A) OPEN SESSION
1) Presidents Remarks
2) Notice of Future Meetings
3) Call for New Business
4) Approval of Agenda
5) Approval of Minutes May 2017
6) Ratify New Executives
   - VP Internal
   - VP Administration
7) Ratify New GSA Clubs
8) Ontario Council on Graduate Studies – Planning Ontario Graduate Student Symposium
9) Committees and Engagement
   - Councillor Engagement Expectations
   - Strategic Plan Subcommittee
10) Councillor Communications
11) New Business
12) Adjournment
pGraduate Students Association of McMaster University

Council Meeting

June 29th 2017
GSA Office, East Tower Refectory
5:00 p.m.

Minutes

Attendees: Tim Van Boxtel (GSA President), Shawn Hercules (VP External), Maryam Alizadeh (FRC International Representative), Derek South (FRC Science), Ashley Ravenscroft (DoO), Nitka Sanger (FRC Health Science), Sara Oikawa (FRC Science), Anita Acai (Senator Science)

Regrets: Kara Tsang (GSA CRO), Megan Murphy (VP Administration), Avijit Mallick (VP Internal), Allison Leanage (FRC Social Science), Robert Alex Ballagh (VP Services), Alexander Qian (FRC Health Science), Jodie Lobana (Incoming VP Administration)

Observer: Roqibul Hasan (Incoming VP Internal)

Absent: Mohamed Zaher (FRC Engineering), Hanie Yousefi (FRC Engineering), Rodrigo Narro (BoG), Tsz Wing Cheng (FRC International), Curran Egan (FRC Humanities), Samira Farivar (FRC Business)

Call to Order 5:06

1. Presidents Remarks
Tim sent the following report:

Events

The GSA hosted a student BBQ at the Phoenix. It quickly sold out and was well attended with positive feedback. Further BBQ’s are being planned this summer with the hope of accommodating even more students. Planning activities are underway for events in July, a brewery tour at the local Fairweather Brewing and a larger outing to Canada’s Wonderland.

Communication

Communication strategies are still being worked on, specifically the mailing campaigns and more targeted information delivery. There have been some hang ups with the mailing service we are exploring, causing some delays. He expects this to be sorted, alongside more comprehensive communication fronts (web, email, etc) by next month.
DBAC Expansion and Student Activity Building

Talks are currently underway with university student services regarding the DBAC expansion and Student Activity Building. Strong efforts are being made to ensure that fees collected will benefit graduate students and not just the university portfolio. Though late to the table, the GSA is now being invited to all planning sessions regarding the project alongside MSU and university representatives. This will ensure that the collective needs of graduate students will be represented in the early stages of this project and allow us to come to a balance of associated fees for the graduate student body for project funding. Expect updates throughout the summer on this item.

- Sara asked if grad students will still have access to DBAC? Tim answered that grad students will still access to the basics of DBAC. He added that they didn’t receive firm number yet from the university. The current fee is $25 goes to DBAC capital bill, which should be paid off by 2020, despite that, the university wants this fee to continue and tap on more money to be applied to the new extension building.

HSR Presto Rollout

It has come to our attention that the rollout of the HSR Presto card system is likely going to come with some challenges that the GSA will need to manage. The issue results in the fact that students will receive cards throughout the final weeks of August, though will incur penalties if they use the card before September 1st. If these cards are used before September 1st, they will be charged regular price for the HSR bus service, resulting in negative balance which will render the card unusable until its is paid off as well as incurring fees associated with the negative balance. This is highly unfortunate and was not made clear to us until this month. The only action we have available to us is to communicate as loud as possible to students to not use the cards until September 1st. Councillors will be expected to help communicate this downstream throughout the summer and various communication strategies are will be explored.

- Sara suggested to distribute the cards on Sep 1st to avoid students’ confusion. Ashley explained that the bookstore will then have a problem of 25 thousand students wants to get their cards at the same day.

- Sara mentioned that grad students don’t have HSR stickers to put it on their student cards. Ashley explained that the current stickers are done through the GSA office, in saying at the beginning of every academic year the GSA contact grad students’ secretaries and send them GSA stickers to be distributed to all grad students. She added that the rational of having these stickers are:
  - Students to be recognized at the Phoenix to get the 25% discount.
  - If students travel world wide they can get their student discount.

- Tim asked if grad students can use the Presto card to use the GO bus? Ashley mentioned that they can but you need to have a balance on it.
Welcome Week Planning

The planning of welcome week events is in full swing. Breaking from tradition, the orientation breakfast sessions are going to be held at the Phoenix. This will allow us to showcase our student owned establishment and all its positive qualities at the very start of the graduate student experience while providing additional revenue. Furthermore, the traditional GSA BBQ is being planned for the Phoenix as well. Some group activities such as a guided hike, campus scavenger hunt, etc are in the works.

New Executives

We expect to have two new executives in the GSA starting July 1st, provided all are nominated and ratified at this coming Board and Council meetings. There is clear passion and commitment from the new executives and he looks forward to introducing the new initiatives they intend to spearhead at coming meetings.

New Graduate Club

The application for a new graduate student club has been received and approved, the Association of Iranian Muslims (AIM). We look forward to working with them and providing them with the services they require.

Phoenix

The Phoenix has been running smoothly this month, even with a new General Manager. Some key issues surrounding lunch wait times have been more or less resolved and the past weeks have seen record revenue earned during the lunch sessions. Several new events such as Thursday tastings (beer, wine, whiskey, etc) are being planned and will launch in the coming month. There are still challenges regarding inventory and labour costs, but all metrics are moving in the proper direction and it is expected to be resolved by the end of the summer.

Engagement

The GSA attended two student association conferences this month, AMICCUS-C and the Ontario Graduate Students Association (OGSA). These are often very useful for coordinating shared information, building networking contacts, and keeping a pulse on the current climate of comparable organizations. Furthermore, convocation dinner was attended by 2 members of the executive. While engagement must be planned strategically, the value adds of attending such events is usually very high and further engagement is being encouraged.

- Ashley added that OGSA had some internal disorganization, last Council decided not to pay membership fees unless they see value of what OGSA can do. The GSA currently observing their results over the next year.
2. **Notice of Future Meetings**

- Council meetings will be on monthly basis, usually the last Thursday of the month at 5 pm.
- Board meetings will be on quarterly basis and the focus will be more on Committees.

3. **Call for New Business**

- CRO standing resolution
- International committee IGSA

4. **Approval of Agenda**

Motion to accept the agenda of June 29th first by Shawn seconded by Derek, all in favour motion carried.

5. **Approval of Minutes May 2017**

Motion to approve the minutes of May 2017 first by Shawn, seconded by Derek, 1 abstention, 7 in favour motion carried.

6. **Ratify New Executives in camera**

Motion to approve the appointment of Roqibul Hasan and Jodie Lobana for the position of VP Internal and VP Administration respectively, first by Nitika, seconded by Sara, all in favour motion carried.

7. **Ratify New GSA Clubs**

- Documents regarding AIM club was circulated.

Motion to ratify AIM new grad student club first by Derek, seconded by Anita

- Sara mentioned that the club budget has deficit, she asked if the Council can ratify this club with a negative balance (~$820) in the budget. Ashley mentioned that the GSA never approve a deficit in the budget, so this should be communicated to them.
- Tim mentioned that they are probably asking for some financial contribution in the amount of $820. Ashley explained that the procedure is to give each clubs $100 seed money (accounted for it in the budget) and they can apply for event funding up to $500. She added the Council can ratify the club with amendment that the budget should be in positive balance.
- Sara asked if it is normal to have undergrad students to join graduate club? Ashley explained that inclusions is part of the GSA and MSU policy. There are different undergraduate clubs, and graduate students can’t be part of the clubs executive.
- Maryam recommended that they should explain that the club is inclusive to all grad students and not to be exclusive to just Iranian Muslims of Shia faith.
• The Council agreed to ratify the Association of Iranian Muslims with the following conditions:
  o The budget mustn’t be of a negative balance.
  o The membership must be inclusive to all grad students who wish to join or fill an executive position within the club, and not to be narrowed to just Iranian Muslims of the Shia faith.

Motion to ratify AIM clubs with the amendment of the above mentioned first by Derek, seconded by Anita, all in favour motion carried.

8. **Ontario Council on Graduate Studies – Planning Ontario Graduate Student Symposium**

• Tim mentioned that OCGS sent a memo to the GSA requesting the support of the GSA, as they are hosting symposium event for the 3-minute thesis competitors (3MT) not participating in the provincial finals as well as grad students who wish to share their work with colleagues across the sector. They are requesting to have grad students advise and ideas, and if they would like to be involved in planning/or co-sponsoring the event.

Motion for McMaster GSA involvement for OCGS student symposium first by Shawn seconded by Maryam all in favour motion carried.

9. **Committees and Engagement**

  • **Councillor Engagement Expectations**

    • Tim mentioned that councillors are expected to be engaged with the GSA committees, and sit on at least 1 GSA committee. There is also a subcommittee on the Board level FRCs are recommended to sit on.

  • **Strategic Plan Subcommittee**

    • Tim mentioned that the Board construct a Strategic Plan Subcommittee to put in place the GSA strategic plan for the next 5 years, environmental scan will be included. He added that a survey will be send to all grad students to share their opinion with the GSA.
    • The subcommittee is missing 3 FRCs. If any FRC is interested can email Mona.

10. **Councillor Communications**

    • Tim mentioned that the Council minutes are open sessions and are posted on the GSA website, however, students don’t access them. He asked the councillors for ideas to help engaging grad students within the GSA.
    • He added SAM and EGS have mechanism in place in reaching to grad students, and FRCs are sitting on SAM and EGS do share information. However, there are no communication between the other sub associations.
    • Tim mentioned that the weekly email content need to be engaging and attract grad students’ attention, he suggested putting a raffle at the end of each email.
Shawn mentioned science students usually ignore general email from SAM, however, if the sender is a student they will read it. So usually if there is an event with in SAM, the president request from a student to send the email, as a non official sort of communication.

Tim mentioned that the mental health referendum was broadcast on Facebook and there were over 300 student watching, he suggested to use the same idea to communicate to students.

11. New Business

1. Recruiting new members
   - Maryam mentioned that they got an international committee, and they sent an email to other FRCs to let them invite their faculties’ international grad students to join.

2. IGSA Logo Competition
   - Maryam mentioned that they need to have a logo for the international committee. The competition will last for three weeks. The start date and deadline is TBD, properly before the end of July.
   - For the prize, they all agreed to have a $50 (1st) and a $20 (runner-up) phoenix gift cards.
   - Ashley explained that each FRC has $600 funding accounted for in the budget to use towards social events, however, they can use the money from this budget line for the prizes.

12. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:56 p.m.; first by Shawn, seconded by Derek, all in favour, motion carried.

Action Item:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Action by</th>
<th>Due date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Following up for FRCs to join strategic plan committee</td>
<td>Mona</td>
<td>By next Council (July 27)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inform Club administrator the result of the Club ratification</td>
<td>Alex</td>
<td>By next Council (July 27)</td>
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Shawn Hercules,  
VP External

Date  
Date  
Date