

Graduate Students Association of McMaster University

**Council Meeting**

September 27<sup>th</sup> 2018

GSA Office, East Tower the Refectory

5:00 p.m.

**Minutes**

**Attendees:** Tim van Boxtel (GSA President), Julia de Lange (FRC Engineering), Shawn Hercules (VP External), Sara Oikawa (VP Internal), Anthony Quarshie (FRC International), Lily Eskin (FRC Social Science), Xiaomin Huang (FRC International)

**Regrets:** Aaron Roberts (Senator Humanities), Tiffany van Lieshout (FRC Science), Rachelle Ho (FRC Science), Ashley Ravenscroft (DoO), Maleeha Qazi (Senator Health Science), Fran Lasowski (VP Administration), Kara Tsang (GSA CRO), Anita Acai (Senator Science)

**Absent:** Mariam Munawar (Senator Business), Rodrigo Narro (BoG), Taylor McKenzie (Senator Social Science), Mohammed Chowdhury (FRC Engineering)

**Guest:** Tyler Meadow (President SciGSA)

**Call to order 5:08**

**1) President remark**

- Tentative date for Council meetings moving forward is last Thursday of each month at 5:00 pm.
- FRCs are expected to sign up for GSA committees as well as ad hoc committees within the University (Valedictorian and Open Education). Information regarding signing up to committees is on the GSA website.
- There is a new VP Administration, Frances Lasowski. She was the president of the GSA 5 years ago, she will start her position next week.
- FRCs health science stepped down this month. However, there are 2 new applicants.
- Welcome Week was very successful. Specifically, worth noting is how successful the BBQ was, where the Phoenix Staff was able to coordinate everything so students were not left standing in lines for hours.

**2) Approval of the Agenda**

- Sara requested to add Fit for Duty Policy to the Agenda.
- Shawn requested to add the following
  - The valedictorian and open education committees.
  - Ratification GMCA club

**Motion to accept the amended agenda moved by Sara, seconded by Anthony, all in favour, motion carried.**

**3) Approval of the minutes:**

- Adding to previous minutes; the name of the Co- President of the IGSA, is Jean-Christophe Ono-Dit-Biot.

**Motion to approve the amendment minutes moved by Sara, seconded Anthony, 6 in favour 2 abstentions, motion carried.**

**4) FRC updates:**

Engineering:

- Julia mentioned that they had great attendance during their Welcome Week Coffee house and the pot lock.
- EGS had 1 meeting last month, mainly to ratify the executives' role and what are the plan for next year.
- There were also two student supervisor issues and the EGS president has been helping navigate them.

International

- Anthony mentioned that they planned an international students hiking trip, 60 students registered; however, only 30 showed up.
- Next event will be on November 8; prizes will be gift cards from the Phoenix.
- They also hired an IT officer.
- SGS put a call for volunteers to join the IGSA group and a lot of students signed up.

SciGSA

- Tyler mentioned that Welcome Week and the success of the resource fair.
- Lab coat social event 15 people attended. Biology ended up winning gift cards.
- Next event is trivia night with IGSA in November.
- Taking the notes for how to deal with supervisor issues. They are looking into whether something like that would exist for Science. Tim advised them to contact EGS as they do have quiet good reference material.
- They are also working on trying to get a formal budget contribution from the faculty of science.

Social Science

- Lily mentioned that on October 20<sup>th</sup> is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Social Science, she will try to reach out to more students to attend.
- New student orientation for political science occurred and 10 students attended.
- Political science grad association meeting occurred on October 17. They meeting was used to prepare future events. Tim suggested that they can apply to be a GSA affiliate club and benefit of the funding.
- Tim recommended that she can try to find engagement from other students other than political science. He suggested to organize something at the phoenix to start meeting people.

### **5) Executives update:**

#### Vp Internal:

- Sara mentioned that she and Shawn were involved with SWELL (Students Wellness Education Lower Lounge), which is different from student wellness center. They are focusing on mental wellbeing of students, their service is open to all undergrad and graduate students, they are open every day of the week from 9-5. She has been contacted by Will, one of the wellness coordinator, he was wondering whether the GSA is interested in some wellness initiatives.
- She also gets contacted by the Grad Wellness Initiative group which used to be funded by SPICES. (, now it is funded by SGS. All this group members have graduated except one, Sara encouraged her to apply for a club status with the GSA, in order to get funding through the GSA as well.
- Sara and Tim briefly discussed the idea of using some money to sponsor graduate students' intramural teams. If graduate student teams are 70% or more Graduate Students the GSA will fund 50% of team fees. The idea is to encourage grad students to get involved in sporting activities. At the moment they are getting some numbers from the Phoenix soccer and softball leagues, to see what proportion of grad students make up those team and decide what the funding percentage could be. Tim added that the GSA is also asking the league organizers to get a similar league incentive on soccer and softball, however, the percentages will be little bit different.
- Sara highlighted that the main discussion at Grad Council is finances and the minimum funding for grad students. The university's proposal is 13500 base plus tuition, which is a substantial increase. This this number will fluctuate depending on tuition changes. She added that Dr. Mike Thompson was very supportive about the idea. If any members of the council would like to add any ideas to that topic they can email Sara.
- The update regarding PhD thesis defense process- supervisors now have the choice to initiate the defense process on their own. The external report is now permitted to be prior to the thesis defense. This came in effect July 1<sup>st</sup> 2018.

- Sara mentioned that the GSA is currently in the process of editing the CAFS Agreement, and it will be circulated soon as well. They are also creating an emergency medical fund and terms of reference/ an application as a pilot program. The GSA is hopeful that the university will match the pool of money the GSA has for this fund. The GSA will cover up to \$1000 for medical situations is the hope. However, there is a lot of issues related to privacy, as students will need to submit documentation regarding their medication, or need for funding. In case of expensive drugs, students will be requested to submit a document explaining how much they pay for the medication. They will also be requested to attend a follow up meeting within 6 months after receiving the bursary to advise the GSA of how the money was spent. The Council members are asked to send their comments to Sara, should they have any.

#### Vp External:

- Shawn mentioned that the GSA had 13 clubs as of September. Only 11 Clubs requested to continue to have a club status with the GSA. This portfolio was under the club administration, however, now it's under the VP External.
- The social events and trip committee met last week, they planned the full year of events for the GSA. Next events will be on Wednesday, there is also Halloween hunt event during reading week.

#### **6) FRC application**

- 3 new FRC application circulated to members including the statement of interest.
- Yi Wang application for Health Science
- Saniya Mansuri application for Health Science
- Sasha Kovalchuk application for Social Science

**Motion to approve Yi Wang FRC Health Science application moved by Shawn seconded by Anthony, 7 in favour, 1 abstention, motion carried**

**Motion to approve Saniya Mansuri application for FRC Health Science moved by Julia, seconded by Sara, all in favour, motion carried.**

**Motion to approve sasha Kovalchuk application for FRC Social Science moved by Sara, seconded by Shawn, all in favour, motion carried.**

#### **7) Club Ratification**

##### DDSA

- Only the constitution was sent. They have to send the rest of the documents as per the policy.
- They need to clarify elections and meeting times.

**Motion to defer the ratification of DDSA club to next month until they complete all the missing documents moved by Sara, seconded by Shawn, all in favor, motion carried.**

IGSA

- The document sent was missing the budget.

GMCA club

- There is a \$300 deficit in the budget, it should be corrected to zero, and adding the amount under sponsorship. Until they change Shawn will communicate their club status.

**Motion to ratify GMCA as a GSA Club pending a slightly revised budget moved by Shawn, seconded by Anthony, 7 in favour, 1 abstention, motion carried.**

**8) New business**

- SGS has requested from the GSA to have grad students to sit on the Valedictorian and OER committees.
- There are 4 meetings for the OER committee, 2 at the fall and 2 at the winter, this committee discusses open resources and open text books.
- Shawn will put a call on the GSA weekly email today also.

**9) Adjournment:**

**Motion to adjourn at 6:00 p.m. moved by Sara, seconded by Julia, all in favor, motion carried.**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Action by</b>	<b>Due date</b>
<b>Following up with club applicants regarding points discussed in the meeting as well as missing documentation</b>	<b>Shawn</b>	<b>Next meeting</b>