

**Graduate Student Association UW**

# **Council**

**Meeting Minutes**

**May 5, 2021**

**Primary Meeting**

Date: May 5, 2021

Time: 4:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M.

Place: Virtual

**Council Speaker:** Tyler B. Hampton

**Minutes Taker:** Niveta Chugh



**MEETING ATTENDENCE**

| <b>Name</b>                     | <b>Position/Faculty</b>              | <b>Attendance*</b> |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Tyler Hampton                   | Council Speaker                      | P                  |
| MK Stinson                      | AHS - Rec & Leisure Studies          | P                  |
| Kalsha Diaguarachchige De Silva | AHS - Kinesiology                    | P                  |
| Sue Sherifali                   | AHS - Public Health & Health Systems | P                  |
| Danielle LaBrash                | Arts - Political Science             |                    |
| Elizabeth Scarlette             | Arts - MPS                           |                    |
| Ethel Zlotnik                   | Arts - MDEI                          | P                  |
| I. S.                           | Arts - Peace & Conflict Studies      | P                  |
| Jessica Gill                    | Arts - Sociology                     | P                  |
| Jessica Ross                    | Arts - Psychology                    | P                  |
| Jillian Adams                   | Arts - Accounting & Finance          |                    |
| Khusro Mir                      | Arts - Economics                     | P                  |
| Lara El Mekkawi                 | Arts - English Language & Literature | P                  |
| Lisa Duggan                     | Arts - Religious Studies             | P                  |
| Lucy Hinton                     | Arts - Global Governance             | P                  |
| Sam Schrim                      | Arts - Germanic & Slavic Studies     | P                  |
| Sarah Galarneau                 | Arts - Fine Arts                     | P                  |
| Tasneem Alsayyed ahmad          | Arts - Philosophy                    | P                  |
| Teghan Barton                   | Arts - History                       | P                  |
| Akshat Atray                    | Eng - Management Sciences            | P                  |
| Helene Chow                     | Eng - CEE                            | P                  |
| Jared Uramowski                 | Eng - MME                            | P                  |
| Meryem Chahbou                  | Eng - Architecture                   |                    |
| Mozhgan Sadeghianlemraski       | Eng - ECE                            | P                  |
| Abdollah Pil Ali (Proxy)        | Eng - ECE                            | P                  |
| Nargess Heydari Beni            | Eng - SDE                            | P                  |
| Wali ur Rehman Zia              | Eng - MBET                           | P                  |
| Anju George                     | Enviro - Planning                    | R                  |
| Caitlin Laidlaw                 | Enviro - GEM                         |                    |
| Kaylia Little                   | Enviro - SEED                        | P                  |
| Misty Matthews                  | Enviro - SERS                        | P                  |
| Jyler Menard                    | Math - Computational Math            | P                  |
| Mojtaba Valipour                | Math - Computer Science              | P                  |
| William Bell                    | Math - Applied Mathematics           | P                  |
| Adrian Van Dyk                  | Science - Biology                    | P                  |
| Jesse St Jean                   | Science - Pharmacy                   | P                  |
| Juliette Teodoro                | Science - Optometry and Vision       | P                  |
| Michael Chapman                 | Science - Physics and Astronomy      | P                  |
| Joshua Woodcock                 | Theo - Theological Studies           |                    |

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|                              |                       |   |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Naima Samuel                 | UW Senate             | P |
| Onurcan Gokkaya              | UW Senate             |   |
| Max Salman                   | UW Senate             |   |
| Aiden Feng                   | GSA Board             |   |
| Cyrus Fiori                  | GSA Board             | P |
| Kelly Zheng                  | GSA Board             | P |
| Nicholas Palaschuk           | GSA Board             | P |
| Thomas Storwick              | GSA Board             |   |
| Elham Mohammadi              | GSA Board             | P |
| Samira Mehrabi               | GSA Board             | P |
| Yi Wang                      | GSA Board             | P |
| Ruby Aigbotsua               | GSA Board             | P |
| Amir Hosein Sadeghi Isfahani | GSA Board             | P |
| Twesh Upadhyaya              | GSA Board             |   |
| David Benjamin Billedeau     | GSA President         | P |
| Cindy Yeung                  | GSA VP Administration | P |
| Zabeen Khamisa               | GSA VP Communication  | P |

\*Attendance

P – Present , R – Regrets , A – Absent (no regrets)

**AGENDA**

| <b>Time</b> | <b>Item</b> |   | <b>Length (min)</b> | <b>Action</b>   |
|-------------|-------------|---|---------------------|-----------------|
| 4:00 PM     | <b>1</b>    | <b>SPEAKER'S WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS</b>  | 5                   | -               |
| 4:05 PM     | <b>2</b>    | <b>ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA</b>   | 1                   | For Approval    |
| 4:06 PM     | <b>3</b>    | <b>DECLARATION OF INTERESTS</b>   | 1                   | -               |
| 4:07 PM     | <b>4</b>    | <b>ATTENDANCE</b>   | 1                   | For Information |
| 4:08 PM     | <b>5</b>    | <b>APPROVAL OF MINUTES</b><br>- March 30, 2021<br>- April 7, 2021   | 2                   | For Approval    |
| 4:10 PM     | <b>6a</b>   | <b>UPDATE and Questions on Policy 30 - Jeff Casello</b>   | 40                  | For Discussion  |
| 4:50 PM     | <b>6b</b>   | <b>BREAKOUT Discussion on Policy 30</b>   | 25                  |                 |
| 5:15 PM     | <b>6c</b>   | <b>Policy 30 wrap-up</b>  | 5                   |                 |
| 5:20 PM     | <b>7</b>    | <b>5-minute break</b>   | 5                   | -               |
| 5:25 PM     | <b>8</b>    | <b>UPDATE FROM THE BOARD – Kelly Zheng</b>  | 5                   | For Information |
| 5:30 PM     | <b>9</b>    | <b>UPDATE FROM THE SPEAKER</b><br>- Council 2021-2022 Schedule<br>- Council Spring 2021 Agenda<br>- Cost of Governance Proposal | 15                  | For Information |
| 5:45 PM     | <b>10a</b>  | <b>UPDATE on GSA Equity Strategy - VP Zabeen</b>  | 15                  | For Discussion  |
| 6:00 PM     | <b>10b</b>  | <b>BREAKOUT Discussion on Equity Strategy</b>   | 25                  |                 |
| 6:25 PM     | <b>11</b>   | <b>5-minute break</b>   | 5                   | -               |
| 6:30 PM     | <b>12</b>   | <b>ORGANIZE UW UPDATE</b>   | 5                   | For Information |
| 6:35 PM     | <b>13</b>   | <b>DISCUSSION on Ombudsperson - David</b>   | 25                  | For Discussion  |
| 7:00 PM     |             | Adjournment   |                     |                 |

**MINUTES**

**1. Speaker’s Welcome and Opening Remarks 04:04pm**

*Hampton takes the chair and calls the meeting to order at 04:04pm.*

**2. Adoption of the Agenda 04:07pm**

*Motion to approve the agenda.*

*President asks for agenda item 13 to be changed from discussion of Ombudsperson to discussion of GSPA Funding Principles.*

*Agenda adopted by unanimous consent.*

**3. Declaration of Interests 04:09pm**

*No conflicts of interest were declared.*

**4. Attendance 04:09pm**

*Chugh takes the attendance.*

**5. Approval of minutes 04:10pm**

*The minutes of the March 30, 2021 meeting and April 7, 2021 meetings were approved by unanimous consent.*

**6. (a) Update and questions on Policy 30 -Jeff Casello 04:14pm**

*Casello gave an update on Policy 30. He mentioned that his team inherited Policy 30 as a legal document which had heavy emphasis on dispute resolution and contractual language. He mentioned that the policy drafting committee realized that they would be able to serve the students better if they began by understanding better the relationship that graduate students play in delivering the courses. The main principle behind writing the new Policy 30 is that the graduate students have their own responsibilities as students which they need to focus on to continue their own academic progression. Casello mentioned that there are six faculties that must implement the policies and are to be guided by the policies. The language of the policy is made sufficiently flexible for existing faculties as there are some places where TAs are assigned by Graduate Chair or Graduate Officers.*

*Casello mentioned that work needs to be done on making the students aware of the TA opportunities as the new policy requires that there be an articulation of what TA opportunities are available to students in each term. How can the students be matched to the TA opportunities? There is a requirement that TA opportunities comes with it an articulation of the skillset, knowledge, and background that people will see is necessary to be successful as a TA for that course. Casello said that they have been trying to make TA matching process more transparent. Also, an agreement will be signed off by the TA and the instructor so that one can know if the match meets the expectations of the instructor and the TA. This agreement will serve as a guiding document when there are activities that deviate from the expectations for both the instructor and the TA for that course.*

*Casello mentioned that they have introduced the dispute resolution process in the policy. The process would start with a conversation between an instructor and TA. If this does not help, there is a hierarchy on resolving the dispute. The process ultimately ends with the dean. When dispute resolution is going on, students will continue being supported financially. If the dispute is extreme and the course needs to be continued, an interim role would be assigned to the course to be delivered effectively.*

*Casello mentioned that there will be a process by which there will be evaluation of the TA's performance at the end of each term which can influence future TA appointments.*

*The Councillor from Computer Science raised a concern if was there any relationship between TA and ISC (Instructional Support Co-Ordinator). Casello clarified that ISC is specific to Math department. He said he can answer better after he forwards the concern to his colleagues and Math department to understand the roles of ISC. The Councillor from Computer Science also raised a concern over discrimination being faced by students in his department. He suggested if the supervisor would take charge of it and act on it when they receive complaints of harassment and discrimination. Casello replied by saying that inclusivity has become of utmost importance to the University in the past 18 months. Discrimination would be handled outside of Policy 30 as it is an ethical behavior issue. He mentioned that Policy 30 does refer to Policy 33 in cases where something like this would happen. The management of TA ships is handles by Policy 30 but discrimination related issues are handled by Policy 33. The Councillor from Computer Science suggested to add something related to discrimination in TA ship to Policy 30. Casello mentioned that Secretariat is helping them in drafting the Policy 30 and he will think about it.*

*The Council Speaker asked how the feedback is incorporated in amending Policy 30. He asked what the process behind it the committee is involved in it and a rough timeline for Policy 30. Policy 33 is also being amended. Casello mentioned that he is not greatly involved in Policy 33. He said he can arrange someone to speak to the Council who has vast knowledge on Policy 33. He mentioned that GSA has appointed new members for the GSRC. GSRC will decide whether the changes are significant or not. These changes will be put together for the drafting committee to address them if the committee feels that the draft can be updated based on the suggestions. Next, it will go to Provost. The Provost will determine what the formal consultation stage will be for the policy. It is up to the General Manager to decide what formal processes will be there in terms of consultation.*

*The Councillor from Germanic and Slavic Studies asked if the TA working hours would be recorded only if the TA works for long hours. He suggested to have a track of TA hours from the beginning of the term. Casello mentioned that having a record of TA hours is important. He mentioned that the policy will be mandating that the discussions are taking place with respect to over-time hours. The policy might not include how such an issue would be resolved.*

*The Councillor from School of Pharmacy raised a concern about 8.3 which is regarding training which says that the training hours will not be counted towards allotment for the course. He*

*mentioned that many departments do not pay TAs out of their allotment areas and a lot of departments have mandatory unpaid training. Graduate students are not going to be paid for training even though it is required for employment and he wants to know if it is legally required by the province. Graduate students are concerned if the training is required to have a general-purpose knowledge. Casello replied by saying that WHIMS is a baseline condition to do anything in Ontario. Similarly, TA training is needed for employment. He said he will find out if the TA training is a part of TA hours and if that is deducted before the start of each term. The policy says that it is important to have conversations about the TA hours before the TA ship starts. The Councillor from School of Pharmacy followed up on the policy and asked if it only addresses the dispute between TA and the administrator. He pointed that this would be heavily favored against the TAs. He raised a concern about the verdict of the dispute. Casello mentioned that they want the TAs to feel empowered and feel that they are very much a part of the education team. He believes that his colleagues are going to treat this provision appropriately.*

*The Councillor from English Language and Literature raised a concern over the evaluation which says that the TA instructor will be evaluating the TA. He pointed that it does not seem fair as the TAs will feel that they do not get to feedback their working experience with the instructors. She said that the Policy 30 is more about protecting the instructor than the TA. She felt that there is lack of transparency and asked if there is any way of addressing the violations or filing grievances against it. Also, sometimes the students are mismatched to their skills and are randomly allotted TA ship. This was common amongst upper year students. Casello agreed that the idea of providing feedback from TA for the instructors is important. He said that transparency is where the students can say and demonstrate their capacity. Each student has the right to challenge the decisions through this policy and this would happen with the help of Associate Dean of the graduate studies. There are pathways to reave if the decisions are going against the policy. The Councillor from English Language and Literature asked if the students decline the TA opportunity, will that result in decline of the entire scholarship funding or the TA funding. Casello mentioned that they are trying to make sure that students respond in most of the cases. If the student does not respond, the faculties will have to look for replacements.*

*A guest from ECE pointed that the ECE department has a process for allocating TA positions where they select domestic students over international students even when they both have equal ranking. He wants to know GSA's perspective on this issue. Casello replied that they have been trying to have equal competition for TA positions. A guest from ECE mentioned that ECE Chair and ECE Coordinators are aware of this and he has documentation for it. Casello pointed that it was not the right forum to have such a discussion.*

*The Councillor from Philosophy raised a concern over the language of the policy and said that everything is inter-defined. She suggested to separate all other responsibilities from the TA duties which graduate students have as students. Casello clarified that if a student is given TA ship in the term, he/she has a comprehensive exam and the student cannot perform TA activities, the student can have a conversation with the administrator according to the policy. The idea is to have a conversation with the department and the administrator. This policy aims to put TA responsibilities*

*with the students' own academic progressions on the same level.*

*A Director asked about the end of term TA evaluation. He asked if it is on the same platform as the instructor evaluation. He asked who is responsible for designing the TA evaluation survey and who can access the TA evaluation data. Casello replied that when a course ends, students are asked to access the performance of the TA. This case is about what the TA administrator perceives about the role of the TA of the course. He mentioned that if a TA is taking proactive steps and is giving extra time to students, the TA administrator would want to know this, and this would help to get approval for the TA position over someone else based on your past performance.*

*The Councillor from Applied Mathematics asked with respect to section 8.3, if in practice the policy is going to be applied in more liberal way, then why not write the policy in a way that the policy will find ease to cover more training than not. Casello replied that there needs to be a criterion for addition of the training to be paid or not in the policy, so the drafting committee landed on the criterion of what is necessary for the provincial legislation.*

*The Councillor from Recreation and Leisure Studies asked for follow up regarding the language and successful completion of the TA ships. She raised a concern that if the student is essentially suffering with own academics, then the issue of losing their funding or TA ship might cause stress which could affect the academic standing in a greater way. This might cause stress about their livelihoods. Casello replied that if the student is struggling progressively and certainly wants a conversation on whether a TA ship is going to be pointed to promote their wellbeing, the University reserves the right in these cases. The intention is not to take away funding. When a student enters the role of a TA, the students have confidence that this would lead to their overall academic progression and confidence. This is the main intention of the language of the policy. The Councillor from Recreation and Leisure Studies asked if the wellness bursary would be greater than or equal to the amount being paid in the situation where the students are TA for that term. Casello clarified that the medical bursary is lesser than the TA funding. If the student decides to go inactive for medical reasons, medical bursary is given as a support. There will not be any tuition fees charged for that term.*

**6(b) Breakout Discussion on Policy 30**

**04:57pm**

*Within small group discussions, the Councillors discussed the changes being made to Policy 30.*

**6(c) Policy 30 Wrap-Up**

**05:15pm**

*Concerns raised by different groups are listed as below:*

- *Concerns regarding feedback and TA evaluations. There would be a unified metric to get a formal feedback from the instructors under this policy.*
- *Concerns regarding online TA ships being burdensome.*
- *Discussions on how TAs should evaluate instructors as it would lead to building some equity into the policy.*
- *Equity towards TA allotment as this differs from department to department.*



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- *Transparency around selection of TAs on whether they are randomly chosen or based on academic qualifications.*
- *Issues regarding definition of training in the policy because training of University teaching is not course specific but is specific to the courses that a student assists for at the UW. The wording of policy should convey that training will not be paid.*
- *Concerns for graduate sectional instructors (replacement when there are no TAs) as many parts of the Policy 30 will not apply to them. So, a clarity for them is needed so that they get same level of protection as graduate TA's.*
- *Clarity regarding what happens if a graduate student refuses a TA ship. Do graduate students have an option to proactively decline a TA ship if they are concerned about their wellbeing.*
- *Councillors suggested to have add to the policy on when the students can respond to a TA opportunity.*
- *Policy should acknowledge violations of transparency and should have processes to deal with it. It should also include that such issues should be brought to the TA administrator/ instructor.*
- *Councillors suggested to have distinction between academic duties and employment. This would help to deal with issues like funding. The University needs to force these rules so that issues with professors can be taken seriously and the professors can be held accountable.*
- *Suggestions to have a mechanism for tracking hours on quest on other online platforms.*
- *Discussions regarding the training and importance of written agreements between professors and students.*
- *Suggestions to potentially have TA support person who can advocate in cases where any concerns / questions that TAs have if usual go to people are not available.*
- *The main request is to have a formal hour tracking system across campus and a centralized system across the University for TA activities.*
- *Concerns about clarity of some terms in the draft of the policy.*
- *Councillors want to know the reason behind reviewing the TA rates.*
- *Concerns regarding the structure of the TA ship. They suggested to have the structure in terms of responsibilities at least 15 days ahead of time to successfully serve as a TA.*
- *The Ontario WHIMS (government) website says that the time spent at training sessions should be considered and it needs to be paid.*

## 7. 5-minute Break

**05:26pm**

**8. Update from the Board-Kelly Zheng**

**05:30pm**

*A Director gave an update from the Board. She mentioned that the Board discussed President Nominating Committee (PNC) recommendations, president term limits, GSA policies, a report by the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC), Organize UW relations, new director training and proposed EL 2.12 and EL 2.20 changes, and board self-evaluation. The Board passed motions to accept governance oversight committee report on updating the Board's letters' patent. The Board delayed the proposals to EL 2.12 and EL 2.20 changes. David Billedeau has been appointed as the President for the second term. The Board also approved the vacancy and resignation policy proposed by the Joint Policy Review Committee (JPRC). Council feedback was incorporated during April 2021 Board meeting including proposed amendments to GP-8. There were discussions running regarding the president re-appointment and performance.*

**9. Update from the Speaker- Tyler Hampton**

**05:34pm**

*The Council Speaker shared the 2021-2022 GSA Council Schedule. He shared Spring 2021 Council Agenda. One of the main things starting is continuation of the discussion of the funding principles. This is a way to engage with Jeff Casello (GSPA) and GSRC more broadly. In the past two years (March 2020 and March 2021), the Council rejected the GSRC's proposed minimum funding level and this rejection has been considered by the GSRC. This is a way to engage more with Jeff Casello and it gets on an issue of University's own understanding of why funding graduate students should be above a livable wage in Waterloo. The second item on the Spring 2021 agenda is questions of students and vaccinations. The President and the Council Speaker are looking forward to having a broader discussion on this outside of Council with the graduate students. The region of Waterloo says Columbia Lake North residents are eligible to get the vaccine. There will be questions regarding the role of UW in increasing access, verifying vaccination status and monitoring COVID-19 prevalence on campus and in community. The third item on the Spring 2021 agenda is regarding the safe return to campus in times of COVID-19. There are questions whether UW will be advocating for international students that are currently abroad and are not in Waterloo community. The main question is how the grads will be impacted by different modes of education/teaching/research formats. These issues should be hammered out before the fall term as graduate community is engaging in a lot of teaching. Grads can reach out to GSA Executives and appointed persons for addressing these issues. The fourth item on the Spring 2021 agenda is framing discussions on equity and justice at UW. This would include supporting and scrutinizing equity and justice work within GSA-UW and University of Waterloo.*

*The Council Speaker proposed the Council Cost of Governance. He mentioned that the Board of Directors will approve the whole GSA's budget in August. He proposed that the part of the budget that was allocated to food can be allocated to Council trainings. So, a budget is proposed for prominent speakers to present to the Council and share their knowledge. The potential topics that would be discussed includes unionization on campus, student activism, racial equity and justice*

*and the future of the University. The maximum compensation the speaker would be maximum of \$500.*

*The Councillor from Philosophy asked how the speaker will be selected and how the co-ordination will be done by others. The Council Speaker mentioned that his role is two-fold as there is no deputy speaker for the present year. He mentioned that the Council has a Council Executive Committee which is laid out in the council policies. The Council Executive Committee would work on providing the suggestions. He asked councillors to volunteer for the Council Executive Committee. This committee would meet monthly for 1 hour, plan regular Council meeting agenda with management/Board and would discuss termly/annual agenda for the Council.*

**10(a) Update on GSA Equity Strategy-VP Zabeen**

**05:50pm**

*The Vice-President (Communication) gave an update on Equity. She mentioned that GSA never had the capacity for Equity. There was a significant response with respect to Equity from the Council last year when George Floyd was murdered. This sparked the thinking on how the GSA would be re-structured and how Equity could be made a top priority. She mentioned that a statement with respect to Equity was released in last year's Council meeting. GSA needs to embody things if a statement is released and help graduate students in the experiences they have been having. She mentioned that it has been an ongoing concern since the past year.*

*In response to this desire from Council to engage in Equity but with anti-racism in mind, first thing that the GSA did last year was to build a team. While building a team, GSA created several different positions which allowed GSA to have the capacity to address the concerns. One of the proposals was to have an Equity Coordinator. The Vice-President (Communication) said if only Equity coordinator is hired, that role would be tokenized. That person would be exhausted and burnt out. So, GSA decided that every coordinator position would have an Equity nexus. This would cover what would equity look like in terms of advocacy, mental health, relationship with campus partners. This would be ensuring that equity is across the board. This is an oppression kind of approach to equity diversity inclusion.*

*The Vice-President (Communication) presented the multi-prolonged and intersectional Equity strategy which involved GSA Governance and services, relationship building and members. She presented the things that were identified in Equity Strategy Phase I. She mentioned that the work being done is relational, and it depends on where the University administration is at these concerns, where the activism is at in the community, who is involved in these concerns and who is on the Executive team.*

*The first thing that was launched in the Equity Strategy Phase I was the safe love week which was a response to acknowledging that the graduate students who identify themselves as a part of LGBTQ community did not have any resources for themselves. So, this week was created where GSA could bring resources. HREI gave \$500 to run the events last year and \$5000 for this year. Equity Strategy Phase I launched the BIPOC Graduate Student Collective which is an*

*intergenerational experience in terms of supporting community. BIPOC faculty, BIPOC undergraduate and graduate students can create a BIPOC community and discuss their experiences on the campus. A review of GSA Advocacy and Wellness was done under the guidance of Vice-President (Administration) and Wellness Coordinator. This review was done to think about providing students with support in navigating policies and keeping a track of these complaints. GSA created internal systems to keep a track of experiences involving high discriminatory behavior against them specially from supervisors/faculties. With respect to Accountability and Representation in University Administration Equity Initiatives, President's anti-racism task force has been the main thing. Each working group of anti-racism task force has a GSA staff member. GSA has been soliciting support from graduate students in terms of recommendation on what they would like to see. This also includes discussing equity concerns with graduate student representatives on University wide communities. Next is relationship building and indigeneous initiatives which is about GSA's relationship with Indigenous people on the campus. It is a community wide initiative and University is not involved in it.*

*The Vice-President (Administration) listed the events for the following year like AccessAbility and Graduate Student Services, BIPOC Graduate Student Collective, Staffing Concerns, Writing Centre, and Positionality Workshop.*

*She mentioned that the main question is how the GSA Council, and the Board will maintain the equity and anti-oppression practices in the future. Work will have to be done internally as the groups involved will not work with GSA if next steps are not taken to codify this work. The groups expect GSA to be present all the time.*

**10(b) Breakout Discussion on Equity Strategy**

**06:08pm**

*Within small group discussions, faculties discussed equity concerns.*

*AHS and Theology:*

- In terms of equity, anti-racism, gender diversity and accessibility, there has been limited to no conversation in one department. In some departments, there were some conversations going on.*
- In terms of initiatives, there was just talk and no action. Most of the initiatives were led by students. In other departments, the initiatives were supported by the department.*
- Everyone involved in the discussion are open to any type of training that will be offered.*
- They support that these kinds of relationships should be going and result in ongoing material actions including things like specific targeted access to mental health BIPOC students, specific targeted funding.*

*Arts I:*

- In terms of equity, anti-racism, gender diversity and accessibility, there are no committees*

*formed.*

- *In English and Psychology department, an anti-racism task force had been created. There was no action taken. Balsillie school does have an anti-oppression equity committee.*
- *All the initiatives have been led by the students.*
- *The Faculty of Environment has a student-led research workshop.*
- *All the members are in favor of having an equity, and anti-oppression training. They suggested to provide training to all graduate students on the campus.*
- *GSA should codify the initiatives to make sure that it is a part of the governance structure of the GSA. Formulation of goals for the GSA would also help to keep a track of the progress of the equity practices.*
- *English department brought up pedagogy and equity specifically with students who speak English as another language and use different kinds of English in their writing. Their consequences are that these students get lower marks and are graded more harshly. Writing Centre has resources regarding this, but the faculties are either unaware or resistant to have it incorporated in the pedagogy.*

*The Vice-President (Communication) mentioned that at the Writing Centre, the positionality workshop is a gateway to asking for more workshops. GSA already had conversations with the Writing Centre to support more English(es). PART has an entire section on decolonizing curriculum and pedagogy is a part of that conversation.*

#### *Arts II:*

- *In the Philosophy department, there has been group working on anti-racism and equity. They are getting a lot of work done.*
- *In the department of Peace and Conflict Studies, new faculty members are being hired.*
- *In the History department, a person belonging to a minority group has not been offered tenure.*
- *The productivity and success of the initiatives varies from department to department as some departments are connected to other schools.*
- *Some of the initiatives are led by students and some are led by faculties.*
- *All the members were in favor of equity and anti-oppression training.*
- *Councillors had concern whether the training would be a general training or would focus on specific areas.*
- *The members talked about encouraging connection between different groups across campus. Suggestions on reaching out to Jewish groups, Indigenous groups, and Black groups.*

*The Vice-President (Communication) clarified that GSA has relationship with other groups on campus. GSA is involved with RAISE. GSA donated \$2k to RAISE. RAISE is involved with GSA in the BIPOC collective.*

*Engineering/MATH I:*

- *There were not lots of efforts seen in the departments on equity issues.*
- *Councillors suggested to have some committee where students can go to and have questions about these kinds of things or problems.*
- *The Faculty of Engineering has a committee which is in its early stages.*
- *In small departments, it might be difficult to have large committees and initiatives, so it would be easier to go on faculty basis with respect to these practices.*
- *One of the departments mentioned that they have a new system which is based on the qualifications and they do not know the outcome of it.*
- *Training will be efficient for everyone if it is more interactive and can take time to learn about things.*
- *Suggestions to have the training to be made available in many languages.*

*The Vice-President (Communication) mentioned that work on setting up a specific training module is being done. It will be self-roll part series so that everyone can use it as per their own specification.*

*Engineering/MATH II:*

- *The training should be made optional. It would be better if the training modules on LEARN can be replaced with interactive workshops. It could include people sharing their experiences.*
- *People in the department have had a positive experience with respect to the initiatives.*
- *It is good to have the President's plan for equity on campus.*
- *Members asked for information to get involved to promote equity practices on campus.*
- *Suggestions to have collaboration with the undergraduate groups.*

*Environment:*

- *One of the departments has organized research workshops which proved to be a good initiative.*
- *Ensuring that equity initiatives remain an active part of Council while going forward.*
- *The idea of having training would be useful for GSA and students who are in leadership roles.*
- *The Writing Centre has been doing work, but it would be helpful if CTE to have some workshops on pedagogy and anti-racism activities.*

*Science:*

- *When the President's Anti-Racism Task Force was set, many of the DGSA's held out experiences and viewpoints in terms of Equity from the students but there was very little feedback in return. After that, the equity work moved more to the faculty level.*

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- *In terms of faculty led initiatives, the progress has been slow, but work has been started. There is Science Anti-Racism Task Force and a decolonizing UW Health Studies working group. This would help in determinacy of health of the indigeneous group.*
- *GSA can support by setting up optional donations to the different groups which can help groups to evolve in particular ways.*

*The Vice-President (Communication) mentioned that community development donations can be considered for the next year.*

*The Councillor from History added that the position for Director of Campus Wellness is open and if anyone was interested in it.*

### **12. Organize UW Update- Samuel Schirm**

**06:57pm**

*The Councilor from Germanic and Slavic Studies gave an update on Organize UW. He mentioned that there is an upcoming town hall in the Faculty of Engineering. There were town halls held in the Faculty of Math and School of planning. He mentioned that there is a page that listing all the current endorsements from DGSA's and others on campus groups and communities.*

*The Councillor from Civil and Environmental Engineering added that they were looking for more Councillors for Engineering town hall from other departments. People who are interested could contact her.*

*The Councillor from English Language and Literature asked how one would know if they needed to resign the card. The Councillor from Recreation and Leisure Studies clarified that Organize UW will be contacting people who have signed, and they will be asked to resign their cards. The card is valid for 12 months.*

### **Adjournment**

**07:00pm**