

Graduate Students Association of McMaster University

Council Meeting

October 29, 2020

Teleconference - Zoom

4:00 pm.

Minutes

Attendees: Shawn Hercules (GSA President), Caroline Seiler (VP Internal), Sydney Valentino (VP External), Anthony Quarshie (VP Administration), Wei Zhao (VP Services), Dhanyasri Maddiboina (FRC Engineering), Ghada Sasa (BoG), Pritpal Matharu (FRC Science), Shuwen Qian (FRC Health Science), Tiffany van Lieshout (FRC Science), Alyaa Abdelhalim (Senator Business), Sarah Elshat, Rida Mohsen, Zarwa Saqib (FRC Health Science), Anita Acai (Senator Science)

Regrets: Ashley Ravenscroft (DoO)

Absent: Sushil Navin Chander (FRC Engineering), Hebe Hu (FRC Business), Sahand Sepehrvand (Senator Engineering), Mona Nasry (FRC Business),

Call to order 4:05

1. Call for New Business

MOTION: Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda of October meeting moved by Tiffany, seconded by Pip, all in favour, motion carried.

2. MOTION: Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes of the last meeting moved by Tiffany, seconded by Pip, all in favour, motion carried.

3. President & VPs remarks:

- Shawn mentioned that he met with the president, provost and AVP of students. They gave an update of what is happening within McMaster.
- During the meeting with Sean V. they talked about the possibility of opening the A&R facility in January, however this wasn't confirmed.

- Discussed mental health service inside SWC, it was noted that the turnaround time was very late. The GSA, though does have its mental health service, Empower Me.
- The meeting with the university president wasn't much to report, it was just an update on what is happening inside the GSA and the university.
- In the meeting with the provost, he discussed creating a conference for grad students at McMaster. It is going to be a space for grad students to represent their research.
- Two Bylaws meetings took place, and the GSA attorney joined in. There was an amendment made to the new anti-oppression policy.

- Sydney mentioned that the bylaws and SIAC committee had a large input in the policy. They are now still able to act on advocacy that affects international student issues that have an effect on campus life while still working within the Letters Patent.
- They had 11 schools across Canada commit to a Canada-wide trivia night. They are meeting in November, and if it goes well, they can continue to have this cooperation with other universities.
- She doesn't have tons of options for social events; however, she is meeting with the committee soon and will coordinate an online scavenger hunt.

- Caroline mentioned that she finished the workshop proposal to send to CUPE.

- Another workshop is coming regarding the writing center.

- Data Science workshop was very well attended with over 200 attendees.

- She will attend the next CUPE GMM to add the motion for the 5k for the workshops

- Anthony mentioned that we met with HSR recently, the HSR will refund the months HSR wasn't charging a fee. Continuing students will get credits on their Mosaic accounts; however, graduated students will receive cheques in the mail.

- Anthony drafted a letter for HSR asking to extend the current fee model for the winter term and request an opt out for international students and students out of the province.
- He created an excel sheet for easier tracking of club expenses.
- The next finance meeting will discuss investment policy.

- Wei mentioned that we had a meeting with CUPE regarding TA students. TA students are automatically opted out of the GSA dental plan.
- Discussing adding visiting students to the GSA plan at the GHSSRC
- Arranging for a club committee meeting to discuss any issues.
- Working on the GSA calendar on the website, any club and faculty association will have access to the calendar on the GSA website to add events.

4. Approval of WomEng Circle club

- WomEng circulated the needed documents. Council members approved the application

Motion to approve WomEng club as a GSA club moved by Wei seconded by Anthony all in favour motion carried

5. MIRA Club

- The budget spoke to having events; however, they didn't highlight who will fund those events
- Tabled to next council

6. Approval to GPA club

- Their budget is in a negative position. This needs to be rectified.
- Tabled to next council

7. FRC Update:

Social Science

Sarah forward the following report:

August-September updates:

1. [HASTalks](#) (Department of Health, Aging & Society) launched its 2020-2021 virtual seminar series for learning, inspiration, and provoking conversations (Nov. 18, 2020, Jan. 20th, 2021, Feb. 24, 2021, March 17, 2021).
2. The release of the [Faculty of Social Sciences 2019 Employment Equity Census](#) results (MUFA members) From 2017-2019, slight increase in percentage points among women, people with disabilities and racialized persons, yet decrease among Indigenous people. More to be done! How about data on graduate students, acceptance, hiring...? Need for similar work and report?
3. Confirmation of the 2020-2021 General Faculty Committee meetings to discuss the general businesses of the Faculty of Social Sciences (Nov. 17, 2020 & May 25, 2021).
4. McMaster Partnered with Mohawk College, Lambton College and Wilfrid Laurier University to create [diploma-to-degree program for Indigenous Studies students](#).

October updates:

1. The McMaster Health Policy PhD Program announced the annual graduate student conference, [New Frontiers in Health Policy](#) (virtual). The theme for 2020 "Health Policy in a Time of Transformation." Registration for all is free (deadline is Nov. 22nd, 2020).

2. [The 2020 Labelle Lecture](#) on by Dr. Tiffany Green, economist and population health scientist, on “racial/ethnic and nativity disparities in reproductive health” was announced (Nov. 11, 2020- 3-5 pm).
3. New staff assigned:
 - Department of Sociology (Aditi Sharma, undergraduate administrative assistant)
 - Department of Economics (Anita Blaney, graduate administrative assistant)
 - Office of the Dean (Wendy Green, accounting assistant)

Engineering

Dany mentioned:

- Recently had METRIC conference, pretty good turn out, engineering students from different universities were invited. Hop-in was used to organize the conference and worked well.
- At the end of November, they are having a data science workshop.

SciGSA

- Virtual scavenger hunt and pumpkin carving contest.
- Held an anti-oppression training workshop
- Communication collaboration with SGS
- Meet with the Dean of Science and updated the DDi plan and discussed the recent event that just occurred on TAship with Dr. Coleman.
- Faculty of Science will be moving forward with a career prep initiative that’s still in the planning stages.

Health Science:

- Zarwa mentioned that there is a mentorship program that has been running for the past month and a half. There were 21 mentors and are from the different programs of Health Science. They had about 30 mentees, and the number is still growing.
- In contact with the dean of health science to have training modules for the mentors
- Mental health workshop in November.
- The graduate program opens house events online in November.

8. Senate / BOG Updates:

- Anita mentioned there is no major update. All conversation is about COVID19.
- Ghada mentioned that Nathan Todd, the CUPE president, has discussed the CUPE new policy that denied benefits to TA out of Ontario.



9. New business:

No new business

10. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 4:59 pm moved by Caroline, seconded by Wei, all in favour, motion carried.

Action Items:

| Item | Action by | Due date |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|
| Include SGM material on next council | Mona | 1 week prior to next Council |