Graduate Students Association of McMaster University

***Council Meeting***

May 27, 2021

Teleconference - Zoom

1:00 pm.

**Minutes**

**Attendees- voting members:** Caroline Seiler (GSA President), Spencer Naylor (VP Administration), Wei Zhao (VP Services), Dhanyasri Maddiboina (FRC Engineering), Sarah Elshaht (VP External), Zarwa Saqib (FRC Health Science), Ghada Sasa (FRC Social Science), Ying Dong (GSA CRO), Newton Ming (FRC Business), Ce Ji (FRC business), Ana Portillo (FRC Health Science), Seraphina Vasilodimitrakis (FRC Humanities), Sudeshna Dhar (FRC International),

**Attendees- non-voting members:** Nicole Areias (Senator Humanities-non voting), Alyaa Abdelhalim (Senator Business-non voting), Mona Mohamed (Executive Secretary-non voting)

**Guest non-voting:** Martha Cassidy-Neumiller, Daniella Silva, Zijun Ding, Tamara Fuciarelli, Ulas Tastekin, Alex Leverman(Guest from the Jewish community)

**Regrets:** Ashley Ravenscroft (DoO- non voting), Shuwen Qian (VP Internal), Michelle Ragany (FRC Engineering)

**Absent:** Sahand Sepehrvand (Senator Engineering- non voting), Shemar Williams (FRC International), Pritpal Matharu (FRC Science)

**Quorum: 30% of seats (20) – met**

**Call to order 1:06**

1. **Introducing new council members**
2. **Call for New Business**

**MOTION: Approval of Agenda**

Caroline requested adding the following to the new business

* **The Palestine statement**
* **FRC Social Science application**

**Motion to approve the amended agenda for May meeting moved by Spencer, seconded by Ghada, all in favour, motion carried**.

1. **MOTION**: Approval of Minutes

**Motion to approve the minutes of May meeting moved by Ghada, seconded by Spencer, all in favour, motion carried**.

**Motion to give Alex Levermen speaking and observing rights moved by Anna seconded by Dhany all in favour motion carried.**

1. **President & VPs remarks:**
   * McMaster provided a statement about a hybrid / in-person return to campus in September; this will depend on the provincial guidelines and the vaccine. There is a discussion of having a vaccine clinic on the campus for people interested in getting their vaccines. As well the vaccine is covered by OHIP and UHIP.
   * McMaster residence is not available anymore for students to quarantine. Instead, it will be reserved for incoming first-year undergrad students starting in September.
   * The university will give 5 hours of paid training for TAs; it will be on oppression, rights and responsibilities. The training will be posted on the avenue to learn.
   * The university is recruiting international student navigators to assist students starting in September.
   * The GSA is considering eliminating the Capital build fee; more information will be discussed at the next meeting.

VP External:

* The orientation session for the peer support program was very well attended.
* A place to fall in love contest, where students post photos over a monthly prize was approved
* Hold a SIAC yesterday to discuss the statement on Palestine that is presented to the council.
* Sarah worked on transitioning the social media platform from Hootsuite to Buffer.
* Sarah worked with Sydney (previous vp External) on drafting the communication policy to ensure a framework of how people submit their communication in the future. It is a basic guideline on formatting, the number of words, and the size of a poster. The policy was posted on teams and circulated to members for review.
* Wei & Spencer suggested adjusting language to allow for the inclusion of other social media platforms like Instagram & LinkedIn.

**Motion to approve the communication policy drafted by Sarah & Sydney pending the update of adding additional social media moved by Wei seconded by Ghada, all in favour, motion carries.**

Vp Internal:

* The university has released the oversight report for the return for fall.
* The outdoor learning spaces for meeting collaboration will be in the works, and McMaster considering making outdoor learning spaces
* The university is planning to release the course information in June for students starting in the fall.
* Shuwen is working on some Welcome Week preparations; if any FRC is interested in joining, can email her directly.
* PC event booking is still available at the library.

VP Administration

* The finance committee met a few weeks ago. The investments policy passed at the finance meeting, and now it is moved for discussion and approval at the board
* GSA GICs almost mature, and at the next finance meeting will discuss reinvesting in GIC again or a high saving account.
* Spencer will compile the COVID 19 funds letters the GSA received from different faculties. Then, he will put together a proposal to have a better package.
* The Phoenix is opening up again next month.

Vp Services

* Next week is the last executive member introduction series; he suggested introducing FRCs in the mailer.
* GSA website is updated and maintained
* Wei is working with studentcare regarding opting out of international students who did come to Canada.
* Wei is working with studentcare to enroll visiting students in the GSA health insurance plan. As a result, students will be charged a $100 admin fee and the GSA membership fee, in addition to the plan fee.

**Motion to approve the visiting students' plan circulated, moved by Seraphina seconded by Spencer, all in favour motion carried.**

1. **FRC Update:**

Social Science

Sarah mentioned that:

* Collaborative event with CUPE that was open for all students had over 300 participants

Engineering

Dhany mentioned:

* New EGS logo and new website
* Annual election within EGS at the end of this week
* EGS is planning for big events that will take place in August, it is a hackathon idea for engineering graduate students, and they are opening up across Canada.
* They received faculty support and a lot of partnerships with the forge.
* They had a couple of professional development workshops

SciGSA

* No new business

Health Science:

Ana Mentioned:

* The HS program is running a mentorship program. Up till now, 30 people signed up.
* They are currently recruiting members to help with the mentorship program.
* May event went well. It was about giving presentations. It was made up of a panel of different graduate students and faculty that like to speak on times communications.
* The faculty of Science plenary event was a success and had much attendance.
* The HS FRCs are planning a career panel event with networking that collaborates with various associations like the medical science program.
* Running a medical science student association event for 4 weeks. It will host a different session of Yoga and Simba.

IGSA

* No new business
* exec 5
* frc 14
* bog 1

1. **Senate / BOG Updates:**

* No new business

1. **New business:**

* FRC Social Science application – Dina Hensen

1. **Adjournment**

**Motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:23 pm, moved by Wei, seconded by Anthony, all in favour, motion carried.**

**Action Items:**

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| **Item** | **Action by** | **Due date** |
| Mona will send covid 19 funding letters to Spencer | Mona | DONE |