



Graduate Students Association of McMaster University  
*Council Meeting*

Tuesday, August 25, 2015  
GSA Office, East Tower Refectory  
6:00 p.m.



**AGENDA**

Attendance: Talena Rambarran, Megan Murphy, Lucia Lee, Mai Yamomoto, Maleeha Qazi, Neha Dewan, Naby Nikookaran, Farhad Sadeh, Ayush Ranawade, Robert Morton, Natalie D'Silva via skype, Tarushika Vasanthan

Regrets: Hadi Eslami, Vi Dang

Absent: Theo Nazary. Darko Ljubic, Azam Shamsi, Philip Tominac,

- 1.0 Call to Order – 6:07
- 2.0 Acceptance of the Agenda – Leagues committee SOP - motion to add SOP to the agenda under new business 1<sup>st</sup> by Naby, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rob, all in favor unanimous, **motion carries**
- 3.0 Approval of Minutes from meeting of July 30<sup>th</sup> – motion to approve minutes 1<sup>st</sup> by Maleeha 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ayush, all in favor unanimous, **motion carries**
- 4.0 Approval of the Minutes of the AGM from March 31, 2015 – 1<sup>st</sup> Lucia, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ayush, all in favor 7, 1 abstention, **motion carries**
- 5.0 Reports from the Board
  - 5.1 President's Report – The GU15 conference was in Winnipeg last week. The group consists of the 15 research intense Universities who share knowledge, best practices and collaboration. Notable topics discussed were; Activism in the GSA, the political neutrality policy was a hot topic and the Manitoba newspaper is doing an article on the GSA. Calgary has a new student-supervisor contract that involves a check list to go through at the beginning of the degree and some of the things that are talked about are vacation, reports, and assignments. The GSA should look at advocating for the implementation of something similar and will discuss this with the University after welcome week. Regarding student advocacy; having a supervisor position is considered a privilege at some Universities and you can have the privilege revoked. Queens University does something similar and a couple of other Universities are also adapting this. The GSA doesn't have anything in place to support students if a student has a problem with a supervisor and Students don't always feel they can go to SGS because it is part of the University, whereas the GSA is an affiliate. Structure of the GSA – our GSA is behind the more established schools. Presidency is in many cases a 25 h - full time position in these schools and you take time off of your PhD as an example or you would change to part time. You would then get an extension on your degree. Maybe in the future if we want the GSA to do more for the Students this needs to be reevaluated and adopted. Right now there isn't enough time to do everything the way the GSA is structured. Talena may suggest this on her way out when she graduates. We don't have a lot of resources/time to do more advocacy for students. Next GU15 conference is in April.

- 5.2 Federal elections are coming up. We have been contacted by “Be the Vote” – Lucia will speak more about it and the GSA would like to support it.
- 5.3 Testing the mosaic system – The GSA has spoken to Brooke Gordon and SGS. The system isn’t working well and all payments aren’t going to be monthly. External scholarships will be paid once per term. SGS needs volunteers to test the system so it can be fine-tuned. Please let Talena know if you want to be guinea pig. Ayush suggested a model of what will be paid in future and not what is just being paid now, this way students can budget.
- 5.4 Bus passes – are available August 28<sup>th</sup>. There are 2 parts to the bus pass the student card and the bus pass. Both parts must be kept together. Existing stickers on cards won’t mean anything. The GSA has brought up the \$100.00 replacement card issue (it is expensive!) and we will ask what alternative options there are. Question: if there are unclaimed bus passes should they not go to the GSA and keep them as a slush fund. Ayush mentioned the fine is on the back of the card.

## 6.0 Committee Reports

- 6.1 Finance Committee (VP Administration) – still waiting for the audit from KPMG. Performance reviews still needs to be done. HR is having issues with the tribunal.
- 6.2 Phoenix Executive Committee (VP Administration) - PEC had a meeting last week, we still don’t have that many members. Only 1 student came to the meeting.
- 6.3 Events and Trips Planning Committee (VP External) – “Be the Vote” – is a not for profit organization that was started last year with Ryerson. They promote Canadians to vote and display positive political advertisements. They would like us to get involved in “Pledge plus 1”, which would get a person involved that didn’t vote last election. What is expected? Is to become a partner for this election. The GSA will advertise and communicate and they will have our GSA logo on their site. Ayush said it would be a good idea to have somewhere to register if that is why people aren’t voting. Lucia will check on this. Advanced polling is possible if you are from out of town. The GSA will check to see if we will have a polling station on campus.  
 There is a Wine Tour this Saturday, 3 different Wineries will be visited. There are 47 students attending. Nothing is planned for September yet, maybe a local OHL game. Volunteers are needed for the Resource Fair and BBQ, we have t-shirts to be worn and name tags. Volunteers will be available to answer questions. Shopper’s items have been rec’d for the resource fair. This year we have logo’s envelopes to stick on the back of cell phones to hold credit cards or debit cards securely.  
 Website – global navigation has been completed and the server is being shared with SGS. Start up is being held off until Mosaic issues are resolved. There will be 4 navigation menus you will see; about, health and dental, sports and recreation, and contact. There will be modules on the right which will be there all the time no matter what menu you are in.  
 Talena will bring her camera and take pictures of everyone from council at the next meeting. Debbie to remind Talena to bring camera.
- 6.4 Academic Affairs Committee (VP Internal) -  
 No meeting so far. A meeting is scheduled next week.

Adjudication of awards – refer to Natalie’s minutes. Pete said they can’t handle them all. So Ayush and Natalie will look after them. Pete is organizing them and will scan and send them to the GSA. The idea is to have it done online and will meet if needed. This is the same process that was used for the Travel Awards. Talena suggested to do it in the board room. Guidelines for adjudication have to be set up. Anyone on the Affairs committee has to step down for the award if you nominated someone.

6.5 International Student Representative Report (International Reps) –There was a meeting 2 weeks ago. There will be 3-4 people at the International Fair booth and iGSA is combining the fair with the buddy system. There will be domestic students volunteering also. If you are free please come out to volunteer or participate in the fair. Neha suggested an introduction letter to email to the buddy.

6.6 GSA Summer Leagues Committee (VP Services) – SOP for League Committee under new business.

6.7 Graduate Student Services Review Committee (VP Services/President) – The committee met on the 12<sup>th</sup> of August and put forth a proposal to Sean. The committee proposed that there would be an increase over a 3-year period and to have different options. Hopefully we will hear from Sean soon and have another meeting. There was a vote of the committee regarding how to move forward. A few students wanted advocacy, however if this was the route taken then there would be no point in having the committee to discuss options. There was a decision made to have a discussion regarding fees with the University as opposed to the advocacy route.. The Committee has to come up with a plan and then it will be brought to Council and then brought to a General Meeting. If this happens the GSA will have to do a lot of advertising. Ayush wanted to know what are the services in wellness and careers? Answer; Catherine Mayberry is the careers strategist and would be brought on full-time. Wellness is the biggest priority, dependents will not be able to use the service if the increase doesn’t go through and students will be on a waiting list. The biggest cost is in counselling.

6.8 Health & Dental Committee (VP Services) – MBA has inquired about health and dental benefits. The MBA’s are asking MSU if they can use their dental plan. UHIP will have 4 information sessions this year and CUPE will be at the meetings this year as well.

7.0 Council appointment of the Board of Directors – Gina has background in finance and works with the University. Laura has HR knowledge. Manraj has experience working on council last year. We still have 2 vacant positions for students and 1 community (law background) position. Neha asked what qualifications are needed and Talena said experience in finance but if the person just wants to become more involved it is fine.  
Motion to re-appoint Laura and Gina and to accept the new appointment of Manraj – motion to accept appointments 1<sup>st</sup> by Ayush, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mai, all in favor, unanimous, **motion carried**.

8.0 Update on Welcome Week (Ayush)

8.1 Volunteers for Welcome Week – schedule confirmation

8.2 Resource fair – GSA has 2 tables

FRCS poster. 3 posters confirmed -1. Science 2.Engineering 3. Health Science

8.3 Nametags are ready to pick up or can be made available on 2<sup>nd</sup> September

- 8.4 Welcome week BBQ – 6 volunteers so far, we would still would like more volunteers
- 8.5 Welcome week BBQ – cool event (Photo booth is booked for 3 hours 11.30AM-2.30PM) #pictures and there will be a gift card to the winner
- 8.6 Welcome week New event – Wine and cheese, phoenix is booked on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 4-6PM, Live music is by Christopher Clause.
- 8.7 PhD Movie 2 screening sometime around 20<sup>th</sup> September
- 8.8 Retractable Banner for GSA has been purchased and it can be used anywhere for other events.

9.0 Next Meeting - Tues September 29 at 6:00

10.0 New Business - Neha didn't think it was a good idea to remove the deadline for travel awards it would remove the competition aspect.

League Committee SOP – The League Commission came to the GSA with stipend concerns. Please take 5 minutes to read the SOP. Questions – Maleeha asked if the stipend will come from what the leagues pay, answer is yes. Ayush asked what is the roll of the Commissioners? Answer - They run the team sign ups, take care of collecting money from the teams, maintain waivers, team schedules, maintenance to fields etc. Megan had a suggestion regarding the Committee members. There are a lot of Students involved with the League and it would be beneficial to have members not involved in the league increased from 1 to 2. Then the League Committee will have up to 9 general members. Change vote approvals to 50 + 1.

Motion to accept Leagues Committee SOP 1<sup>st</sup> by Natalie, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Ayush, all in favour, unanimous, **motion carried** with changes.

Mai has been working on SAM. SAM hasn't been reviewed yet and they have their first social event and they would like to be recognized before the event. SAM would like to have an email vote. Ayush assured Mai to go ahead and have the event, SAM is a work in progress. EGS had an event before they were official. Neha asked for help with the website. Lucia, Naby, and Mai offered to help.

11.0 Adjournment – 1<sup>st</sup> by Megan, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Lucia all in favor, unanimous, **motion carried**