

**GSA COUNCIL – MINUTES**  
**Carleton University Graduate Students' Association, Ottawa, Ontario**  
**Robertson Hall, Senate Chamber - 6:00 pm – Monday, November 13, 2017**

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**CALL TO ORDER – 6:00pm, Monday, November 13, 2017**

*The GSA recognizes and acknowledges that the lands on which we live, work, and study belong to the Algonquin nation.*

*The Algonquin nation, whose territories comprise the entire Kichi Sibi (Ottawa River) watershed and include the city of Ottawa, never ceded or surrendered its territories to Canada. The Canadian state laid claim to these territories through violent systems of colonization that resulted and continue to result in the dispossession, marginalization, and impoverishment of Algonquin people and the overexploitation of land and waters within their territory.*

*The GSA commits to fully supporting Algonquin struggles and Algonquin assertions of self-determination and nationhood. We are not innocent in the ongoing colonization of these lands and we resolve to challenge the presence of colonialism in our words, actions, and communities. We extend our ongoing solidarity to the Algonquin nation with our words, actions, time, skills, and resources.*

**Attendance**

- Rhyss Stee (Sociology)
- Abigail Curlew (Sociology)
- Kristen Bussiere (English)
- Hemant Gupta (Computer Science)
- Lalean Sinclair (Social Work)
- Helyeh Dartaghi (Legal Studies)
- Jacky Tran (Public Policy & Admin)
- Aula Mustafa (Public Policy & Admin)
- Anurag Das (Systems & Comp Engineer)
- Melissa Pullara (English)
- Ahmed Hassan (CEE)
- Carmen Warner (Communication)
- Charlie Helmer-Smith (Economics)
- Chelsea Nash (Communication)
- Jacqueline Lalor (NPSIA)
- Marin Martinov (Physics)
- Amin Ghaziaskan (Mech & Aero)
- Lauren Thompson (Psychology)
- Shermeen Nizami (CUPU)
- Rob Curriewood (Political Science)
- Lucas Jerusalemiec (PSCI)
- Michael Bueckert (Observer)
- Meral Hussein (Applied Linguistics)
- Taryn Hepbrun (Legal Studies)
- Lunsday Cator (Math & Stat)

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- Timothy Whalew (Psychology)
- Rosita Sherifahmadi (Electronic)
- Annika Mazzarella (Art History)
- Debbie Owusu Akyeeah (VP-Operations)
- Eric Hitsman (President)
- Taylor Howarth (VP-Finance)
- Jay Ramasubramanyam (VP-Academic)
- Phil Robinson (Executive Coordinator)
- Vincent St-Martin (Office and Communications Coordinator)
- Jenna Amirault (VP-External)
- Zidan Mohamed (Membership Coordinator)

Meeting called to order at 6:05 pm.

### **1. INTRODUCTION OF CHAIR**

#### **a. Announcement of Proxies**

- Martin Martinov for Victor Malkov (Physics) (2 votes)

### **2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

**Mover:** Charles Helmer-Smith (Economics)

**Seconder:** Taryn Hepbrun (Legal Studies)

**Carried**

### **3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

#### **a. E-minutes from October 19, 2017**

**Moved:** Jay Ramasubramanyam (Law and Legal Studies)

**Seconded:** Meral Hussein (Linguistics)

**Carried**

#### **b. Minutes from October 19, 2017**

**Moved:** Debbie Owusu Akeyeeah (President)

**Seconded:** Helyeh Dartaghi (Legal Studies)

**Carried**

### **4. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- #### **a. After the next council meeting, on December 5<sup>th</sup>, we are looking to host a party at Mike's place (details to be determined, but there could be cupcakes).**

### **5. ORDER OF THE DAY:**

**a) Introduction and Question and Answer Period with Interim President Dr. Alistair Summerlee.**

5.a has been postponed; it will take place in the near future.

**b) Presentation of the 2017 Welcome Weeks Report**

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Eric Hitsman (VP-Operations) presents the written report.

**6. EXECUTIVE REPORTS**

- a. President (Eric Hitsman)

**CFS Ontario Exec Meeting**

I attended the CFS Ontario executive committee as a representative for local 78. Over the course of the meeting, the main focus was on planning for the upcoming campaigns for the New Year. These campaigns include Mental Health Initiatives, as well as a major campaign related to fight the fees.

*Fight the Fees – Fund Our Future – Day of Action*

The provincial day of action, scheduled on February 1<sup>st</sup> 2018, is going to be connected to a larger campaign being organized by the provincial component of CFS. This includes a wide range of issues that all connect with the idea of accessibility (Housing, sustainability, transportation, funding, etc.). This campaign is relatively unstructured as of now, but is meant to correspond with the upcoming provincial election. The idea is to lobby politicians running for office to take accessibility and environmental policies into their platforms.

Since it is still very open, they are asking for any ideas from locals to help organize the campaign. If you know of any external groups working on accessibility or sustainability campaigns, please forward them to me so I can share them with the CFS.

Lastly, they are trying to think of a better name for the campaign to make it sound more actionable. Any ideas? Let me know!

**Graduate Faculty Board (GFB) – PhD Completion Times**

At the last Council it was promised that the issue of completion times for PhD students would be discussed at the GFB, however, it was announced at the meeting that the agenda was already too full to include the issue in our discussion. As such, we have recently scheduled monthly meetings with the FGPA where we will continue to push for this topic to be included in the GFB discussion, and work on potential solutions to solve the issue.

**Trivia at Mike's Place**

There will be a schedule available for upcoming themed trivia at Mike's Place. Starting on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, themes will begin with superheroes and villains. The ever popular "Harry Potter trivia" will take place on November 29th. This trivia will also feature a raffle put on by the Carleton U Terry Fox Society – which will have prizes like gift cards and Bluetooth speakers. If you want a seat at Harry Potter trivia, come early.

- b. VP Finance (Taylor Howarth)

**Mike's Place Specials**

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Coming this week: BUTTER CHICKEN! Mike's Place Pub will be serving special dishes only available for a limited time on a rotating basis. We are trying out a variety of new curries, including vegetarian options, and will be rolling out a soup option as the colder weather approaches.

### **Student Organization Grant**

The Student Organization Grant, or “the Org Grant”, is designed to help defray the cost of sponsoring and organizing events and programming and is available to departmental societies registered with the GSA, groups of graduate students associated for a specific purpose, and Carleton student clubs and societies.

Org Grant funding include, but is not limited to, academic conferences, colloquia, speaker presentations, panels, workshops, and social events that contribute to graduate students' education and community.

### **Councillors**

We are still looking for GSA Council members from various departments. If you know folks outside of your department that may be interested in joining council once a month, let them know that we would love to have them! Here's a list of the departments we are still missing from council:

Architecture

Biology

Biomedical Engineering

Business

Chemistry

Civil Engineering

Cognitive Science

Cultural Mediations

Earth Science

Environmental Engineering

Film Studies

French

Geography and Environmental Studies

Health: Science, Technology & Policy

Human Computer Interaction

Industrial Design

Information Technology

Institute for Comparative Studies in Literature, Art & Culture

Journalism

Music & Culture

Neuroscience

Philosophy

Political Economy

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Political Management  
Religion and Public Life  
Sustainable Energy  
Technology Innovation Management  
Women & Gender Studies

**Ancillary Fee Meeting**

The tripartite meeting between the university administration (specifically the VP Finance, Michel Piche, and VP Student Services, Susanne Blanchard), CUSA, and the GSA will be happening on November 24. At the next meeting of GSA Council, we will be providing a detailed update.

- c. VP Operations (Debbie Owusu-Akyeeah)

**Departmental Society Meetings**

The GSA is looking to have meetings with departmental societies. Please take this opportunity to give us feedback on the student organization grant, travel grant, and other GSA services that students in your department use. You can reach out to Zidane about booking this meeting at mc@gsacarleton.ca.

**Sexual Assault Outreach Coordinators**

On Friday, November 17<sup>th</sup> (**Location:** GSA Lounge. **Time:** 6pm-8pm) our SAOCs will be hosting a Feminist Self-Care Night. Join them for an evening of making self-care plans and kits and discuss what self-care means to you. The SAOCs will also be planning a contingent for the Trans Day of Remembrance vigil happening on November 20<sup>th</sup>. Please look out for more information on this on the GSA Facebook page or Grad Bulletin.

**COUNCIL REMINDER**

The next Council meeting is Tuesday, December 5<sup>th</sup>. Dates for Council in the Winter Semester will be announced as soon as possible. If you have feedback on Council dates, please do not hesitate to contact me at vpo@gsacarleton.ca.

- d. VP Academic (Jay Ramasubramanyam)

**Grad Academic Caucus (callout)**

I now have a full list of potential GAC reps. I will be sending out an email this week with a doodle poll and a tentative schedule to plan the meeting. The delay is to ensure clarity on some issues that have been concerning grad students. Apologies for the delay.

**International Students Outreach**

I have now begun working closely with the ISSO, on activities that would potentially have wider outreach. Some international grad students have been unable to get a sense of the activities that are catered to all International students. We will now have announcements and events that are specifically for international students, highlighted in the Grad Bulletin.

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**International Students Committee**

The initial plan was to have an International Students Group. But we made a decision to have a slightly more ad-hoc approach to this. We will be organizing our first international student hangout event tomorrow. This will become somewhat regular in the upcoming months.

**Racialized Action Committee**

We had our third RAC get together last week. We have planned several events for this group. Skating and Beavertails being one event that we have planned for the 9<sup>th</sup> of December. In 2018 we hope to have speakers and movie screenings which will tie closely to the theme – ‘social justice in the age of Trump.’

- e. VP External (Jenna Amirault)

**Political Action Committee**

The Political Action Committee met on November 6 to discuss our mental health campaign and other initiatives we would like to have throughout the year including panel discussions and anti-war programming.

**Students Against Israeli Apartheid**

The group Students Against Israeli Apartheid (SAIA) will be meeting Thursday, November 16 at 7 pm in the GSA Boardroom to discuss initiatives for the year.

**Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) National General Meeting**

The CFS National meeting will be taking place from November 17 to 20. This meeting will help determine the initiatives of the CFS until the next meeting in June. There will also be elections for new National Executive positions.

- f. Questions: No Questions Addressed.

**7. OTHER REPORTS**

- a. Senate & Senate Committees
- b. Graduate Residence Caucus (GRC)
- c. Graduate Faculty Board (GFB)
- d. Canadian Union of Public Employees 4600 (CUPE 4600)
- e. Carleton Post-Doctoral Association (CUPA)
- f. Board of Governors (BOG)
- g. Carleton University Students' Association (CUSA)

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- h. Presidential Search Committee
- f. Questions

**8. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS**

**9. NEW BUSINESS**

- a) **Motion 13.11.2017 - 01: Motion in Solidarity with CUPE Local 2424 at Carleton University**  
**Moved:** Jenna Amirault (VP-External)  
**Seconded:** Carmen Warner (Communication)

Whereas 850 administrative, technical, and library workers at Carleton University, as represented by CUPE 2424, have been in bargaining negotiations with Carleton University for a new collective agreement;

Whereas on October 20th, members of CUPE 2424 voted overwhelmingly (93%) to support a strike mandate;

Whereas Carleton has proposed major concessions that pose a serious risk to workers;

Whereas Carleton's aggressive posturing, particularly regarding pensions, could result in a strike that will negatively effect students;

Whereas to ensure success and a positive experience, students need the support of administrative staff, library and technical workers who are treated fairly;

Be it resolved that the GSA write a letter of solidarity and support to CUPE 2424.

Motions carries.

- b) **Motion 13.11.2017 – 02: Motion to Receive the Annual Graduate Recreational Softball League Report**  
**Moved:** Eric Hitsman (President)  
**Seconded:** Martin Martinov (Physics)

Whereas the Co-Commissioners for the Graduate Recreational Softball League have tabled a report on the 2017 season, therefore;

BIRT the report of the GSRL Co-Commissioners be received by Council.

Motions carries.

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**c) Motion 13.11.2017 – 03: Motion to Support the Ottawa Food Bank**

**Moved:** Jay Ramasubramanyam(Law and Legal Studies)

**Seconded:** Anurag Das (Systems & Comp Engineer)

Whereas hunger is a persistent issue that exists in Canada; and

Whereas during the holiday season, many less fortunate families experience overwhelming financial struggles; and

Whereas the GSA has had a rich history of supporting community led charitable events and initiatives; and

Be it resolved that the GSA set up a food donation box in the Grad Lounge, which will accept non-perishable food items.

Be it further resolved that the GSA will donate the contents of the box to the Ottawa Food Bank.

Motions carries.

**d) Motion to Endorse the 'Peace in Palestine' Campaign and Parliamentary Petition on Illegal Settlements**

**Moved:** Abigail Curlew (Soc/Anth) devotes it to Michael Bueckert (Soc/Anth)

**Seconded:** Meral Hussein (Linguistics)

Whereas this year marks the fiftieth anniversary of Israel's occupation of Palestine; and

Whereas Israeli settlements built in the Occupied Palestinian Territories are illegal under international law, and universally recognized as an obstacle to peace; and

Whereas the Canadian Government officially opposes Israeli settlements, yet has refused to take any action to pressure Israel to change its policy; and

Whereas Israeli settlement activity has intensified in 2017, as Israel has approved thousands of new units in settlements in East Jerusalem and Hebron, approved the first entirely new settlement in 15 years, and is proposing the annexation of several major settlement-blocks around East Jerusalem; and

Whereas Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME) have a new campaign and Parliamentary Petition which calls on the Canadian Government to "demand that Israel immediately and completely cease all settlement activities in the occupied Palestinian territories," and which requires the collection of 100,000 signatures by the end of January 2018; and



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Whereas CJPME's petition has been endorsed by at least 89 organizations, including Unifor, CUPE, CUPW, the Canadian Labour Congress, Independent Jewish Voices, Idle No More, the Canadian Federation of Students—Ontario, the Canadian Muslim Forum, Québec Solidaire, and many others; and

Whereas the GSA has a proud history of standing up in solidarity for Palestinian human rights and freedom; therefore

Be It Resolved That the GSA endorses the "Peace in Palestine" campaign and the Parliamentary Petition on illegal settlements; and

Be It Further Resolved That the GSA promotes the campaign and encourages its members to add their individual signatures to the Parliamentary Petition.

Motions carries.

**e) Discussion on Graduate Student Mental Health**

- i) Introduction of Topic (5 minutes)
  - a) Do graduate students have specific needs with regards to mental health?
  - b) Are existing services at Carleton University adequate to support graduate students' mental health? If not, what could the university implement to benefit graduate students' mental health?
  - c) If additional supports and services are needed, what steps could graduate students take to have them implemented?
- ii) Break-Out Group Discussions (15 minutes)
- iii) Report Back (5 minutes)

- Suggesting training regarding mental health.
- There are problems with wait times.
- Considering a petition, specifically the online petition and how it should be presented to university.
- Therapy dog program.
- Many grad students are dealing with children and aging parents.
- The need to inform students of the types of services available for them on campus.
- The challenges and mental pressure caused by the graduate studies when it comes to scholarships, turning in papers, and competitions.
- Some relationships with supervisors are unhealthy.
- The lack of space on campus to exercise yoga and other health and relaxation practices.
- Considering more stable contracts with therapists/counselors on campus to maintain a stable and healthy counseling for students who tend to stay for 5 or 6 years in a program such as PhD students. There is also a problem with limits on the number of counseling visits a student can make.

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**10. OTHER BUSINESS**

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

**Moved by:** Taylor Howarth (VP-Finance)

**Seconded by:** Chelsea Nash (Communication)

**Carried.**

Meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.