Graduate Students Association of McMaster University

Council Meeting

January 25th 2017
GSA Office, East Tower Refectory
6:00 p.m.

Minutes

Attendees: Tim van Boxtel (GSA President), Shawn Hercules (VP External), Sam Peter (FRC Engineering), Ashley Ravenscroft (DoO), Simon Mcnamee (FRC Engineering), Sara Oikawa (FRC Science), Robert Alex Ballagh (VP Services), Aaron Roberts (Senator Humanities)

Regrets: Taylor Mackenzie (Senator Social Science), Allison Leanage (FRC Social Science), Nitika Sanger (FRC Health Science), Tsz Wing Cheng (FRC International), Curran Egan (FRC Humanities), Kara Tsang (GSA CRO), Anita Acai (Senator Science), Jodie Lobana (VP Administration)

Absent: Rodrigo Narro (BoG), Sid Nath (Senator Health Science), Mariam Munawar (Senator Business), Alexander Qian (FRC Health Science), Derek Stouth (FRC Science), Nick Yelle (FRC Health Science)

Call to Order 6:04

1. Presidents Remarks
   • Frost week, Welcome Week for Jan didn’t go well, few people came, the event wasn’t successful, it wasn’t planned well, we didn’t communicate effectively. Members are requested to send their idea on how to make it better.
   • VP Internal stepped down, the position will be posted on the website, any Council members interested in the role for next year are welcome to apply, the constitution of the role is online, however, there will be some amendment to the role next year.

2. Notice of Future Meetings
   ▪ February 22, at 6pm

3. 3) Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda of January 25th, moved by Sam, seconded by Alex, all in favour motion carried.

4. 4) Approval of Minutes

Motion to accept the minutes from November 23rd Council moved by Sara, seconded by Alex, all in favour, motion carried.
5. **VP Updates**

- Shawn mentioned that Niagara trip will be tomorrow, 24 tickets sold out of 34. He is planning a ski trip next month the date will announce depending on the weather condition.
- Alex mentioned that currently the GSA have 10 clubs, ratification of another one will be discussed in the next coming points. He gave a presentation regarding the health and dental benefits to international grad students.
- Studentcare contract will be renewed, the contract is very standard like last contract, no major changes. Studentcare are asking for a small fee increase for themselves, they haven’t increased their fees for 10 years now. They are requesting a longer contract like 5 years instead of 3, this point still under discussion. Ashley added that Studentcare advocate for the GSA e.g. they refunded some of the money a student requested it for his medical device, and they also pay the Del Pereira bursary.

6. **FRC Updates**

**SAM**

- Trivia night for SAM tonight. On Feb 23 SAM having grad students meeting with alumni who gone into industry, they will charge $10 to cover the cost of renting university hall, they are getting money from faculty of science as well. They are trying to make it different than last year, there are 7 professors, dean of science, and past supervisors attending. They wish they can have more faculty representation but it is difficult because it is a Friday night.
- Faculty of science organizing science open house coming March 15.

**EGS,**

*General topics for this year:*

- Unifying degree requirements between departments
  - Course requirements and number of comprehensive exams
    - Some department have 2 comprehensive exams; however, the majority have 1.
- Are engineering graduate students being paid enough? Sam compared the amount grad students paid in University of Waterloo and Windsor, they are pretty much the same as McMaster, as there is a base salary for all grad students.
- How can the graduate student / supervisor relationship be improved?
  - EGS exposure
- Expansion of EGS sub-committees – There is a subcommittee that will meet with facility services to look into a green bin service and see if there is a demand for it. Ashley added that there is no green house at the Phoenix, if Sam is interested to lead, then they can use the Phoenix garden.

**Travel awards**

- 22 applications, 6 awards, $5,500 awarded
o Rubric is being polished for next round of applications

Budget for next year has been doubled

o Increased number of department representative’s increases potential for events and workshops

- In replying to Sam’s question regarding Pulse service, Tim explained that the GSA is still at the same situation, the university still does a lot without consulting the GSA, Ashley added that Sean mentioned that there has been miscommunication, they send the fee schedule every year, she will check what the fees this year, and then council can try to get on top of it.

- Sara suggested not to enrol on A&R, and grad students can go off campus, as it’s much cheaper, Ashley explained that the biggest issue in this case that the GSA will pull out the capital, this will be done by 2019. Sara added that the issue is grad students used to pay way less, there is mass jump in prices, even if there is cap on prices it is still high.

- Ashley mentioned that the more concern for the university is how they will have mechanism to limit the entrance of students of certain students and not other students.

- The Council agreed to start looking for facilities off campus.

7. Senate Updates

- Aaron mentioned that the graduate enrollment figures were presented to Senate: as of November 1, 2017, McMaster had enrolled 4,561. Compared to last year at this time, these numbers represented growth of about 2% in graduate enrolment.

- Dr. Dean, University President, Chancellor and Senate Chair, advised that significant additional federal research funding will be very likely forthcoming, but details regarding the precise amount and process for applying for said funds is, as of yet, unclear.

8. Ratification of Student Club

- McMaster Water Network Student Chapter

- Ashley explained that The McMaster Water Network Student Chapter (MWNSC) is the student arm of the faculty group McMaster Water Network (MWN). They encompass over 121 undergraduate and graduate students at McMaster University, it is led by 16 students from all faculties whose research focuses on water or who are interested in water-related issues. The MWNSC provides a platform for students to interact, share ideas, and network with professionals through organized events and projects. Their goal is to facilitate the growth of students by providing resources and opportunities for water leadership and education.

Motion to ratify McMaster Water Network Student Chapter moved by Sam, seconded by Sara, 1 abstention, 6 in favour motion carried.
9. 9) Discussion

• Role of Council in Future Executive
  • The discussion point; how to have a better process to select executives, can they be appointed internally? Can executive be chosen depending on what work need to be done within their term?
  • Tim asked if council members are comfortable to elect from inside the council? In replying to this question Sam suggested that students elect the president first, then application can be submitted for the rest of the positions. He recommended that students applying for executive position send resumes, then council decide and ratify.
  • Shawn recommended that the president can have a meeting with the executives and then have a specific portfolio for each one, and they still are elected by council. Tim added that council should choose the roles for the executives, since executives will be elected by council members.
  • Tim mentioned these changes will be presented to board first to motion, then AGM, since this is a long process it might takes place on 2019-2020 election. Ashley recommended to take this discussion to the bylaws committee as it relates to it.
  • Council members agreed to take this point to the bylaws committee for discussion.

10. New Business

• The AGM is March 21\textsuperscript{st}, 5:30 pm is recommended, quorum is 40 at the AGM.
• Ashley suggested to open the FRC funds to all FRC since there still some fund in the budget, she will discuss the number with Tim, and get back to the Council.

11. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 6:51 moved by Sam, second by Shawn all in favor motion carried.

Action Item:

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<tr>
<th>Action by</th>
<th>Due date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ashley</td>
<td>By next meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Look for GYM facilities off campus</td>
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Shawn Hercules,            Date                   Recorder          Date
VP External

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