



GSA COUNCIL
Notice of Meeting
 May 6, 2020
 4:00PM – 7:15PM

Zoom Meeting (Details in Outlook Invitation)

AGENDA

Time	Item	Action
4:00PM	1. SPEAKER'S WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS	-
4:05PM	2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA	For Approval
4:07PM	3. ATTENDANCE	For Information
4:08PM	4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES a. March 4, 2020	For Approval
4:10PM	5. REPORTS a. Update from the Board – Stirling (5 mins) b. Update from the JPRC – Reid (15 mins) c. Update from the Speaker / VP – Billedeau (5 mins) d. Update from the President – Samuel (25 mins) o Legal service fee referendum o GRT U-Pass new contract and fees o Health and dental fees fall 2020 o Strategic planning timeline changes o COVID-19 updates	For Information
5:10PM	6. Presentations a. Vital Signs – (25 mins) b. COVID-19 Impact Survey – Yeung, Salahub (25 mins) c. Training Opportunity – Khamisa (5 mins) d. Canadian Federation of Students – Billedeau (5 mins) e. Advocacy – Billedeau (15 mins)	
6:25PM	7. COUNCIL SPEAKER ELECTION a. CEC Introduction b. Candidate statements c. Online vote	For Discussion
7:15PM	8. ADJOURNMENT	-
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MINUTES

1. Speaker's Welcome and Opening Remarks 4:02

Billedeau takes the chair and calls the meeting to order at 4:02.

2. Adoption of the Agenda 4:03

Motion to approve the agenda. Approved.

3. Attendance 4:04

Ouellette takes the attendance.

4. Approval of Minutes 4:05

a) March 4, 2020

Approved.

5. Reports 4:05

a) Update from The Board – Stirling

Board has met several times since the COVID-19 crisis began to discuss strategies for assisting graduate students related to ongoing operations and emerging issues. A working group was also formed to address elections.

Motion to enter confidential session (Stirling/Samuel). Approved unanimously.

Motion to leave confidential session (Stirling/Luong). Approved unanimously.

An overview of the Board meetings was provided. A CRO has been appointed as per the recommendation of Management. AGM has been postponed due to COVID-19; however, online channels for facilitating the event are being explored. The terms for the President and Vice President have also been extended until the end of August. More information can be found on the GSA website.

Next meeting later this month will consider fees for Fall 2020. Legal service fee referendum was discussed. First bargaining agreement is anticipated to take one year. Councilors who have further questions about updates were invited to direct them to the Board Chair.

b) Update from the JPRC – Reid 4:37

Five policies have been revised and approved by the Board since March – changes were described. The Council's role in the president and vice president nominating process was outlined. The appraisal process was emphasized as a development on which the Council will be updated. The JPRC has proposed the formation of a committee to review council policies. This is intended to be a short-term committee with 4 representatives from Council, ideally from separate faculties. Interested volunteers should email Robbins and Parker.

Motion to approve the Terms of Reference, subject to any revisions suggested by Council, to create a Council committee to review Council

policies and produce a set of recommendations for Council with a goal of clarifying and streamlining existing policy (Parker/Lamoreau). Approved unanimously.

c) Update from the Speaker / VP – Billedeau 4:46

Research contracts and their presentation dates were displayed. Two new contracts were presented: one on sexual violence and assault and another on animal welfare. Even with lab closures, animal welfare is still considered a relevant research contract. A rubric will be written that details the assessment criteria for the contracts. The possibility of mandatory sexual violence training is being pursued. Interested applicants should email Billedeau.

d) Update from the President – Samuel 4:51

i. Legal service fee referendum

Justification and recommendations for the legal service fee was provided. The initial cost is \$28 annually per student and is eligible for opt-out. Details for the referendum were given. If approved, it is possible that the fee may increase in small increments after the first year, subject to inflation (same as all services). It will be charged once in the fall term. Vital Signs did not include questions about a desire to expand the legal service. The referendum is intended to gauge student desire. Voting procedures for the referendum were clarified. Gaps in StudentCare coverage were noted - Barton can provide a brief memo of relevant issues. Samuel will double-check whether \$1000 of support is per lifetime or academic year.

ii. GRT U-Pass new contract and fees 5:07

Details of the contract renewal process were provided. The option to automatically renew the contract every 5 years and the option to terminate with 180 day notice is in negotiation. The previous contract was 5 years – Samuel will check whether there was a cancellation with notice option. Accommodations for remote or financially limited students were discussed. The reason for a greater increase in fees during the first two years was given. The impact of COVID-19 on the utilization of this service and fee payment was considered. The different roles and perspectives of WUSA and GSA in negotiating the pass were addressed. Discussions between the GSA and GRT about bus service routes are ongoing.

iii. Health and dental fees fall 2020 5:16

The GSA is in a good financial position in terms of health and dental reserves. Fees were displayed. Access to health coverage is maintained during the COVID period as it is an annual plan. Restrictions on dental services relies on action from the provincial government. Caps on the number of counselling appointments available to students before and after EmpowerMe were questioned; Samuel will follow up with counselling services on this information.

iv. Strategic planning timeline changes 5:27

Timeline was presented. The plan is to be approved by Board in June and shared with membership at the AGM.

- v. COVID-19 updates 5:27

Updates included current efforts, funding, the COVID-19 survey, faculty-level advocacy, operational changes, and the petition to reduce tuition. \$75,000 will be dedicated to existing streams dedicated to graduate students: contingency bursary, thesis completion, and emergency support. University re-opening date is unknown at this point in time. Communication from UW administration on fall 2020 is expected for next month.

6. Presentations 5:32

- a) Vital Signs

Specific questions can be viewed in the text summary provided in the council meeting package. The distribution of students by citizenship status and faculty, compared to distribution of those responding to the Vital Signs Survey, were illustrated. Most respondents to the survey initiated it a day after official GSA emails were sent out and it generally took between 10-30 minutes to complete. Some results indicated that more information on progress can be determined by separating the student data on those who will attend UW for over three years from those who will attend UW for less than three years. Overview of responses to the survey categories were described.

- b) COVID-19 Impact Survey – Yeung, Salahub 5:54

Respondent demographics and responses to questions were illustrated. A notable portion of students expressed experiencing negative mental health impacts due to COVID-19. The factors that students attributed to not accessing mental health services were presented. Types of 'other' responses for spring activities were also provided. Survey burnout and the frequency of future surveys was addressed; GSA will be working with administration on a strategy to address this consideration. Data from GSA surveys are accessible internally and not shared with UW. Further questions and comments can be forwarded to Yeung and Salahub.

- c) Training Opportunity – Khamisa 6:17

Details for an online training workshop on engaging constituents virtually were displayed. Khamisa will be facilitating the workshop. All councilors are welcome.

- d) Canadian Federation of Students - Billedeau

Deferred to next meeting.

- e) Advocacy – Billedeau

Deferred to next meeting.

7. Council Speaker Election 6:25

- a) CEC Introduction

The process for candidate statements and voting was defined. Councilors were reminded to delete emails and documents pertaining to candidate voting.

b) Candidate Statements

6:26

Each candidate provided an overview of their personal background, skills, interests, and goals as council speaker. Each candidate was afforded a brief opportunity to answer questions.

c) Online Vote

Robbins was elected as the council speaker.

Sgandurra was elected as the deputy speaker.

8. Adjournment

7:00

Meeting adjourned at 7:00PM.