

Council Meeting Agenda – 14 April 2020

Date: Wednesday, 14 April 2020

Chair: Cody Waite

Time: 5:30 pm

Recording Secretary: Krista Harris

Location: 'Zoom' Meeting – Link in email

1. Call to Order 5:30
 2. Roll Call/Call for Quorum 29 people – See VP Admin for attendees – Quorum = yes.
 3. Wolastoq Acknowledgement – The Graduate Student Association at the University of New Brunswick recognises and honours the Wolastoq Nation and their unceded territories where we have gathered today.
 4. Adoption of Agenda – amendment proposed by Chair (1) remove Summary of Executive Activities in lieu of emailed reports/website posting, (2) add to New Business an update of UNB's response to the pandemic. Moved by VP Admin and seconded by President.
 5. Approval of minutes – February meeting minutes. Chair states that the minutes for February were not circulated before the meeting. Chair further states that upon recall there was only 1 motion, and that the majority of the meeting was in-camera, so will email out the wording of the motion to councilors. Approval forthcoming.
 6. Summary of Executive Activities (All Executive Members) (to be emailed/posted on GSA website)
 7. New Business
 - Virtual meetings (1) we all recognize that for now, there is a need for virtual meetings. (2) The next proposed meeting is May 13th @ 5:30. Motion by President and seconded by VP Societies & Events. Chair asks if anyone has issue with virtual meeting at 5:30 pm on May 13th. None heard.
 - Health and Dental Insurance Plan 2020-21 – update by President and VP External. Goal to find a sustainable plan. Reliable data collected from the insurance sector and detailed info on our plan have led us to this step.
- Motion to go "In Camera" by President, Samer Alam. Seconded by the VP External, Ramin Shamsdini
- Motion to come "Out of Camera" by the President, seconded by the VP External.
- Motion: (1) cancel, (2) year to year contract.
- (1)The GSA council & the GSA Executive committee move to terminate the current agreement between the GSA and the current broker.

The GSA council welcomes the process to begin looking at brokers for the upcoming year. Motion by Ramin (VP External), seconded by Mehdi (Computer Science). All in favor, none opposed.

(2) Regarding the year to year process, one year agreement with new broker. Chair to provide wording.../put into bi-laws...

Motion by Ramin (VP External), seconded by Nicole (Biology). Any issues? Yes, question from Naveed (Mechanical Engineering) Should we not consider 2 and 3 year contracts if they offer more and are a better value? Why limit it to only 1 year when it may not be the best option? A longer contract is not necessarily a bad thing. Chair responds that Council can put it in the bi-laws but that does not stop future Council from editing the bi-laws if they see fit in the future. We should look at this for the governing document, point taken though.

Naveed (Mechanical Eng.) Motions to table item (2) by Ramin. No issues.

8. Announcements – President states that the GSA has received a lot of feedback from students on UNB's response to the Covid- 19 pandemic. We want you to know that the GSA Executive have sent a letter, today, to the university administration. Letter highlights read by President. Eligibility to relief measures for International students, financial bursary amount insufficiency, most students do not qualify for CERB are included concerns. The final point, being put forward to university administration, concerns fees. Specifically, why are we paying full summer term fees? Research based programs especially? There has been a shutdown of services, no access to labs or the university itself, UNB could waive/reduce fees for graduate students. These concerns have been sent to the President, VP Academic, & the Dean. We are awaiting a reply.

The GSA now requests that if you have specific feedback on the impact to graduate students in your department please email them to us so that we can document and add these concerns to our list as we do our best to help. This information will be helpful as we move ahead. Please, also let us know about academic impacts to student life so that we can reach out to the administration with the specifics of how this is impacting students.

Comment from History stating that Program Directors could also be a good resource for information to support this request.

Question from Naveed (Mech. Eng.) The next meeting is May 13th, is it to discuss health & dental and also the university update? Chair confirms yes, a new update and report. Naveed asks if the health & dental will be finalized by that time? President responds that it would not be ready as it could take up to 1.5 months to complete the search process. Follow-up question from Naveed: will there be a separate health & dental committee? Chair responds, yes, it will be requested in the coming meetings. President encouraging all perspectives to be involved in the process.

Question from History asking if the response from the university administration can be sent to Council? Chair responds yes, we will send to the membership.

Chair asks if there are any further questions/comments and seeing none requests that additional feedback should be emailed from individual departments as information presents.

9. Adjournment – motion by Education, seconded by VP Societies & Events @ 6:24 pm.

*Note to Students: PLEASE SEND any inquiries or questions you have regarding these agenda items (prior to the meeting!) to the appropriate GSA Executive and please cc Krista Harris (office@unbgsa.ca) in your email!