

GSA COUNCIL – E-MINUTES

Carleton University Graduate Students' Association, Ottawa, Ontario

Robertson Hall, Senate Chamber - 6:00 pm – Tuesday, December 5, 2017

CALL TO ORDER – 6:00pm, Tuesday, December 5, 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

- Hemant Gupta (Computer Science)
- Lexi Zamoiski (NPSIA)
- Dat Tran (ALDS)
- Annika Mazarella (Art History)
- Parnian Shafia (GRC)
- Jason Beaver (GRC)
- Marianna Rankin (Social Work)
- Jacky Tran (Public Policy and Administration)
- Aula Mustafa (Public Policy and Administration)
- Rob Currie-Wood (Political Science)
- Martin Martinov (Physics)
- Robert Lech (GRC)
- Lauren Thompson (Psychology)
- Taryn Hepbrun (Legal Studies)
- Rhys Steckle (SOAN)
- Lucas Jerusalemiec (Political Science)
- Carmen Warner (Communications)
- Seonaid (Allie) Watson (Communications)
- Alexa Dodge (Legal Studies)
- Trycia Bazinet (Indigenous and Canadian Studies)
- Kristen Bussiere (English)
- Timothy Walen (Psychology)
- Helyeh Doutaghi (Legal Studies)
- Lalean Sinclair (Social Work)
- Anurag Das (Systems & Comp Engineer)

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- Melissa Pullara (English)
- Chelsea Nash (Communication)
- Rob Curriewood (Political Science)
- Meral Hussein (Applied Linguistics)
- Debbie Owusu Akyeeah (Vice-President Operations)
- Eric Hitsman (President)
- Phil Robinson (Executive Coordinator)
- Vincent St-Martin (Office and Communications Coordinator)
- Jenna Amirault (VP-External)
- Zidan Mohamed (Membership Coordinator)

Meeting called to order at 6:03 pm.

1. INTRODUCTION OF CHAIR

a. Announcement of Proxies

- Chelsea Nash (communication) (1 vote)
- Victor Malkov (physics) (2 votes)

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Moved: Eric Hitsman (President)

Seconded: Debbie Owusu-Akyeeah (Vice-President Operations)

Carried

3. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

a. E-minutes from November 13, 2017

Moved: Carmen Warner (communication)

Seconded: Meral Hussein (Applied Linguistics)

Carried

b. Minutes from November 13, 2017

Moved: Taryn Hepbrun (Legal Studies)

Seconded: Anurag Das (Systems & Comp Engineer)

Carried

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

a. Drink Tickets and Delicious Gourmet Cupcakes at Mike's Place

Announced by Debbie Owusu Akyeeah (Vice-President Operations)

5. ORDER OF THE DAY: Updates on the Health, Dental and Accident Insurance Plan

a) Presentation by Vincent St-Martin (Office and Communications Coordinator)

6. EXECUTIVE REPORTS

a. President (Eric Hitsman)

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Mike's Place Holiday Party

In partnership with CUPE 4600, the GSA will be hosting a holiday party at Mike's Place on Thursday December 17th between 5pm and 9pm. The exciting news is that this event will feature Karaoke hosted by Gareoke. Additionally, we will be serving some free nachos.

Meeting with the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs

I mentioned last council that we would be meeting regularly with the FGPA to discuss issues that are impacting graduate students. We had a meeting a few weeks ago that was very productive. One major issue we brought forward was that of PhD times to completion as a major contributor to mental health issues. We pushed to have this topic discussed further at the Graduate Faculty Board, and the FGPA agreed to bring the issue to the executive committee for the GFB who will work to find a productive means of discussing the issue in future GFB meetings.

Meeting with Lieutenant Governor of Ontario

Along with CUSA, the Rideau River Residence Association, the Carleton Academic Student Government, and President Summerlee, I met this Saturday with Elizabeth Dowdeswell – the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario. She wanted a chance to speak with students about the challenges students face in University environments. I tried to focus on detailing contributing factors, as well as the barriers we face on campus in regards to mental health. Regardless of new frameworks the university releases, there are not enough resources on campus going towards the mental health of our students. It seemed that President Summerlee agreed.

Additionally, we discussed student debt as a contributing factor to mental health issues. Elizabeth Dowdeswell was particularly interested in the burden of tuition costs, including the particularly strong burdens placed on international students, and I received an e-mail this morning indicating that she will be “raising this issue with the government as part of her feedback to government”.

b. VP Finance (Taylor Howarth) given by Eric

Mike's Place Pub

After a slower-than-expected October, sales were particularly strong in November. Earlier this month we introduced butter chicken curry as a special, and we will be bringing in a vegan vegetable curry soon.

Ancillary Fee Protocol Committee

As previously reported, we were having discussions regarding proposed amendments to the Ancillary Fee Protocol at Carleton. I'm pleased to report that the University has accepted the GSA's position regarding provincial policy that establishes the regulations for ancillary fee protocols at Ontario universities. This means that senior administration has abandoned their initial claim that the University and CUSA can amend the existing agreement without the GSA's consent.

Membership Information

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The GSA has continued its efforts to access the contact information for its membership. This would greatly enhance the GSA's ability to ensure all graduate students are aware of the services available to them. The GSA reviewed the relevant privacy legislation, Carleton's own policies, and policies at numerous other Ontario universities. It is very clear from this research that providing this basic information to the GSA would be entirely compliant with privacy legislation so long as students are notified that the information will be transferred to the GSA, and the GSA and Carleton University sign a privacy and confidentiality agreement that outlines how the information will be used. A draft agreement has been prepared by the GSA.

Front Office Improvements

The GSA front office now has a point-of-sale system that enables the use of credit and debit cards for services such as printing and to opt-in to the health, dental and accident plan.

- c. VP Operations (Debbie Owusu-Akyeeah)

Sexual Assault Outreach Coordinator Events

The SOACs are hosting a "Surviving the Holidays" event on Thursday, December 7th from 3pm-5pm at the GSA Lounge. This workshop will focus on navigating difficult relationships during the holidays from a survivor-centric approach. Come grab a bowl of soup and discuss some coping strategies while building a sense of community.

December 6th Vigil

We strongly encourage you all to attend the annual December 6th vigil to commemorate the victims of the Montreal Massacre, as well as every life taken away by violence against women and gender-based violence. The vigil will be taking place at the Women's Monument at Minto Park (Elgin and Gilmour) at 6pm.

- d. VP Academic (Jay Ramasubramanyam) **given by Jenna**

Grad Academic Caucus (meeting)

We had our very first Grad Academic Caucus meeting on the 30th of November. Thank you to those who attended the meeting. Some of the significant concerns that were expressed by our members were on TA-ships, Milestones and Course withdrawals. With respect to allocation of TA-ships, there have been some concerns. Some members have felt a very arbitrary and selective process is in place. More specifically international students have been disproportionately affected by this issue. If you require any updates on this meeting please feel free to contact me.

Discussions with Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs

We are in the process of discussing some very important issues relating to milestones for upper year PhD students, graduate study spaces, and mental health initiatives with the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs. We will keep you posted on updates.

Library Resources

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I am not sure if I had already mentioned this, but the library met with the Graduate Faculty Board and presented their restructuring initiatives. Many of the steps taken by the library were done without consultation which I called them out on. They had held focus groups that only included a handful of people. They admitted to their process being quite non-inclusive and many of their concerns were with respect to budgetary constraints. One of the most significant “developments” is the removal of foreign language newspapers.

Ottawa Food Bank Food Drive

Please donate any non-perishable food if you are able to do so. There are boxes at the front desk of the GSA and in Mike's Place. We will be very appreciative of any donations you are able to spare.

- e. VP External (Jenna Amirault)

Political Action Committee

The Political Action Committee continues to work on a petition that recommends better access and resources for grad mental health. We are planning to launch the petition in the New Year.

We also heard from a graduate student who was recently forced to pay fees to take maternity leave. Her story has been covered by the CBC. The GSA offers a Family Leave Grant for its members, and can make arrangements to ensure students on family or medical leave can remain within the graduate student health, dental and accident plan. However, while on leave, students are not able to access the gym, health and counseling services, the U-Pass, and other ancillary services.

The GSA is approaching the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs to discuss ways to improve the experience of student parents at Carleton. Some of the options we are looking at include eliminating the arbitrary fees to take a leave of absence, creating the option of opting in to ancillary services such as health and counseling while on leave, and increasing the funding available for graduate students who need to take a family or medical leave.

Canadian Federation of Students National General Meeting

The CFS-National Meeting took place last month. Local 78 submitted a motion for the CFS to help create materials and awareness to fight fascism on campuses throughout the country. This motion was supported and passed unanimously at the meeting.

- f. Questions

7. OTHER REPORTS

- a. Senate & Senate Committees
 - Alexa: raised the issue of emergency response committee. She gave an overview about the responsibilities of this committee and how these responsibilities are expanding over the years. Therefore, the responsibilities of the committee should

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be highlighted in words (written down) in order to refer to this committee only when it is needed and necessary.

- b. Graduate Residence Caucus (GRC)
 - Nothing to report.
- c. Graduate Faculty Board (GFB)
 - Nothing to report.
- d. Canadian Union of Public Employees 4600 (CUPE 4600)
 - Nothing to report.
- e. Carleton Post-Doctoral Association (CUPA)
 - Nothing to report.
- f. Board of Governors (BOG)
 - Nothing to report.
- g. Carleton University Students' Association (CUSA)
 - Nothing to report.
- h. Presidential Search Committee
 - Nothing to report.
- f. Questions
 - No questions.

8. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

9. NEW BUSINESS

- Nothing to report.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

- Nothing to report.

11. ADJOURNMENT for GOURMET CUPCAKES at Mike's Place

Moved by: Debbie Owusu Akyeeah (Vice-President Operations)

Seconded by: Kirk Kitzul (Indigenous & CDN studies)

Carried

Time adjourned 6:51 pm.