

UMGSA Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 27th, 2023 - 5:30 PM – Zoom

1. Call to Order (5:30)

2. Traditional Territories Acknowledgement

The University of Manitoba campuses are located on original lands of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene peoples, and on the homeland of the Métis Nation. We respect the Treaties that were made on these territories, we acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the past, and we dedicate ourselves to move forward in partnership with Indigenous communities in a spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.

3. Approval of the Agenda

MOTION: BIRT the UMGSA Council approves the agenda for the September 27th, 2023, UMGSA Council Meeting as presented.

Brenda/ Akshi
Carried

4. Approval of the Minutes

MOTION: BIRT the UMGSA Council approves the minutes of the August 23rd, 2023, UMGSA Council Meeting as presented.

Akshi/ Brenda
Carried

5. Committee Reports

5.1. August Committee Reports (Appendix II)

- i. Chris shared that the Ad-Hoc Committee on Food Insecurity has met and elected co-chairs. Chris also touched on the motion under New Business item 11.2 which will allow some flexibility in terms of membership of the committee.
- ii. The Executive Committee is now looking forward to strategic planning as well as looking at ways we can alter and change the capacity within our current governance structure.
- iii. The Events Committee discussed fall orientation as well as the UMGSA executive meet & greet/ pizza party. The committee is also planning for future events such as a mental health workshop and Halloween event which will both be happening this October.
- iv. There were no Services & Support Committee meetings in August 2023.

- v. The Awards & Academic Affairs Committee processed the student & teaching award applications, received confirmation from Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGS) and announced the award recipients. The committee has decided to review and revise the application form format.
- vi. Hanieh announced that the Awards & Academic Affairs Committee has started working on the 2023 Holiday Hamper Program. If councillors have suggestions or feedback related to the hamper, please email Hanieh at vpa@umgsa.org.
- vii. The Finance Committee has been keeping up to date with processing conference grants. The Bylaws & Policy Committee did not meet in August 2023. This is because Julie & others are still drafting details of what they'd like to present to the committee.

6. HSGSA Report

6.1. August HSGSA Report (Appendix III)

- i. Akshi shared details of their summer event which happened in August. HSGSA provided transportation, food & games for a fun day at Birds Hill Provincial Park.
- ii. Akshi explained that students at St. Boniface campus have access to the Bannatyne & Fort Garry campus gyms/ recreation services, however due to the commute, many students aren't making use of this. If they want to access the St. Boniface gym, they must pay extra. This is why HSGSA is providing a partial subsidy to students at the St. Boniface campus who choose to purchase the extra membership.
- iii. The HSGSA is planning to have a multicultural event. Students of different cultures and communities can get together and wear their traditional attire if they wish and bring food from their cultures.
- iv. HSGSA is also planning the annual Patrick Choy Distinguished Lecture. This event will take place late October, in-person for the first time in 4 years.

7. Senate Report

7.1. August Senate Reports (Appendix IV)

- i. Though there were no senate meetings in August, Armin provided an update on his activities as Senator 2.
- ii. Armin spoke about his proposal for the writing assistant software survey. The results revealed that there is some demand for such software but there are also challenges and barriers with proceeding with the idea to distribute subscription plans to the graduate students.
- iii. To supplement this, the UMGSa has increased their department grant budget to accommodate for an influx in applications. Departments can use this grant how they wish. Councillors/ student may encourage their respective department associations to consider using the monetary support to provide their students subscriptions or subsidies for writing assistant software. If you are using Grammarly or similar programs to complete assignments, please be sure your usage is aligned with the university's [academic integrity policies](#).
- iv. To ensure your department can benefit from these grants it is important to confirm that your internal GSA is active and has a representative on the

- v. UMGSA Council (good attendance & consent culture training is essential). Armin mentioned that there is a proposal in the works aimed at securing governmental insurance coverage for international students.
- vi. We have drafted a proposal aimed at securing governmental insurance coverage for international students. Currently, students are required to pay nearly \$1000 annually for this coverage.
- vii. Armin suggested that we evaluate the advantages of provincial nomination for Ph.D. candidates, a benefit already in place in some provinces like British Columbia.
- viii. Lastly Armin shared that we are actively investigating methods to make payment adjustments for stipends and scholarships.

8. Executive Reports

8.1. August Reports (Appendix V)

9. Departmental Reports

10. Unfinished Business

- i. There was no unfinished business to be discussed.

11. New Business

11.1 Approval of Food Insecurity Membership

MOTION: BIRT the UMGSA Council approves the following members of the Ad-Hoc Committee on Food Insecurity:

Hanieh/ Sakshi

Carried

UMGSA Executives

- Uche Nwankwo, Senator 1
- Akshi Malik, HSGSA President

HSGSA Representative

- Jamie Sookhoo, VP-External

UMGSA Council

- Alejandra Diabb Sanchez
- Cici Guo

General Graduate Student Population

- Meghan Mills
- Behnam Arzhang
- Sadman Rafid

11.2 Approval of Food Insecurity Policy Amendment

MOTION: BIRT the UMGSA Council approves the following amendments to the Ad-Hoc Committee on Food Insecurity Terms of Reference.

*Brenda/ Sara
Carried*

Membership:

- One (1) faculty member or their designate as approved by the committee.

Mandate:

- If the committee is at capacity, the committee may recommend additional members for membership.

12. Generative Discussion

12.1 University Budget 2023-2024

- Chris explained that this discussion item was selected given that on Tuesday the University held its annual town hall where they provided an update on the university's budget for the 2023/24 fiscal year as well as some insight with regards to the beginning planning for the 2024/25 budget.
- Chris opened the floor to the councillors to share their insights or ask questions about certain pieces. No council members had feedback to share.
- Chris concluded the discussion mentioning that councillors are welcome to email/ connect with him at anytime to discuss or provide feedback.
- We (the UMGSA) will continue to share details with you all for important events such as this one that could benefit from student presence.

13. Announcements

13.1 Committee Vacancies:

- Food Insecurity Ad-Hoc Committee (1 spot). Email Willow at gcc@umgsa.org for details.

13.2 Next Council Meeting:

- Wednesday, October 25th, 2023 - 5:30PM – Zoom.

13.3 October Newsletter:

- If anyone has anything they want to share, please e-mail gcc@umgsa.org.

Adjournment (6:08)

UMGSA Council Meeting Attendance
September 27th, 2023

| Position/Department | Name | Signature |
|--|---|----------------------------|
| President | Christopher Yendt | Present |
| VP Finance & Administration | Julie Xue | Present |
| VP Academic | Hanieh Rezasoltani | Present |
| VP Services & Support | Timilehin Oluwajuyitan | Present |
| HSGSA President | Akshi Malik | Present |
| Senator1 | Uche Nwankwo | On leave of absence |
| Senator2 | Armin Aghajani | Present |
| Chairperson (No Vote) | Kavisha Manoj Mehta | Present |
| Office Manager (No Vote) | Ruth Prokesch | Present |
| Gov & Comm Coordinator, Minute Taker (No Vote) | Willow Josephson | Present |
| <i>Agric & Food Science</i> | | |
| Animal Science | Breanna Zwick | Absent |
| Entomology | Sara LaValley | Present |
| Food & Human Nutritional Science | Ravinder Singh (Co-Councillors) Joanna Candas | Both Present |
| Plant Science | Laetitia Mukungu (Co-Councillors) Md. Ehsanul Haq | Laetitia Present |
| Soil Science | Sithabile Nyathi (Co-Councillors) Jing Hou | Sithabile Present |
| <i>Architecture</i> | | |
| Architecture | Paige Coleman | Absent |
| City Planning | Oluwasegun (Isaac) Omonaiye (Co-Councilors) Julian Loutsik | Julian Present |
| Interior Design | Tessa Horn (co-councillors) Lara Machum | Tessa Present |
| <i>Arts</i> | | |
| Economics | Michael Apata (Co - Councillors) Shantanu Debbarman | Absent |
| English, Theatre, Film & Media | Sakshi Tyagi | Present |
| History | Cara Ginter | Absent |
| Linguistics | Mohadeseh Rostami Samak (Co-Councillors) Ashkan Ghaemmaghami | Mohadeseh Present |
| Political Studies & Public Administration | Jessica Drakul (Co-Councillors) Md. Azizul Hakim | Absent |
| Psychology | Cici Guo (Co-Councillors) Reegan McCheyne | Cici Present |
| Sociology & Criminology | Mehraz Sarker (Co-Councillors) Sara Fehr | Mehraz Present |
| <i>Management</i> | | |
| Management - MBA/MFin/MSCM | Helena Goldman (3x Co-Councillors) Sebastine Omeje | Helena Present |

| | | |
|---|---|---------------------|
| | Chidimma Oryedum | |
| Education | | |
| Education - PhD | Salma Quadri | Present |
| Education - CTL | Minhee Kim | Absent |
| Engineering | | |
| Biomedical Engineering | Farinaz Jonidi Shariatzadeh | Present |
| Biosystems Engineering | Sunday Olakanmi (Co-Councillors) Mahmuda Parvin | Absent |
| Civil Engineering | Tara Seidi | Present |
| Environment, Earth & Resources | | |
| Environment & Geography | Debangshu Banerjed (Co-Councillors) Tyler Langos | Tyler Present |
| Geological Sciences | Tekla Cunningham | Sent Regrets |
| Natural Resources Institute | Alejandra Diabb Sanchez (Co-Councillors) Sobiya Aziz Badat | Absent |
| Graduate Studies | | |
| Applied Health Sciences | Brenda Tittlemier (Co-Councillors) Banke Oketola | Brenda Present |
| Peace & Conflict Studies | Maha Mehanna | Present |
| Kinesiology & Recreation Mgmt. | | |
| Kinesiology & Recreation Mgmt. | Mudra Dave (Co-Councillors) Sasha Kullman | Both Present |
| Science | | |
| Biological Sciences | Reemana Fatema | Present |
| Chemistry | Bahareh Taghavi Shahraki | Present |
| Mathematics | Ian Thompson | Present |
| Microbiology | Dustin Maydaniuk | Absent |
| Physics & Astronomy | Brydyn Mac Intyre | Present |
| CUPE3909 | | |
| CUPE3909 (No Vote) | Garett Williams | |
| Indigenous Engagement | | |
| | | |
| Guests | | |
| | | |