

Graduate Students Association of McMaster University

***Council Meeting***

April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2019

GSA Office, East Tower the Refectory

5:00 p.m.

**Minutes**

**Attendees:** Tim van Boxtel (GSA President) Ashley Ravenscroft (DoO), Sara Oikawa (VP Internal), Rachelle Ho (FRC Science), sasha Kovalchuk (FRC Social Science), Shawn Hercules (VP External), Maxwell Lighstone (Senator Engineering), Anita Acai (Senator Science), Fran Lasowski (VP Administration), Tiffany van Lieshout (FRC Science)

**Regrets:** Yi Wang (FRC Health Science), Xiaomin Huang (FRC International), Kara Tsang (GSA CRO), Anthony Quarshie (FRC International)

**Absent:** Mariam Munawar (Senator Business), Taylor McKenzi (Senator Social Science), Mohammed Chowdhury (FRC Engineering) Rodrigo Narro (BoG member), Sanyia Mansuri (FRC Health Science), Julia de Lange (FRC Engineering), Maleeha Qazi (Senator Health Science)

**Call to order 5:05**

**1. President's Remarks**

- Next Meeting – tentative end of May 2019 at 5 pm

**2. Call for New Business**

a. **MOTION:** Approval of Agenda

Addition of the following:

- 2 nomination; VP Services and FRC Health Science
- SciGSA report moved after Think indigenous
- Update on CJPAC event Maxwell attended

**Motion to approve the agenda with amendment moved by Sara 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 Rachelle, all in favor, motion carried.**

### **3. Think Indigenous 2019 Conference presentation By: Evans Jamieson-Eckel**

- This conference is being going on for 10 years, it doesn't necessarily to be held in Canada, it goes all over the world. Think Indigenous 2019 was in Alberta this year, it focused on indigenizing education. Evans original subject matter with his honour thesis was about lateral violence in indigenous communities and how to create barriers with humans within the communities. His presentation was about post secondary education, he explained how lateral violence comes in formulation in university campuses, how to prevent, stay away and how to deal with it in post secondary environment.
- There is various indigenous groups at McMaster, however, the Spike is one always exist for graduate and undergraduate students and there are very small portion of students who are actually engaged on campus.
- The main problem is always funding, not all indigenous students can get their education covered. Also there is no consideration in education covered for disable indigenous students.
- It is a bit challenging to access funding on campus, and it usually comes out negative. There are Indigenous funding programs, to fund and support indigenous students succeed, however, the funds doesn't necessary go to indigenous students.
- There are 600 indigenous students on campus, Evan suggested to have a chair in council for an indigenous grad student. Ashley explained that this point was discussed last year and the concern to make the position and not able to fill it, which will not be a most use of our representation.
- Sara suggested to have indigenous club as this is the logical way to make it happen and have people get involved as clubs is a great way to start.
- Maxwell mentioned that there is a club called indigenous grad society, there is also something called Indigenous Education Council (IEC) which is a creature of the university, both of these could be a useful resources for funding.
- Evan explained that the problem of these clubs is that they don't have terms of reference and their respond time is very long, and it takes very long time to follow their protocol for funding. In replying to Ashley's question who runs IEC? Evans explained that university staff runs it, in addition to 2 community chair in which they suppose to be indigenous students representative, however, no one is selected.
- Evans mentioned that he believes indigenous students should be aiming for something similar to Sheridan collage, as they have IEC mostly made of indigenous community members in which their terms of reference, mandate and mission focus on students.
- Tim by explained that the GSA are aware about their lack of progress on this topic, since he discussed the topic with other Universities' GSA and it is quiet shocking how little the GSA done. Sara highlighted that it's not a fair comparison

as the west universities have a lot of funding compared to the GSA McMaster.

- Council members agreed to postpone the discussion of adding indigenous position to council.
- Sasha suggested that the GSA can do an annual event to get students to be informed what the are the GSA services and what the GSA can do.

#### **4. Executives/FRC Updates**

##### **a. SciGSA**

Rachelle mentioned the following:

- Preparing for the AGM on May 1<sup>st</sup> at the 4 pm at the Phoenix, they need 28 science students to reach quorum.
- In replying to a question about elections, Ashley explained that elections usually runs on 3 days, once the time frames is agreed upon is closed, Simply voting will announce the successful candidates.
- There is a lot of new hires with in Faculty of Science department.
- Alumni event was successful and they had \$200 residual after paying they paid the photographer.
- SciGSA and WISE are collaborating for big conference coming in May.

##### **b. Update on attending CJPAC; report by Maxwell Lightstone:**

- On April 4th, Maxwell attended the Canadian Jewish Political Affairs Committee's (CJPAC) annual ACTION evening.
- CJPAC's mission is to engage Canadians in the political process in a multi partisan way, connecting Canadians with political parties.
- The event, ACTION, furthers that goal by bringing together officials, young professionals, and community leaders in a low stress, fun evening.
- Typically, there are several high ranking politicians and political aids at the event. This year he saw Andrew Scheer from a far, and spoke one on one with Doug Ford, Andrea Horwath, Donna Skelly, Peter Kent, Roman Barber, and several other MPs and MPPs.
- To Doug Ford and Donna Skelly (both MPPs from the Conservative Party), he spoke about the amazing research that is being done at McMaster, and the capacity that such research has to bring world class employers and corporations to Ontario (#openforbusiness).
- To Andrea Horwath (who is both the leader of the opposition and an MPP for Hamilton) he spoke about the importance of the LRT to McMaster students, and the possibility of a spur line along Longwood to connect McMaster with McMaster Innovation Park.
- To several representatives, he mentioned the importance of the work that student associations do and the necessity of our services.
- There is a same event coming to Montreal on May 30<sup>th</sup>.

**c. EGS**

- Currently having constitutional referendum they are 20% of the required quorum(110 votes)
- Upcoming professional developing workshop on May 7th registration closing on 26th April.
- Personal branding workshop on May 1st
- Travel award are finalized
- In the process of finalizing the bylaws
- METRIC in September looking for more engagement from other students.
- Looking to be involved in welcome week with GSA events

**d. Social Science**

- No new business

**e. Vp internal:**

- Due to the political changes in parties there is a hold on the OGS liberation from the government, they aren't given the universities any scholarships, there is no idea when the funds will be released or how much money they will get. However, the university is in process for releasing a certain number of OGS scholarship.
- There is 2 Dean searches going on for the Associate Dean Grad studies for faculty of humanities and health sciences.
- Two tax workshop is coming on McMaster.

**f. Vp external:**

- There were discussion few months ago regarding looking for someone to conduct a workshop for Executives about leadership, there is someone the GSA is currently in contact and it's expecting to give the workshop by mid May.
- Shawn met with the new VP External to give her a some directions regarding her position, they are currently planning an event in May at the Phoenix patio.
- Tim and Shawn attended thinkGrad early in April in Sherbrooke university. They suggested that Ontario universities should stand up for the new government student initiative, however, french universities operates differently as they have a law that allow student unions to exist.
- GSA Manitoba had an issue with their CRO, in which the CRO released public comments against contested students. Their bylaws allows the appeal committee 3 days , however, the process took longer. Tim highlighted that the GSA bylaws is vague on similar situation, he suggested to hold a bylaws committee meeting to discuss this section.

- There was an issue regarding international students at Saskatchewan university; international students whose residency ends in August for instant and apply to renew in May, they are considered in imply status, in which they are legally entitled to work in Canada, however, Saskatchewan university stopped international students TA and funding due to the imply status as they are unaware of the process.
- International students tuition was raised at Dalhousie University by 34% for new students only.

#### **5. Senate / BOG Updates**

- On the federal budget, there is investing in the Canada train benefit, which will balance the provincial changes on OSAP, it will have lower interests rate and no interest for the first 6 month for federal loan.
- They was a note that they will fund strategic science fund which will start in 2022, it will be an addition to funding for research.
- There is an inclusion of paid parental leave for students researcher.
- Expansion to the number of Master scholarships across the country.
- Additional funding for post secondary access for indigenous individuals.
- Investigating new international students loan strategy to support Canadian students studying abroad.
- Expansion to the welcome to great Lauryn program, 20 thousand non step placement and 20 thousand cross discipline placement mostly for undergrad and it will be run through private program partnership.
- Providential budget, there is tuition cuts and student choice initiative by the PC Government.
- The central bounce response survey data was released on March 19 based on this data McMaster seems to be more less in line with institution across the province.
- The province will double investment in to the women safety grand.
- The University will be participating for full day of lobbying into Queens Park onto the 16 of April.
- There is community consultation going on, only one session was held, Anita is requesting from council members to participate and encourage other grad students to participate as well in the incoming session to have grad students representation.

#### **6. OSAP Rally update**

- Quick update; Ashley mentioned that the money approved by council to be spent on this rally was spent out in full and money allocated to community initiative.

#### **7. Discuss adding non voting seat on Council for a CUPE membership**

- Council members agreed to move the discussion to Bylaws committee.

## **8. Review Graduate Students Fees.**

- During AGM students did vote on a new fee schedule, there are certain number of fees that are essential and non essential as per the new government student initiative.
- Since the AGM the university requested to changed the academic fee (awards fee) to be a non essential fees
- In the past the membership fees used to cover awards, however, after the new student initiative the GSA will not collect member fees.
- Maxwell highlighted that most students who will opt out of the academic fees will be because they don't have the finances to pay them, he asked if there will be an exception for them to participate in the award. Ashley explain that there will be subcommittee under the board level to discuss this issue. Maxwell will be interested to join this committee.

## **9. Board Nominations**

- 3 nomination for BOD external members positions
  - David Moore
  - Talena Rambarren
  - Frances Laswoski

**Motion to accept all 3 nomination for the BOD positions moved by Anita seconded by Shawn, all in favor, motion carried**

## **10. New Business**

- After discussion, council members agreed to approve the nomination of Caroline Seiler for FRC health science position.

**Motion to approve Caroline Seiler for FRC Health Science position moved by Maxwell seconded by Rachelle all in favor motion carried.**

- VP Services: tabled to next agenda.

## **11. Adjournment**

**Motion to adjourn at 6:32 pm moved by Shawn, seconded by Rachelle, all in favor, motion carried.**

### **Action Items:**

**Item**

**Action by**

**Due date**



Send IEC information to Maxwell  
Ashley

By  
next meeting