2023)**

The following items are discussed at the meeting.

Agenda Items for decision and Discussion:

- Approving Avery as 3rd co-signer for GSA financial document

Agenda Items: (Discussion and Decision)

- I. GSA Diversity Committee Update by VP External and VP Indigenous and Engagement
- II. GSA Winter Bursary Update
- III. GSA Gala Event Update by VP External Affairs
- IV. c. Invitation Letter
- V. d. Sponsorship letter
- VI. GSA Annual Award Committee Updates by VP External Affairs
- VII. GSA Sustainability Committee Update by VP External Affairs
- VIII. Saskatchewan Federation of Students update by GSA President.

#### **8. GSA Executives by-weekly meeting (February 22, 2023)**

Please read the enclosed meeting minutes for details

9. Planning and Priority Committee Meeting (February 8, 2023)

10. Planning and Priority Committee Meeting (March 1, 2023)

**11. GSA Tax Clinic March 15 and 16**

The GSA has scheduled two free tax clinic sessions: a) [March 15, 2023 \(5:00 pm to 7:00 pm\) for graduate students with no spouse and kids](#), and b) [March 16, 2023 \(5:00 pm to 7:00 pm\) for graduate students with spouse and kids](#).

In these tax clinic sessions, the GSA president will provide a hands-on demonstration to graduate students to help them file their taxes using **UFile software**. Please circulate the Tax clinic information among the graduate students of your council.

Date: March 15 and 16, 2023

Time: 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm

Location: GSA Commons, 1337 College Dr, Saskatoon, SK S7N 0W6

**Mostofa Kamal**

**President, Graduate Students' Association (GSA)**

University of Saskatchewan

Saskatoon, SK, CANADA

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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.*



## Report from the VP Finance and Operations (February 2023)

Hello GSA Councilors,

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

### 1. GSA Winter Bursary Update

GSA winter bursary was open from January 10 to January 31. I received over 50 applications. The bursary committee met and finalized the recipient for the round first. The executives decided to do the winter bursary I two round since we had many requests after the deadline therefore second call was announced which the deadline for it is March 8.

### 2. GSA Commons and GSA operations

The GSA has been fully functional in serving graduate students, with the GSA Commons serving as an excellent study space and accommodating events for income. Recently, ratified club funds have been released, and as soon as other clubs finish their process, they will be served. Efforts have been made to negotiate students' rights with Student Care and increase the quality of service.

As VP Finance, I have been working with the university fee review committee to approve new rates for GSA services such as bus transit and student care, all of which have been approved. Additionally, I am currently helping organizing the Gala event and working to ease financial difficulties.

Each month, I update our budget and provide documents and ledgers for our bookkeeper. This month, we needed to spend an extra 30rs on our books to finalize payments to service providers and pay our bills. I schedule our coordinators to ensure that the GSA stays fully functional, keeping track of their working hours and covering events after working hours. Additionally, I am responsible for GSA booking contracts and following up on collecting invoices.

In my role as VP Finance, I take care of all payments and maintain GSA Commons supplements. After every event, I inspect the GSA Commons to ensure that all GSA belongings are working and undamaged. I am also responsible for managing executive meetings and ensuring all executives are participating.

Furthermore, I oversee coordinators and the office manager's performance, making sure they are working towards the GSA's interest, which is serving students with the highest possible quality. Additionally, I am responsible for student health and dental care and Saskatoon bus transit operations, keeping track of expenses and following our approved budget. Overall, my role as VP Finance is crucial to the successful functioning of the GSA therefore, I do my best to overcome all the challenges.

Additionally, I continue to sit on various committees to improve the graduate students' experiences both on and off campus. Some of the meetings that I attended as part of my responsibilities are listed below:

#### *Meetings*

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*Executive Retreat Meeting*

*PRT/PEC/USSU/GSA Meeting*

*Studentcare*

*GSA-PSAC*

*Student Affairs and Services*

*ISSAC-GSA*

*Mental Health First Aid*

*Meeting with the City of Saskatoon*

*GSA Executive Meeting*

*Multiple meetings with outgoing VP Finance*

Please feel free to contact me at [gsa.fin@usask.ca](mailto:gsa.fin@usask.ca) should you have any questions or need any further clarification.

Sincerely,

**Ehsan Moradi**

**Vice-President Finance and Operations**

Graduate Students' Association

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## Monthly Activity Report from VP Academic and Student Affairs

Dear Council Members,

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

### 1. GSA Executive Committee Meeting: February 08 and 22, 2023

Please see executive meeting minutes for details.

### 2. Evaluating Winter Bursary application:

As a GSA Bursary Committee member, I evaluated around 14 applications in Winter 2023. Our VP Finance and Operations already circulated the result.

### 3. Organizing pop-up webinar for prospective graduate students: March 01, 2023

GSA President, Mostofa Kamal, and me attended this event. I presented and discussed GSA's service and organized social events. Around 50 future grad students participate in this session all over the world.

### 4. Attending meetings with Jesse Todd: March 01, 2023

GSA Executives met with PSAC officer to discuss the increase in the hour rate for grad students. Also, we discussed in introducing maternal leaves and benefits.

### 5. Meeting with Graduate Career Educator: March 02, 2023

We discussed that Wenona Partridge, Graduate Career Educator, is interested in organizing the graduate student career coaching events in Spring/Summer. We discussed whether she could use the GSA Commons office to organize such events. She will keep in touch with GSA.

### 6. Attended regular meetings of my portfolio:

- a. *Research, Scholarly and Artistic Work Committee*: February 02, 2023
- b. *GSA Council Meeting*: February 08, 2023
- c. *Academic Program Committee*: February 15, 2023
- d. *Academic and Student Life Technology Meeting*: February 16, 2023
- e. *Graduate Programs Committee*: February 07, 2023
- f. *Residence Discussion meeting*: February 01, 2023
- g. *Graduate Academic Affairs Committee meeting*: February 08, 2023
- h. *Teaching, Learning and Academic Resources Committee meeting*: February 28, 2023

Regards,

Sristy Sumana Nath

VP Academic and Student Affairs

Graduate Student's Association, University of Saskatchewan





**Graduate Students' Association**  
University of Saskatchewan

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February 2023

**RE: VP External's Report to Council**

Dear Council Members,

Please find below my report to the Council for February 2023:

1) **Gala event**

- I and the Gala event planner met with the Remai Modern event organizer to confirm the hall booked for the Gala. Also, we have decided which tables, covers, and chairs will be used. We will have dinner as a buffet, a free bar, and the dance floor at the end of the event.
- The sponsorship request so far:  
The college of education, Dr. Beth Bilson supported 1500\$, and  
The College of Kinesiology, Dr. Joel L. Lanovaz, 1000\$.  
The Johnson Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy (JSGS) (700-900)  
The College of Agriculture and Bioresources \$700.
- The invitation so far:

**Attendees:**

Minister of Advanced Education Gordon S. Wyant, K.C with his Chief of Staff Michelle Lang  
The Interim Vice-Provost, Russ Isinger, and his guest  
Abhineet Goswami, President of the USSU with a guest  
Dr. Jane Alcorn, Dean of the College of Pharmacy and Nutrition  
Associate Vice-President Research, Dawn Wallin  
Louise Simard, U of S board member  
Dr. Angela Jaime,  
Dr. Airini, the Provost and Vice-President Academic  
Dr. Debby Burshtyn, Dean, College of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

**Regrets:**

President Peter Stoicheff  
Minister Duncan  
Dr. Karsten Liber, Dean of School of Environment and Sustainability  
Baljit Singh, Vice-President, Research  
VP Cheryl Hamelin

2) **GSA Standing committees**

- Awards selection committee:

The announcement for the Annual Awards was shared via Facebook and Instagram every day to remind grad students of nominations. Please ask your department to share it with all professors and grad students to remind

them the deadline is extended to March 17, 2023.

The number of applications so far is three.

- Sustainability committee:

The competition of multimedia contest was started from Feb 24 to March 20. The announcement was shared via Facebook, Instagram, and email to all grad students. We seek outstanding sustainable ideas from your department, labs, and the campus of U of S to make the University of Saskatchewan more sustainable. Also, the research ideas are welcome to inspire a greener future! The winners of the contest will receive a prize of up to 200\$ and a ticket to the GSA awards Gala on April 29, 2023. In addition, the winning photograph will be featured on the GSA website and social media channels.

The Sustainability Committee is scheduling tours for the only synchrotron research facility in Canada, Canadian light source (CLS) on 3, 7, 10, and 17 March 2023. The flyer of the event has been circulated on the GSA social media. Please share it with your department to engage more grad students.

- Diversity committee:

The “Mother language day” event on Feb 21, 2023, was canceled and the announcement was shared via Facebook and Instagram. Since it was the weekend that it was decided to postpone the event, we were unable to share via email.

The new event detail will be shared soon.

A shared email address was created for the committee under [gsa.diversity@usask.ca](mailto:gsa.diversity@usask.ca). you can email your concerns, suggestions, or any questions you should have directly to the mentioned email address.

### 3) Meeting minutes

The meeting minutes of executives’ bi-weekly meetings were prepared for December 15, January 5, January 16, and February 22.

### 4)Meetings/Events

The following is a list of meetings I attended in Dec 2022:

| <b>Date</b>  | <b>Meetings/Events</b>               |
|--------------|--------------------------------------|
| Feb 8, 2023  | GSA executives’ Meeting              |
| Feb 12, 2023 | GSA executives’ Meeting              |
| Feb 21, 2023 | GSA planning meeting at Remai Modern |
| Feb 22, 2023 | GSA executives’ Meeting              |

Regards,

**Ozra Mohammadi.**

**Vice-President External Affairs**

Graduate Students' Association (GSA)

University of Saskatchewan

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