

Graduate Students Association of McMaster University

Council Meeting

May 23rd, 2019

GSA Office, East Tower the Refectory

5:00 p.m.

Minutes

Attendees: Shawn Hercules (GSA President) Ashley Ravenscroft (DoO), Mia Zhang (VP Internal), Caroline Seiler (FRC Health Science), Unnati Trivedy (VP External), Maxwell Lighstone (Senator Engineering), Olive Liang (VP Administration), Tiffany van Lieshout (FRC Science), Kara Tsang (GSA CRO), Mohammed Chowdhury (FRC Engineering), Wei Zhao (VP Services)

Regrets: Anita Acai (Senator Science), Anthony Quarshie (FRC International)

Absent: Mariam Munawar (Senator Business), Rodrigo Narro (BoG member), Julia de Lange (FRC Engineering), Maleeha Qazi (Senator Health Science)

Call to order 5:05

1. President's Remarks

- Next Meeting – tentative date 30th of June 2019 at 5 pm.

2. Call for New Business

- a. **MOTION:** Approval of Agenda moved by Max seconded by Mohammed all in favour motion carried.

Motion to approve the agenda moved by Unnati seconded by Maxwell, all in favor, motion carried.

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

Motion to approve the minutes of last meeting as circulated moved by Maxwell, seconded by Unnati, all in favor, motion carried.

3. President remark:

- Shawn highlighted that this year the GSA is planning to continue last year initiatives, for instance, GO bus refund voucher for international student will continue.
- There will be a website update and the executives will meet to discuss this.
- Shawn encouraged FRCs to join GSA committees and external committees, at least each member shall sit on 1 committee.

- The GSA is planning a team building activity at the altitude next month, a doodle will be sent to plan the team building activity. Also, members are encouraged to hang out right after council meeting at the Phoenix for a drink for team build up.
- The GSA is still waiting for ratification for VPs Internal, Services, and administration positions.

4. Vp External report:

- There are few FRC position still open; 2 Humanities, 2 international, 2 business, 2 social science, this will be announced at the GSA weekly email.
- There are 2 open positions for the board internal director, it will be announced at the GSA weekly email as well.
- The GSA will set up a website committee for people who have time and expertise to build on the website.

5. GSA background and overview:

- GSA covers grad student for Health and dental. Support grad student club and events, in addition to awards, bursary and emergency funding.
- Due to the new student choice initiative proposed by the PC government, there are some changes into the GSA fees, in which fees are now broken down to essential and nonessential and student can opt out from the non essential fees.
- The GSA will set up a student imitative committee to discuss more student initiatives.
- Ashley noted that the GSA meetings are governed by Robert rule as it's a formality, it is the away to keep meetings in order. In addition, Mona will send the organization chart of the GSA, and the cheat sheet. It will show you how motions are made.

6. FRC update:

Sci GSA

- AGM was May 1st, they had quorum
- Transition meeting is coming up between incoming and outgoing FRC
- The 2 FRC position wasn't contested.
- They have received guaranteed for funding from Faculty of Science.

EGS

- New constitution voted in
- FRC election on June 11. Nomination have been closed at 1 pm today
- Election is through Mac voting system, that is the same system used for senate and BoG elections.
- Two workshops were conducted, personal branding and professional development.
- Planning to have METRIC conference on September 5th.

- Ashley suggested to change the date for METRIC as it is going to conflict with the GSA Welcome Week.
- She added this year due to the PC Government student initiative SGS have deficit in their budget, they will not be able to do the new students' breakfast however, they will hold a different event.
- EGS received 6 application for travel awards in which all are successful.
- Setting up students' issues committees, since EGS receives frequent student supervisory issues. A part of that committee, they will be having a list of resources available on campus and off campus as well, so as soon as student have an issue, they now where to go.

Welcome week plan

- Resource fair for new students Sept 3rd but open to every one,
- Sept. 4th McPherson institute of learning
- Sept. 5th from 2pm to 5pm a big welcome event that will include all faculty association and clubs at the patio
- Sept. 7th from 4 pm to 6 pm family picnic event, they did last year
- Sept. 9th a bike ride down to princess point
- Sept. 10th international student event
- Sept. 12th planting roots event
- The GSA will host a BBQ event but the date isn't announced yet.

Health Science:

Caroline sent the following report:

- In the Faculty of Health Sciences, the most recent event was the Health Sciences Research Plenary, held from Tuesday, May 14 to Thursday, May 16. At this event, graduate students and fellows presented their research either via poster presentations or oral presentations.
- Winners of the poster and oral competitions will be announced on Wednesday, May 29 at the award ceremony from 4pm-6pm. This award ceremony will also be the annual award ceremony for graduate students and fellows in the Faculty of Health Sciences.
- An activity occurring in the department is the Transcending Borders to Improve Care: Dinner & Reception on Thursday May 30, 2019 at the University Club.
- On May 21, there was also a webinar for Indigenous Nurses Day. On May 16, the 4th annual Jack Diamond Memorial Lecture was given by Dr. Ellen Lumpkin on cell-cell signaling between epithelia and neurons. On May 3rd there was
- The Annual Lecture Series on Cutting-Edge Advances in Pediatric Research hosted by the department of pediatrics.
- Finally, spring convocation ceremonies for McMaster University's School of Nursing and Faculty of Health Sciences are being held on Wednesday and Thursday, respectively.

7. Senate

Max sent the following report:

- President's Remarks
 - Provincial Update
 - No reductions to operating grants in the budget in this cycle
 - Outcomes-based funding intended to be achieved through SMA process
 - Present model based on weighted heads
 - Moving to a model in which 60% of the operating budget is tied to performance-based metrics; shift will be gradual
 - Number of metrics being reduced to 10 - linked to government priorities on job training, economic impact and outcomes, etc.
 - The government announced the discontinuation of initiatives designed to grow programs such as the undergraduate MD program
 - Previous pressure on universities to grow. Had operations and capital investments
 - Funding was amortized: 5 million every year. Included in capital projects
 - Helped pay for PG-LLC
 - Significant hit across the board (province?); roughly a \$53M loss to the university
 - Federal Update
 - Final text announced for “Made in Canada” Athena Swan Charter program (we’re calling it “Dimensions: EDI Canada”)
 - TriAgencies have encouraged universities to endorse the charter. McMaster has.
 - Minister will be on campus next week. May have a signing ceremony of some sort
 - With the charter, we commit ourselves to EDI principles—currently, we are developing an EDI framework; hope to apply this to our research community
 - Will include an awards program with details TBA
 - Local Updates
 - Dr. Rob Baker is stepping down from his role as VP Research; Dr. Karen Mossman will be acting until a new VP Research is found
 - PACBIC Annual Report Update
 - In the past year, spent a lot of time establishing the role of PACBIC and its relationship to various bodies/stakeholders within the university (p. 4 of report)
 - Consultation on new EDI framework
 - Provides care and support to the campus community, particularly during challenging times; relationship building is an important focus

- Currently 40 members; how do we build awareness around PACBIC and what it does among community stakeholders?
- Open to people who would like to join in on meetings
 - Hamilton Student Mobilization Network burst into Senate meeting, and made demands
- Gord Aubau described on the incident that occurred at May at Mac
- Aarig (EIO) stated that the actions undertaken were not in concert with the freedom of protest policies
- Deane said that the trespass notices were unfortunate given that the students appeared to be engaging in peaceful protests
- It was noted that the students did not initially identify themselves as being members of the McMaster community
 - **Changes to Graduate Programs**
 - Change to Admission Requirements Chem Eng (M.A.Sc., Ph.D.)
- The program proposed raising their minimum English proficiency requirements from 88 to 91 for the TOEFL and from 7.0 overall with a minimum of 5.5 in each component for IELTS to 7.0 overall with a minimum of 6 in each component. This change was proposed as a result of their IQAP review as the review committee identified the resolution of this issue within the Faculty as a top priority.
- Approved
 - New Streams SEPT (M.Eng.D, M.E.M.E.)
- For the M.Eng.D. degree the program proposed the introduction of two new streams, one in Smart Systems and one in Digital Reality. For the M.E.M.E. degree the program proposed the introduction of an Automotive Stream and a Digital Manufacturing stream. The addition of the streams will allow students to specialize their degree by focusing on specific areas which are also aligned with the areas of strength of the School, including the growing area of cyber-physical systems.
- Approved
 - Removal of Research Field Anthropology (M.A.)
- The program proposed removing the research field of Linguistic Anthropology from the calendar as they no longer support this field within the program, and it has not been active for some time.
- Approved
 - **Changes to Undergraduate Programs**
 - Undergraduate Council recommended that Senate approve the establishment of a Responding to Violence Against Women Certificate, as recommended by the Centre for Continuing Education and set out in Attachment I.
 - Approved

- **Academic Integrity**
 - The annual report indicated that the majority of offences are by undergraduate students; there were only 5 recorded cases among graduate students last year
 - Proposed a policy wording change but this will be taken back for discussion; the motion was withdrawn
 - The issue of 2% academic dishonesty rate in Engineering and what is causing students to feel like they need to cheat.
- Mental health was brought up. Are we supporting students?
- Chair of the committee said that profs from other faculties are likely not comfortable with bringing forward charges
- Chair says we need to be more flexible in our teaching style, particularly with deadlines
- David Farrar talks about Vice Provost Student Affairs. MacPherson is doing a president's retreat. Engineering is changing their programming, to change how things run. Reduce number of high stakes exams
- “iSci doesn’t have a problem, because we tell them not to cheat”
- “There is something sick in the system”
- According to Chem Eng prof: not related to mental health

8. New FRC nomination:

- Zarwa’s application was circulated to members.

Motion to appoint Zarwa Saqib moved by Tiffany seconded by Caroline all in favour motion carried.

9. New Business

- Ashley mentioned that a student visited the GSA office to speak about the 2 peaceful protester students that were fined by the university
- She reached out to the director of security, however, he couldn't discuss it due to confidentiality. McMaster will send tickets to the students on Wednesday; the reason those students were fined because they were unable to provide their student identification. So McMaster gave them trans passing tickets.
- Max mentioned a side note, last council members spoke about having an award for effort recognized by grad students on the council or the board level.
- Ashley explained that this discussion will be moved to award committee, she added that executives receives award from the university by the end of their term with the GSA.

10. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 6:00 pm moved by Tiffany, seconded by Max, all in favor, motion carried.

Action Items:

Item	Action by	Due date
Send Robert rule cheat sheet and organization chart to council	Mona	Next meeting