

Graduate Students Association of McMaster University
Council Meeting
November 29, 2018
GSA Office, East Tower the Refectory
5:30 p.m.

Minutes

Attendees: Julia de Lange (FRC Engineering), Sara Oikawa (VP Internal), Anthony Quarshie (FRC International), Ashley Ravenscroft (DoO), Mohammed Chowdhury (FRC Engineering), Rachele Ho (FRC Science), Sanyia Mansuri (FRC Health Science), sasha Kovalchuk (FRC Social Science), Fran Lasowski (VP Administration), Shawn Hercules (VP External), Maxwell Lighstone (Senator Engineering), Anita Acai (Senator Science)

Regrets: Lily Eskin (FRC Social Science), Xiaomin Huang (FRC International), Tim van Boxtel (GSA President), Yi Wang (FRC Health Science), Tiffany van Lieshout (FRC Science), Aaron Roberts (Senator Humanities)

Absent: Mariam Munawar (Senator Business), Taylor McKenzie (Senator Social Science), Maleeha Qazi (Senator Health Science), Rodrigo Narro (BoG member), Kara Tsang (GSA CRO)

Call to order 5:34

1. **President's Remarks**

- a. Next Meeting – Thursday, January 24th, 2019 5:30pm
- Tim was unable to attend the meeting. He sent notes, which Ashley read.
 - Ashley mentioned that Grad council voted on the minimum remuneration which is tuition plus \$13500. This is a big win, as previously it was \$19,500.00 and there was no mention of tuition.
 - Bylaws are expected to be submitted before next council.
 - The GSA is planning Frost week; council members are requested to send their ideas or request before January. The current thought is that the GSA will do a free chili event, trivia night and/or any other social night.

2. **Call for New Business**

- a. **MOTION:** Approval of Agenda
- Asked to move the senate update after approval the minutes.

Motion to approve the agenda with amendments moved by sasha, seconded by Maxwell, all in favour, motion carried.

- b. **MOTION:** Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes of last meeting moved by Julia, seconded by Anthony, all in favour, motion carried.

3. **FRC Updates**

a. SciGSA

Rachelle sent the following report

Trivia

- About 17 teams participated, 3 rounds of questions (intermingled between science and multi-cultural questions). The questions were medium to hard in toughness.
- There was food served to each table, which was better than having participants come to the front and grab food in a buffet-style dinner.

Alumni social

- March 1st or February 8th SciGSA will be hosting a social.
- Still looking for good alumni that would be good to talk to students seeking non-academic roles.

Grad student/supervisor conflict resolution:

- Bhagwati Gupta knows of a group that is hoping to do something related to this. EGS president will attend the meetings.
- SciGSA wants to partner with GSA
- With limited funds to run this event, we are thinking of a running this as a panel because a workshop might be cost more.
- Sara highlighted that there is a current working group on grad council for supervisor/student relationship, if SciGSA have any specific feed back, Sara can bring it to grad council.
- Ashley will follow-up with EGS and try and link all of the resources to have something come to fruition.

Updates about Science Clubs:

- Exercise is medicine - becoming an official club is underway
- Math club - becoming an official club is underway

Updates from the Office of Associate Dean of Science

- All science students are at a minimum of \$13500 regardless of how that funding comes (i.e. from the supervisor, TA ship, etc.)

They are trying to figure out what to do when you win an award - policies for students. Usually, the departmental and supervisor money is withdrawn once the student wins an award.

- Student Ambassadors from departments will be helping with recruitment to each department.

b. Health science,

- Sanyia had a meeting with the Graduate Program Associate, she is working on establishing HealthSciGSA, which would be a faculty association under the GSA. There is a graduate health organization that is currently running, their main communication is through health science mailing list. She has been in contact with the 2 president, however, they are not very responsive.

c. Engineering

- Julia mentioned that the Matlab workshop is this weekend.
- They will be hosting a cooking class next weekend at Fortinos.

d. International

- Trivia night co-organized with Sci-GSA.
- Budget: they are yet to finalize their budget, the last item holding them back from ratification is the budget. They intend to finalize it by the next council meeting, which is scheduled for January 12.

e. Political science

- sasha reached out to each department in Political Science to search/ inquire if there are any representatives at these departments that want to be engaged. Some people responded to him and currently he is planning to meet with them all in the new year.
- One of the representatives contacted him as they represent McMaster indigenous grad students. Sasha will follow-up with this student and ensure they are represented.

4. Senate / BOG Updates

Anita sent the following report:

- Report from the Graduate Student Representative on Senate (Science)

1. Departure of Dr. Patrick Deane

- It was recently accounted that McMaster's current president, Dr. Patrick Deane, will be beginning a new role as principal of Queen's University. Dr. Deane will continue as president until June 30th, 2019 when current provost Dr. David Farrar will assume the role of acting president for a term of up to one year. The committee to recommend a new president is determined by the Senate and the Board. It is expected to be in place and ready to begin its work early in the new year.

2. Research Excellence at McMaster

- Senators were informed that for the second consecutive year, McMaster has been named Canada's most research-intensive university by Research Infosource in their annual ranking of the country's Top 50 Research Universities. McMaster researchers brought in \$379.9 million in total sponsored research income. McMaster also placed first in graduate student research intensity. On the list of Canada's Top 50 Research Universities, McMaster ranked seventh overall which was up one position from the previous three years.

3. Update on the Provincial Government

- Dr. Deane provided members with an update on relations with the provincial government. The University is working to respond to the government's requirement that all universities should have a policy on free speech in place by year end. Since McMaster already has a policy framework in place, the University has developed a web-page, housed on the President's Office website, which gathers together all the relevant policies and statements in relation to this issue. To accompany this, the University is developing a one-page summary of policy framework document, which outlines our approach and the policies already in place

5. Club Approval

- Shawn mentioned that some clubs presented their budget with a deficit, however, this was sorted out. MIGSS budget has \$300 deficit, it is assumed that this amount is the seed money the GSA will provide.
- a. Exercise is Medicine at McMaster University (EIM)

Comments:

- In the budget they added \$100 from fundraising, however, they don't have any fund raising initiatives in their events.
- Ashley highlighted that what was discussed and that the budget presented is a proposed budget, they don't know if they going to receive all the funding, if the income is lost then obviously some of the event will not be held.

- b. Grad Wellness Initiative (GWI)- no comments
- c. McMaster eHealth Students Association (MeHSA)- no comments
- d. McMaster Iranian Graduate Student Society (MIGSS)

Comments:

- Undergrad Iranian club constitution was used as a template.
- Ashley highlighted that the GSA offers a template if students haven't an idea on how to generate their own, nonetheless, there is no specific template for constitution or Bylaws as long as it doesn't conflict with the GSA Bylaws. However, Ashley suggested another thing to consider is how the club will differ from the undergrad equivalent.

- e. Mathematics and Statistics Graduate Society (MS-GS)- no comment.

Motion to approve all the above mentioned clubs moved by sasha, seconded by Shawn, all in favor, motion carried.

6. New Business

Financial update

- Fran mentioned that the finance committee met on November 15. She noted that the Phoenix is still generating a profit, however, it is making less than last year, this is due to couple of factors: the summer was very hot this year and the patio wasn't used as much, staff wage increase, and lastly there were more on-campus events compared to this year.
- Conrad understands that the Phoenix patron is quiet sensitive so he is working on keeping the cost under control to avoid increasing prices. He is focusing more on marketing initiatives specially on campus as away to encourage new business as well as larger events such as, weddings; however, there is going to be an issue with parking, which the Phoenix will have to consider.
- The Phoenix's 50th anniversary is next year. Conrad, is planning to leveraging the vendors he has to sponsor these events.
- The GSA is in a strong cash position, there is a small change in cash compared to last year due to paying the construction loan to avoid interest payment.
- The GSA Leagues are both self funded, the soccer league has a large surplus. Accordingly, they are planning to subsidize soccer grad student team by allowing them to pay only half of the fees or something in the same vein.
- In replying to sasha's questions regarding if the Phoenix has decreased the number of staff members due to the minimum wage increase? Fran explained that Conrad is doing his best to allocate the staff where he needs them for peak service hours. Accordingly, there is no plan to minimize the number of staff. Conrad is focusing more on changing the menu and cut off waste.

CAGS,

- Ashley mentioned that she and Fran had attended CAGS early this month. Some of the items that has merit here is the professional development and career services offered to students. They saw many models that they thought would be beneficial to the GSA. They started conversations with SGS about having an interim data base where McMaster will populate all resources for career development. Dr. Mike Thompson is very receptive to the idea. The current discussion is to put the information on OscarPlus since most of grad students can access this.
- Western university has the most comprehensive model. Fran spoke with them regarding how they got funded and they mentioned that they used existing resources and started by contacting people who are already doing stuff for grad students and tried to make them offer some specific focus areas on career services.

- She added that engineering has already created a relatively comprehensive career co-op person for grad students within engineering, she suggested to leverage this service and services like this it should be available in one area.
- Indignization was another big theme during the conference, Fran noted tri-council funding agencies were putting a new system for PhD scholarship applications online, so it was a stream lined process and from there, the university will have a cap on how many people can submit, however, indigenous applicants will not be affected with that cap. An interesting aspect of the funding was also that the indigenous population that was consulted did not want a separate funding envelope for indigenous people as they wanted to compete with the greater population. Accordingly, this was taken into consideration by the tri-counsel agency.

7. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 6:18pm moved by Shawn, seconded by Sanyia, all in favour, motion carried.

Action Item:

Item	Action by	Due date
N/A		