

MINUTES

Graduate Students' Association Council

Thursday, October 25, 2012

12:00 - 2:00 PM

Sankey Chamber

Present:

Kiel Ormerod (President), Phuc Dang (VP Student Affairs), Brandon Garib (VP Equity and External Affairs), Riaz Akseer (VP Finance), Munazza Tahir (VP Communications), Courtney Phillips (Senate Rep), Jess Vickruck (Biological Sciences), Leslie Nash (Biotechnology), Ghazanfar Qureshi (Business Administration), Lee Belding (Chemistry), Liz Smith (Critical Sociology), Kaleb Wagner (Earth Sciences), Christyne Taschuk (Education), Lisa Arblaster (Geography), Aaron Rodenburg (History), Patrick Wood (Management), Jory Korobanik (Physics), Adrian Burlacu (ISP), Ashley Hobden (Child & Youth Studies), Tessa Little (Classics), Sarah Robinson (Classics), Julia Polyck-O'Neill (Comparative Lit & Arts Rep), Katie Rankin (Popular Culture)

Regrets:

Tomasz Wierzba (Board of Trustees Rep), Taylor Dawson (Senate Rep), Malvina Skorska (Psychology), Indermohan Saini (Business Economics)

Absent:

Melissa Roque (Political Science), Lauren Torok (Applied Health Sciences), Renata Karapanceva (Social Justice & Equity Studies), Zipparah Stephenson (Social Justice & Equity Studies), Stephen Asobiela (Computer Science), Natasha Maunder (Accounting), Shazia Bandali (Accounting)

No representatives elected:

Applied Disability Studies, Applied Linguistics, English, Interdisciplinary Humanities, Mathematics & Statistics, Philosophy

1. Meeting called to order 12:09 PM, Kiel Ormerod presiding
2. Motion to adopt agenda: Ghazanfar/Julia
3. Motion to accept last meeting's minutes: Courtney/Phuc
4. Kiel: First workshop on Academic Integrity by Troy Brooks was scheduled for yesterday. One person registered but nobody showed up at the workshop. Please let your programs/departments know about the workshop and promote this series of workshops; encourage people to attend and learn about academic integrity.
5. Ratification of omnibus agreement - One of the best points about the agreement is that we don't have to get yearly audits. The agreement has taken a long time to come to completion but it is finally done, which is a great success for the GSA.

6. Ombudsperson - Summary of what an ombudsperson does, i.e., represents graduate students in very serious situations. The Student Appeals Board can be a grueling experience and the ombudsperson can provide us with support and advice in this regard.
 - a. Carol Moss, Brandon Garib & Kiel Ormerod had a meeting to discuss our current service
 - b. Old contract was destroyed as a result of the above meeting and there was an agreement to rewrite the contract and reduce the cost of the service to approximately \$6,000. This is a tremendous success for the GSA. The ombudsperson provides a vital service, but the previous contract was very restrictive and binding for several years.
7. OCGS update - This is a council of deans from across Ontario's post-secondary institutions and this is the first time they allowed one student representative. Kiel was able to attend this meeting and it was quite informative.
8. Rewriting the Faculty of Graduate Studies handbook in collaboration with FGS. Some help is needed in this regard from the council members. The handbook needs to clarify expectations for grad students, vacations, supervisor-student relations, etc.
 - i. Volunteer for this task: Leslie (Biotechnology)
9. Discussion on space for grad students - What exactly do we need space for? (real, tangible goals) We can target the Cairns Building for this purpose as it has new space to offer.
 - a. Julia: One of the reasons we need more space is for TA responsibilities. There is a lack of quiet study space for TA work and the current space on the 6th floor of the library is always overloaded.
10. First grad student pub night at Alphonse's Trough. First event of its kind that is not affiliated with BUSU. On the first night, all program representatives get one free drink ticket.
 - a. Discussion on what night would be most suitable to get grad students out to attend pub night
 - i. Julia: Have it on a variety of different nights, so it opens up more availability for people
 - ii. Jessica: Themed nights may not be a good idea but having an open floor would be good
 - iii. Aaron: keep it open and allow more opportunity to mingle
 - iv. Renata: Concern about timing of pub night
 - v. Ghazanfar: Concern about classes being scheduled at the same time as pub night
 - vi. Ashley: Going out of Brock because grad students are always on campus and it would provide an opportunity for students to get away from campus for a while
 1. We currently don't have insurance for off-campus events
11. VP Student Affairs Report
 - a. Coffee Connection went well at the Pond Inlet and there's another one in November (cancelled)
 - b. Hamilton Luncheon was generally okay, but there were some logistics issues. We need to keep this in mind for the Oakville campus social
 - c. Thanksgiving food drive also went well and we will do another one in December for Christmas

- d. The Pumpkin Carving event is coming up and we have 12 teams signed up. The YouTube video was created by Tomasz in efforts of trying out ideas for promotion and publicity.
 - e. Reminder for Academic Integrity Workshops
12. VP Finance Report: Budget Review
- a. Motion to accept budget: Courtney/Patrick
13. VP External Report:
- a. ISIC cards: CFS will be coming in again on November 6
 - b. OGS update: No longer adjudicated through the ministry. Each educational institution administers it individually and November 2 is the new deadline. Money will be included with the funding you're already receiving. For new programs, you will have to apply for OGS at every single school applied to. Also, OGS is now renewable.
 - i. Discussion on the OGS application process and complications of the new system
 - c. CFS Annual General Meeting in December - Brandon will attend the meeting but not the Grad Caucus
 - d. Equity and advocacy committee volunteer: Tessa Little (Classics)
14. Courtney's committees: We need a representative for January for three committees - Senate, Information Technology & Infrastructure, and Academic Review Committee. Positions will be vacant soon.
15. Kiel: Suggestion for a new executive position of VP International Affairs (temporary) - 33% of graduate students are international (25% being ISP). There are several issues related to international student funding, etc, that we are not even aware of and these students need representation.
- a. Motion to create new VP position for International Affairs: Moved by Patrick/Jessica; unanimous vote
16. More funding available this year for bursaries and awards - Recap of new bursaries brought in last year. We need to write up guidelines or criteria for receiving new awards. The GSA council will eventually vote on who gets the bursaries & advocacy awards
- a. Jessica: It may be better to leave it more open/broad
 - b. Ashley: writing something on behalf of someone might be better
 - c. Julia: More beneficial to not categorize students. There are also ethical considerations for someone else submitting applications on a student's behalf (privacy & confidentiality).
17. Investing profits from this year into a high-interest GIC might be a good idea. This will allow for more bursaries in the future. Any ideas from council members for investments of this money would be helpful.
- a. Riaz: All the extra money will eventually go back to students. The GSA is a non-profit organization, so we are not seeking a profit but rather trying to make more funds available for grad students
 - b. Julia: More beneficial to give money back directly to students rather than invest in something for the distant future - Suggestion to split the current profit half and half (give half back to students and invest the other half)
 - c. Ghazanfar: Suggestion to work with VP finance to invest GSA money soundly
 - d. Aaron: Speak to people in the Business Department about investment

18. Discussion on library space for graduate students
 - a. Julia: It should not be a space for sleeping. Students should not leave their belongings at a work station if they're not present
 - b. Renata: Remove other people's belongings if they are left there for a long time
 - c. Kiel will speak to the head librarian to put up a sign explaining the policy
 - d. Courtney: Try to avoid confrontation between students
 - e. Aaron: Since there is a shortage of carousels, we shouldn't go past a 20-minute time limit to leave the workspace unattended.
 - f. Riaz: Don't wake up napping students because it is a mental rest for them
 - g. Ashley: Sharing space between departments
 - h. Motion to table this discussion for next meeting: Munazza/Riaz
19. Meeting adjourned 1:56 PM

Submitted November 08, 2012

Munazza Tahir