

**Graduate Student Association UW**

# **Council**

**Meeting Minutes**

**June 1, 2022**

**Primary Meeting**

Date: June 1, 2022

Time: 4:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M.

Place: Virtual

**Council Speaker:** Sidra Khan

**Minutes Taker:** Mavjot Kaur



**MEETING ATTENDENCE**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position/Faculty</b>	<b>Attendance*</b>
Sidra Khan	Speaker of Council	P
David Varandas	Health - Kinesiology	A
MK Stinson	Health - Recreation & Leisure Studies	P
Pam Hopwood	Health - Public Health Sciences (School of )	P
Jillian Adams	Arts - Accounting & Finance	P
Chris Martin	Arts - English Language & Literature	A
Stephanie Wilson	Arts - Fine Arts	Po
Nathalie Gadbois	Arts - French Studies	A
Erica Swyers	Arts - Germanic & Slavic Studies	A
Michelle Brown	Arts - History	A
Zerihun Kinate	Arts - Master of Peace & Conflict Studies	A
Cael Dobson	Arts - Philosophy	P
Harshadaa Deshpande	Arts - Psychology	P
Matthew Gerrits	Arts - Master of Public Service (MPS)	A
Ben Szoller	Arts - Religious Studies	R
Madeleine Pinard	Arts - Global Governance	A
Alex Dalton	Eng - Master of Business, Entrepreneurship, & Technology (MBET)	A
Manh Kien Tran	Eng - Chemical Engineering	P
Nastaran Mosavari	Eng - Civil & Environmental Engineering	P
Cindy Yang	Eng - Electrical & Computer Engineering	A
Devansh Nagpal	Eng - Management Sciences	A
Jinesh Shah	Eng - Mechanical & Mechatronics Engineering	A
Elizabeth Diederichs	Eng - Systems Design Engineering	P
Yusof Ghiasi	Enviro - Geography & Environmental Management (GEM)	A
Donna Jones	Enviro - School of Environment, Enterprise, & Development (SEED)	P
Katie Pita	Enviro - School of Environment, Resources, & Sustainability (SERS)	P
Cloe St-Hilaire	Enviro - School of Planning	A
Joseph Meleshko	Math - Computer Science	P
Alexandra Mossman	Math - Statistics & Actuarial Sciences	P
Caleb Ryan	Science - Biology	A
Everett Patterson	Science - Physics and Astronomy	P
Antoine Hakim	Science - Pharmacy (School of)	P

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Asiya Jabeen	Science - Optometry and Vision Science (School of)	P
Kevin White	Collaborative Water Program	P
Elham Mohammadi	Director (Board)	A
Yi Abby Wang	Director (Board)	A
Ruby Aigbotsua	Director (Board)	A
Mohammad Barkhori	Director (Board)	A
Tia Driver	Director (Board)	P
Teghan Barton	Director (Board Chair)	P
Kaylee Biggart	Director (Board)	A
Everett Patterson	Director (Board)	P
David Billedeau	Director (Board)	P
Jullian Surdi	President- GSA UW	P
Glaucia Melo	VP Admin	R
Tyler Hampton	Vice-President (Communication)	P
Naima Samuel	Senator	A
Onurcan Gokkaya	Senator	A
Aiman Fatima	Senator	P
Jack DeGooyer	Senator	A
Aiden Huffman	SGRC	A
Sophia Sanniti	SGRC	A
Jennifer Reid	SGRC	A
Rita Cherkewski	Executive Manager	P
Christy Racho	Office Coordinator	A
Anju George	Department of Planning, Faculty of the Environment	P

\*Attendance

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

**AGENDA**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Item</b>		<b>Length (min)</b>
4:00 PM	<b>1</b>	<b>Opening Remarks</b> - Speaker's Welcome - Land Acknowledgement	2
4:02 PM	<b>2</b>	<b>Attendance</b>	1
4:03 PM	<b>3</b>	<b>Declaration of Interests</b>	1
4:04 PM	<b>4</b>	<b>Adoption of the Agenda</b>	1
4:05 PM	<b>5</b>	<b>Approval of Meeting Minutes</b> - April - May	5
4:10 PM	<b>6</b>	<b>Update from the President</b>	10
4:25 PM	<b>7</b>	<b>Update from OUW</b>	5
4:25 PM	<b>8</b>	<b>Discussion on Council Process &amp; Communication</b>	
4:25 PM	<b>8a</b>	- Assigning time for Councillors' feedback during meetings/after meetings	10
4:35 PM	<b>8b</b>	- Use of Slack	5
4:40 PM	<b>8c</b>	- Do Councillors need access to previous documents?	10
4:50 PM	<b>8d</b>	<b>Selection of Councillors from faculties with multiple interested candidates</b>	10
5:00 PM		<b>5 minute break</b>	
5:00 PM	<b>9a</b>	<b>Update on Council Executive Committee</b>	15
5:15 PM	<b>9b</b>	<b>Format and Election/Appointment of Deputy Speaker Role</b>	15
5:30 PM	<b>10</b>	<b>GSA Partnership Development &amp; Philanthropy Efforts (Presentation by Partnerships Coordinator)</b>	15
5:45 PM	<b>11</b>	<b>PNC Report Approval</b>	5
5:45 PM		<b>ADJOURNMENT</b>	

**MINUTES**

- 1. Opening Remarks** **04:01pm**  
-Speaker's Welcome  
-Land Acknowledgement

*Khan takes the chair and calls the meeting to order at 04:01pm.*

- 2. Attendance** **04:03pm**  
*Kaur takes the attendance.*

- 3. Declaration of Interests** **04:03pm**  
*No conflicts of interests were declared.*

- 4. Adoption of Agenda** **04:04pm**  
*Motion to approve the agenda. Approved unanimously*

- 5. Approval of Meeting Minutes** **04:04pm**  
-April  
*The minutes of the April 6th, 2022, meeting was approved unanimously.*

- 6. Update from the President** **04:07pm**  
*Julian Surdi introduced himself as the incoming President for the GSA-UW. He mentioned that he is currently in the first year of his masters in Kinesiology department. He had been actively involved in student governance during his high school and under graduation.*

*He did not have any updates as he is transitioning through the role of President.*

- 7. Update from OUW** **04:10pm**  
*OrganizeUW (OUW) representative gave an update on the state of OUW Campaign. The drive is for the formation of Union of graduate student workers (TAs and RAs), as well as sessional instructors. The Union provides unique legal protection for workers which cannot be covered by GSA.*

*The OUW is offering in-person session at the Graduate House and visiting offices for card signing. The OUW was also present for all the GSA Faculty orientation mixers in the past month. The ice-cream truck event on May 25 was hosted and it was a success.*

*OrganizeUW (OUW) representative informed about that there is an upcoming event on June 15. The OUW also offers weekly socials at the Grad House on Mondays from 5-7 pm called 'Stammtisch'.*

- 8. Discussion on Council Process & Communication** **04:17pm**  
- Assigning time for Councillors' feedback during meetings/after meetings  
- Use of Slack  
- Do Councillors need access to previous documents?

*The Council Speaker asked about the favourable time for feedbacks from the Councillor. She proposed two options, that is, during meetings or after meetings. She also asked for other alternative timing.*

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*The Councillor of Statistics & Actuarial Sciences suggested to create specific channels for post-meeting feedbacks as emails are hard to manage. In the Channel, the Councillors can give their feedback after the meeting. The Councillors can mention about issues which can be addressed in the upcoming meetings.*

*The Councillor of Physics mentioned that he is not included in the Slack and did not receive any updates about it.*

*The GSA-UW President mentioned that some Councillors might not be comfortable to share their opinions and ideas in front of the whole Council. He suggested to direct message each other on Slack, in case of developing ideas and building it before presenting it in front of the Council. This can be an effective way.*

*The Councillor of Public Health Sciences raised a concern about confidentiality that the former Councillors are part of Slack. The Council Speaker clarified that currently emails are being used for confidential documents therefore, it is not a concern. However, the list will be updated soon, and the former members will be removed.*

*The Councillor of Computer Science mentioned that there is no obvious way to get something on the agenda. There is a need of a structured way to overcome this issue by using a specific channel on Slack or other alternatives.*

*The Councillor of School of Environment, Resources, & Sustainability (SERS) mentioned that it is difficult to find the previous documents as they are not in a single place. It would be helpful to have a centralised repository for it.*

*The GSA-UW President suggested to use Google forms for the suggestion about what is to be included agenda. The google forms can be posted in Slack.*

*The Council Speaker asked what documents are considered 'previous documents' as meeting package is already available on the website. The Councillor of Recreation and Leisure Studies (RLS) said that in the past, new Councillors were not given access to previous meeting minutes. Now that it is being considered to create a centralised repository, it should also be considered to what extent the Councillors are getting access whether the whole history of GSA meeting minutes or case by case minutes. She also added that Slack is a form of social media and not private for confidential matters.*

*The Councillor of Computer Science mentioned that as per section 92&95 Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act (ONCA) the members are legally allowed to have access to the meeting notes.*

*The VP Comms said that it was his responsibility to upload the meeting minutes on GSA website. He added that the discussion should also be about whether to give access to other documents along with meeting minutes or not.*

*The Councillor of RLS said that the other documents related to a specific meeting package can be accessed via request. The Councillor of SERS said that the access should be given and agreed with the Councillor of RLS on access via request.*

**- Selection of Councillors from faculties with multiple interested candidates**

*The Council Speaker asked about whether GSA should centralise the selection or ask dGSAs. However, some faculties and departments do not have dGSAs. Tia (Director) mention that the dGSA of School of Environment, Enterprise & Development (SEED) call of candidates and elections are held. The Councillor of Collaborative Water Program asked about departments without dGSA whether there is a way to contact all the graduate students of the department and hold elections without involving GSA. Teghan (Board Chair) said that the Election Coordinator hold elections in the department which does not have a dGSA.*

*The Councillor of Computer Science asked what discussion should be about, as it is already mentioned in the policies. The Council Speaker said that she was not aware that there is a set procedure for the election of Councillors. The Councillor of Computer Science further asked about election procedure in case where the dGSA is at faculty level. The Councillor of Accounting & Finance clarified that in case of faculty level, the Election Coordinator holds elections the same way which is done in departmental level.*

*The VP Comms mentioned that some of the Councillor seats has been empty for a long time. The process used by the Election Coordinator has the same for each term. However, the Councillor seats are still empty which might be a matter of discussion, what changes can be made to attract more students to be part of Council.*

*The Councillor of Optometry and Vision Science mentioned that in their dGSA, the VP sits as a Council. However, multiple people showed interest, but nothing could be done about it. The Councillor of Computer Science suggested that a formal process might be good. He added that some people are not interest just because they are not willing to commit to the job of a Councillor. These people can be provided with some flexibility so that they know how things works and develop their interest. Rita (Executive Manager) suggested to go to the departments and give presentations to engage them in the GSA. The VP Comm mentioned that this can be organised in the next term during the orientation of the students.*

*The Councillor of Collaborative Water Program suggested that current Councillors from a certain faculty can talk to other people in their faculty and encourage them to join the Council. The Councillor of Physics and Astronomy highlighted how their dGSA involved people. They spoke in the graduate department meeting and hosted a campus tour & a casual meet at the GSA right after the meeting. They also recruited people for the dGSA by talking to them.*

*The Council Speaker suggested that Councillors, Directors, and Senate have an in-person meeting to set the momentum for the next year. She further asked what the purpose was for organising faculty orientations. The VP Comm clarified that GSA does not do student orientations. This responsibility is of the Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs (GSPA) & Student Success Office (SSO). He replied that those events were just welcome event for the students with just food and a GSA representative to answer their questions. The Council Speaker suggested to host such faculty wise events in the next term where Councillors from the respective faculties could advertise about GSA.*

*The Councillor of Public Health Sciences mentioned that some students do not stay near the campus, and some are enrolled in distant learning courses. There should be consideration for virtual engagement as well. The Councillor of SERS said that if GSPA and SSO are not providing quality orientation, then GSA should step in to fill the gaps.*

*Teghan (Board Chair) suggested to involve renowned person, like Faculty Chair, in the recruitment. This way the student will be obliged to be involved in GSA.*

**9. - Update on Council Executive Committee 05:17pm**

*The Council Speaker informed that three candidates have shown willingness to join the Council Executive Committee (CEC), namely Nastaran Mosavari, Alexandra Mossman and Joseph Meleshko. She added that there are still three vacancies in the CEC. The Councillor of Computer Science informed that he and Alexandra are from same faculty. He will be part of the CEC until Alexandra joins the CEC. Therefore, there are four vacancies instead of three. The Councillor of SERS showed interest in joining the CEC. The VP Comms suggested to refer to Policy 1 for more information on the role of CEC. He added that CEC has a say in the agenda of the Council meetings. The Councillor of Public Health Sciences asked about time commitment. Tia (Director) replied that one hour meeting per month and meetings while recruiting the Council Chair which is mentioned in Policy 5.*

**- Format and Election/Appointment of Deputy Speaker Role 05:27pm**

*In the last meeting it was finalised to recruit Deputy Speaker as it is mentioned in the By-laws. The Council Speaker asked if the appointment should be done by CEC, or the Council wants to get involved. She further added that as per GP-8.5, the Council elects the deputy position. The GSA-UW suggested that two ways. First, the Council calls for nominations and interview the candidates. Second way is that the CEC screens the candidates and present 2-3 candidates in front of the Council for voting. The Councillor of Computer Science mentioned that the deputy speaker should be a sitting Councillor. He suggested that the Councillors can send an email directly to the Council Speaker showing their interest for the position. In the next month, a way could be figured out to elect the Deputy Speaker depending on the number of applications.*

**10. GSA Partnership Development & Philanthropy Efforts (Presentation by Partnerships Coordinator) 05:40pm**

*The Partnership Coordinator briefly introduced himself. He mentioned about his academics and research as a PhD student. He also mentioned that he had been involved in GSA as a board member before being appointed as the Partnership Coordinator.*

*He highlighted the roles and responsibilities of the position. One of which is coordinate and manage the Philanthropy Fund Partnership initiative and the #PoliticsToday Event Series. He listed the Political positions,*

- *Political position 1: Ensuring ethical and equitable academic, employment, and social policies for UWaterloo Graduate Students.*
- *Political position 2: Mitigating barriers to pursuing graduate education in Ontario*
- *Political position 3: Encouraging the University of Waterloo and wider Region of Waterloo community to be leaders in sustainability*
- *Political position: Supporting student mental wellness*

*He answered some Frequently asked question about Philanthropy Funds. The local non-profit and grassroots organizations are eligible for this funding. The student-led elections take place for the selection of the recipient. Four organisations are selected based on the political positions. These organisations get \$1000 each and are allocated in 3 semesters.*

*The formal engagement with Reep Green Solutions (political position 3 recipient) and Sexual Assault Support Centre (political position 4 recipient) has been initiated. Reception House Waterloo Region*



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*(political position 2 recipient) will be engaged in month of August. However, the political position 1 recipient, ReAllocate Waterloo Region, was not registered organisation. Therefore, they could not meet the criteria. So, after discussion with GSA Administration team, the fund was allocated to the second highest voted Organisation, that is, Kitchener Waterloo Community Foundation.*

*He further encouraged the Councillors and other graduate students to submit their nominations for the year 2022-23 Philanthropy Fund. The nominations are to be submitted directly to the Partnership Coordinator through email. The list of suggestions would be presented to the Council in January 2023, where the Council will on which organisations should be prioritized.*

*The VP Comm asked for information that could be shared by the Councillors with their constituents. The Partnership Coordinator replied that as the funds and process gets finalised a repository can be shared about the past nominees and recipients with the Councillors.*

**11. PNC Report Approval**

**06:00pm**

*The PNC Report was approved by the Council.*

**Adjournment**

**6:03pm**