

Graduate Students Association of McMaster University

Council Meeting

March 5th, 2020

GSA Office, East Tower the Refectory

5:30 p.m.

Minutes

Attendees: Shawn Hercules (GSA President), Caroline Seiler (VP External), Mohammed Chowdhury (FRC Engineering), Anthony Quarshie (VP Administration), Zarwa Saquip (FRC Health Science), Ashley Ravenscroft (DoO), Manisha Pahwa (Senator Health Science), Tiffany van Lieshout (FRC Science), Wei Zhao (VP Services),

Guests: Oliver Wearing, Jennifer Williams

Regrets: Anita Acai (Senator Science),

Absent: Mariam Munawar (Senator Business), Kara Tsang (GSA CRO), Rodrigo Narro (BoG), Man You (FRC International), Ish Jain (FRC Science), Sahand Sepehrvand (Senator Engineering), Mia Zhang (VP Internal), Maxwell Lighstone (FRC Engineering),

Call to order 5:34

1. Call for New Business

a. **MOTION:** Approval of Agenda

- Shawn requested the addition of 1 club application to new business.

Motion to approve the agenda with amendments moved by Tiffany, seconded by Caroline, all in favor, motion carried.

b. **MOTION:** Approval of Minutes

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

2. President remark:

a- Next Meeting – tentative date 27th of April 2020 at 5:30 pm.

- Shawn mentioned that the Ski Trip was the coming Saturday with 94 students going to Snow Valley.
- Workshop series 1, starting March 18: series of workshop for soft skills and micro credential, some of these workshops are being funded by CUPE.

- Strategic planning meeting was 2 weeks ago, at which the group discussed what was achieved and a plan moving forward. The GSA now have a strategic plan in place for the next 5 years. Some of the topics discussed were:
 - Advocacy: GSA's partnership with thinkGrad.
 - Operation and resources: considered a major HR policy change with the goal of creating a comprehensive HR policy for the association
- Wei created a GSA handbook for students, outlining student life, where to go to get a bank account etc. Wei is also creating a new website for the organization that will include a wiki page. The website was undergoing testing.
- Caroline was working on social media, constantly posting on the website and using mailer. In addition, she was organizing the Snow Valley trip for Saturday.
- From the VP Internal, there were 2 topics for business modeling workshops and 2 other inspirational topics; the GSA was partnering with Forge to deliver these workshops.
- The board had decided to appoint KPMG as the incoming auditor.
- The university is searching for a new Provost and VP Research.

3.AGM Material

- The AGM was scheduled for March 20th at the Phoenix at 9 am.
- Fee schedule: last year's fees were presented as nonessential and essential; however, SCI has been deemed illegal thus making all fees essential for this year. The fees had been increased by CPI except capital build and student assistant program.
- Health and dental were still TBD; the GSA to confirm numbers by the end of March.

Motion to approve the fee schedule as circulated moved by Tiffany seconded by Manisha, all in favor, motion carried.

- SGS will not be able to contribute as much as last year, so there is a decrease on this part of the income.
- FRC funding budgeted less compared to last year, as FRCs did not apply for funding.
- There is less income anticipated next year, however, the GSA had a positive cash position and able to infuse money into the budget. For instant, travel awards were increased in this regard.
- The GSA to conduct a survey to assess grad student appetite regarding what to use the capital build fee for. However, the GSA had been considering putting up a day care to assist grad students.
- The phoenix was in very good financial position and looking to pay the GSA 40k of short-term loan.
- PhD pitcher to be moved on to phoenix's book moving forward, hence why it is not on the GSA budget.

Motion to approve the budget moved by Tiffany seconded by Caroline all in favor, motion carried.

4. Ratification of VP Administration position

Anthony stepped outside.

- Anthony submitted a letter stating his interest in the VP Admin position and the board approved his appointment.
- Anthony had been on the finance committee for over a year and has GSA council experience. He will do very well in the VP Admin position.

Motion to ratify Anthony Quarshie for the VP Admin position moved by Tiffany, seconded by Mohammad.

5. FRC reports:

SCIGSA

Tiffany sent the following report.

- Planning finishing up for the Alumni event happening Feb 28th at 6:30. This year it was to be hosted at the Phoenix with some last-minute details to be sorted out with Phoenix.
- Opening remarks are set to start at 7 with the Dean. Following this each panelist will have a quick introduction, time to answer personalized questions, and then they will invite everyone to mingle/network. The Alumni office will be participating in this event via financial support and panelist selection. Right now, they have 9 confirmed panelists as well as will be paying a photographer to do professional headshots. Registration for the event will be done through Eventbrite.
- Various departments within Science have updates including a fundraising event in Kinesiology on March 20th, physics and astronomy approving their student government and hosting an undergrad poster session, PNB having their annual grad recruitment, and Math/Stats undergoing the interview process for 2 new positions.

HS

- Zarwa mentioned that the members would like to wait for the next GSA council meeting to hand over the HSGSF Constitution because they were in the process of recruiting other HSGSF members based on the elections protocol in the constitution. This took more time than expected. In summary, GSA will have the HSGSF constitution for the next meeting which she will be able to attend and answer any questions.
- Hosting a financial workshop in March and April.

EGS

- Mohammad mentioned that a board game night was planned for March 23rd
- Technical writing workshop on the week of April 13
- 2 AGMs this academic year, one was in November, the second in June right after the election
- Graduate curriculum policy committee, SEPT was moving to change their one-year program to a 2-year program, but accelerated option will still be in place in case some students choose to finish early.

International

- Anthony mentioned that they had a trivia night on Feb 12.
- Planning of soccer tournament for fall welcome week was to start soon.

6. Senate / BOG Updates:

- The university approved for compensation to be sent to families of the students that passed away in the plane crash.
- Senate still discussing a new software program to scan for plagiarism. There was concern with the server outside Canada.

7. New business

- No new business

8. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 6:32 pm moved by Caroline, seconded by Tiffany, all in favor, motion carried.

Action Items:

Item	Action by	Due date
NA		