



Graduate Students Association
Concordia University, 2030 Mackay - Montreal

GSA Monthly Council Meeting - Monday, June 29, 2015 - 1:00PM to 3:00PM

Place: GSA House, 2030 Mackay, Montreal/ PLEASE PRINT YOUR OWN COPY

DRAFT JUNE 2015 COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

0. Attendance Sheet verification at 1:00PM
1. Call to Order
2. Chair's Remarks
3. Approval of the Agenda
4. Approval of the Minutes
5. ASEQ – Presentation
6. Advocacy Center Resource Allocation
7. Vacant Advocacy Manager Position
8. Vacant Service Manager Position
9. GSA Lounge Renovation
10. New Filing System
11. Financial statement update
12. Committee Appointments
 - a. Hiring Committee
 - b. Student life committee
 - c. Campaigns Committee
 - d. BDS Committee
13. CFS case conclusion briefing (Closed session)*
14. Appointment of Chair and Secretary (Closed session)*
15. New Finance Manager Employment Contract (Closed session)*
16. Outreach Coordinator Position (Closed session)*
17. Reports - Appendix I
 - 17.1 Service Manager
 - 17.2 Campaigns/Departments Manager
 - 17.3 President



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17.4 VP Internal

17.5 VP External

17.6 VP Mobilization

17.7 VP Academic and Advocacy

18. Other Business

19. Adjournment



Appendix 1: Reports

President

This is the first of several reports I will write during the year to keep you informed of our plans and progress. I will do my best to ensure that GSA's resources are managed effectively to provide resources and services that will help improve the experience of graduate students. I will work towards improving the quality of our language courses. Approval of the council of directors is needed to reintroduce free computer labs, low-cost photocopying and low-cost printing, which are services the GSA provided to its members in the past.

SUMMER SEMESTER GOALS

1. Minor renovation of the GSA lounge

This semester I will be overseeing the renovation of the GSA lounge to better utilize the space. There is need for the GSA lounge to be more welcoming to help improve the experience of students. Students association all over the world invest in their lounges to give students a central meeting space for relaxation and study.

Activities:

June 03, 2015 – I had a meeting with the Senior Director, property Management of the facilities management. We started discussions on the renovation of the GSA lounge.

I had a meeting with the Facilities management Property Manager at the GSA house. The VP internal was in attendance. The meeting focused on establishing the scope of the work. We inspected other spaces in the university to make comparisons.

June 23, 2015 - I had a meeting with the Facilities management Property Manager to review the quotations for the work order.

2. Internal Controls

I examined the internal controls at the GSA and will work with the VP Internal to improve it. Effective internal controls helps to protect assets and assist in their proper management. A primary responsibility of directors and executives is to ensure that the organization is accountable to its fee paying members and complies with the university and government policies.

Activities:

June 01, 2015- I assisted the VP Internal during the physical Inventory count.



3. Fall 2015 Orientation

I will assist in the planning and the coordination of the events for the fall 2015 orientation.

Orientation events where we welcome new and returning students are very important. This year we will be bringing the events forward by one week and plan to host more events.

Activities:

June 05, 2015 – I attended a meeting with The VP Internal and the VP Academic/Advocacy at the Dean of Students office. The meeting was with the Dean of Student, Andrew Woodall and Terry Kyle and focused on the upcoming fall 2015 orientation.

June 16, 2015 – I attended an orientation planning meeting organized by the Dean of Students office with the VP external, the service Manager and other student leaders. The meeting focused on coordinating the orientation events of the various student groups.

June 23, 2015 – I attended an orientation planning workshop organized by the Dean of Students office with the VP Internal and other student leaders. The workshop focused on the planning of orientation events.

4. June 30, 2015 Canada Day Event

On June 30, 2015 we will have an early celebration for Canada day. The event will commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Canadian flag. I ordered and received delivery of posters of the flag as well as mini Canadian flags and lapel pins, which will be handed out.

5. Council Training - In Progress.

June 04, 2015 – Commenced the facilitation of the Council training with the training facilitators.

6. New Filing System – Planned

7. Office Space rearrangement – In progress

Other Activities:

June 02, 2015 – Inspected the building condition of the GSA house. Issued a work order to the facilities management department to replace a broken washroom tile.

June 11, 2015 – I had a bank appointment with the VP Internal and the Finance Manager to change the signatories to our account. The balance of that account was \$10, 079.02. The Manager Finance will give the details in his report. There was a discrepancy between these figures and the one which was presented by the former president during the May 29, Council meeting. This discrepancy represents cheques which were issued by the former executives but had not been presented to the bank.

June 12, 2015 – I had a meeting with the Dean School of Graduate studies, Paula Wood-Adams. The meeting focused on areas of collaboration with the GSA. Dean Wood-Adams will be inviting GSA representatives to coffee breaks in the fall semester.



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June 12, 2015 – Staff meeting and Executive committee meeting.

June 18, 2015 – I had a meeting with CSU President, Terry Wilkings. The meeting focused on collaboration between the GSA and the CSU.

June 18, 2015 – Produced and distributed the GSA newsletter for June 18, 2015.

June 19, 2015, I had a meeting with Philippe-André Tessier who represented the GSA in the CFS case. The details of the meeting will be disclosed during the closed session.

June 20, 2015 – Co-hosted the Concordia University team during the Walk for Montreal event with Concordia University, President Alan Shepard. The event was a 3KM walk to the new Glen site of the McGill University Health Centre for its official inauguration.

June 26, 2015 – Scheduled - Staff meeting and Executive committee meeting.

VP Internal

SUMMER SEMESTER GOALS

A) Inventory

As, there's no inventory record from past years, I wanted to have a record on inventory what's been in the house and what's been used and what we need. In this way we can keep a record/track of inventory. The inventory-report is attached at the end of the report.

B) Orientation

1. Planning on

- ❖ Handbook
- ❖ T-shirts

2. Appointing Committees

- ❖ Hiring committee
- ❖ Student life committee

C) Organizing the house

ACTIVITIES

1. Daily Activities

- ❖ Documenting a final inventory report of GSA house 2030 MACKAY.
- ❖ Knowing about the duties of VP INTERNAL, the staff and executives.
- ❖ A rough plan for the orientation.
- ❖ Going through the time schedules and preparing schedules for staff and executives.
- ❖ Looking into the handbook work.



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- ❖ Organizing and re-arranging the GSA house.
- ❖ Looking over all the documentations in the office rooms.
- ❖ Preparing a quick outline for the FALL 2015 ORIENTATION.
- ❖ Preparing rough documentation of FALL 2015 ORIENTATION PROGRAMS.
- ❖ Outlining the agenda for council meeting which is to be held on June 29th.
- ❖ Going through and making sure about Association's allocations report and records.
- ❖ Meeting Alex Oster about Hall terrace issue.
- ❖ Understanding and going through GSA financial statements and GSA last year's budget.
- ❖ Association's registration work.
- ❖ Planning and getting the things ready for an event on June 30th 2015(Canada day)

2. Meetings

- ❖ Fall 2015 orientation discussions among staff and executives.
- ❖ Meeting with Laura about Orientation/frosh logistics.(June 9th 2015–Tuesday)
- ❖ Meeting with Alex Oster about hall terrace issue.
- ❖ Attended workshop on university finance and statements.(June 9th 2015–Tuesday)
- ❖ Meeting with Facility manager David.
- ❖ Staff meeting(June 12th 2015-Friday)
- ❖ First Executives meeting(June 12th 2015-Friday)
- ❖ Second Executives meeting(expected to be on June 26th 2015-Friday)
- ❖ Orientation planning committee meeting(June 16th 2015-Tuesday)
- ❖ Orientation/frosh coordination workshop(June 23rd 2015-Tuesday)

OUTCOMES

- ❖ Wishing the June 30th 2015(Canada day) is successful.

VP External

GSA DAY to DAY (Miscellaneous):

1. Orientation planning meeting:

Facilitated the orientation planning committee, since the priority of the new executive team is to enhance the student involvement/participation in GSA, Fall Orientation is the best opportunity for the new students starting their journey at Concordia as well as the current students, we thought to do some major changes in the way GSA used to organize its orientation traditionally,



for example this year we would be doing our orientation early (3rd week of September) and came up with diverse list of events targeting different age groups within the graduate audience. For more details about the events please refer VP internals report.

2. Orientation planning meeting with dean of students:

Attended the meeting with dean of students office, the meeting was focused on, “available resource in Concordia for the orientation events” the meeting was attended by other student leaders on campus as well, Each association present on the table shared the kind of events they all are planning to organize and Concordia administration gave us the input in terms of risks associated with those events, the type of insurance we would be needing in case of third party involvement, etc.

3. Staff meeting

Facilitated the staff meeting, points like Procedure for the weekly schedule for staff, Office space rearrangement etc. were on the agenda of discussion. For more details please refer VP internals report.

4. Lounge Rearrangement:

With a view to accommodate more students in the lounge and make it more welcoming we experimented different lounge setups and finally agreed to the one which you can see now!! the intention behind was to make lounge a hanging out place for the graduates where they can chill, have free hot beverages, play there favorite music and study. Further details about it will be discussed in the lounge renovation point on the agenda of council meeting.

5. Brainstorming for Lounge renovation:

The points on which we did brainstorming was:

1. How to increase the capacity of lounge from 20 students to 35-40 students at a time in Lounge?
2. What kind of furniture we would need?
3. Should we run a co-operative GSA café ?
4. Should we Invite Fine Arts students to do Artwork in the lounge?

6. June 30th Canada day celebration at GSA lounge:

We came up with a descent Canada day celebration event at GSA lounge on 30th from 4 pm till 10 pm, there will be an introductory talk given by ex-director of GSA on the history of Canada and of course we will be serving some good snacks and beverages. So yes, you all are invited!!



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7. Funding committee (Cheque for a Winter 2015 funding):

The group named "Headlight Anthology" had applied with an internal account but they agreed to use the external account of their Departmental Association i.e. Student Association of Graduates in English (SAGE). Since I was part of funding committee last year I explained the situation to our new finance manager and helped facilitating payment to the group.

8. ECSGA Meeting:

Had a meeting with the president and VP-Internal of ECSGA regarding the issues ENCS faculty students are facing with CO-OP institute like eligibility, selection criteria, etc. and requested them to allow me to attend their council meeting. Being a director in school of Graduate studies, I found that decisions relevant to Co-Op institute for ENCS curriculum are taken in ENCS faculty council, where GSA lack representation (a potential opportunity to look into!), but ECSGA do have their representation on it and unfortunately past year no constructive argument was presented in the ENCS faculty council around that issue.

So hopefully If I am given a chance to attend their council meeting I will propose the potential solution to ECSGA representatives as well as ask them to nominate me to attend the ENCS faculty council meetings.

External Portfolio relevant tasks:

Summer action plan:

1. Research on budget cut (Austerity) impact on Concordia graduate students:

Task Update:

In a recent meeting with the new External officer of CSU, we decided to do a combine research on the above mentioned topic, since the two being the umbrella associations, the research will help GSA, CSU, departmental and faculty level association to visualize the impact of budget cut in a clear manner and will help the associations to act precisely.

We came up with a timeline so that we will be ready to counter the effects of impact before the start of fall semester.

Timeline:

1. JULY 6: Send the Call out for the researcher
2. JULY 27: Assess the applicants and select one
3. AUGUST 28: Give researcher a month duration and Have the research by the 28th august.



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In order to stick to the timeline the council needs to approve the campaigns budget for summer, please refer the snapshot of the budget by the end of the report.

2. Attendance to new students federation meetings at provincial level:

The student associations of greater Montreal are exploring different options to establish new national student council representation.

Task Update:

I am attending the meetings of different projects being proposed and giving them the brief insight of what GSA is looking forward in regards to principles, objectives and strategies of the proposed national councils and if they are aligning with GSA's mandates. Just to mention I am attending those meeting as an observing member since, GSA is not in position to have affiliation with any national council, But its important to attend those meetings since it helps GSA to be in touch with current campaigns undertaken at provincial level and associate as an "observing member" if the campaigns are inclined with GSA's mandates.

3. Meeting with External officers of other universities:

I am in a phase of making good contacts with the newly elected external officials of other university associations, in order to get information about their annual campaigns and projects they are inclined to pursue this year.

Task Update:

1. Met with Gabriel Velasco (CSU VP EXTERNAL): Discussed CSU's annual campaigns and potential endeavors where GSA and CSU can work together.

2. Met with Marie D.Gauthier (External officer FEACUM):

Discussed FEACUM's annual campaigns and potential endeavors where GSA and FEACUM can work together, there is possibility that GSA and FEACUM will conduct a combine research on "Repayment of Tax credits for International students".

4. GSA Agenda/Handbook:

Will be working with VP mobilization and VP internal for the production of GSA annual agenda (to be given in orientation events).

Task Update:

CSU soon will be forwarding the list of Potential Sponsors for the Agenda.

5. STM:



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Currently, the Montreal public transit system requires students above the age of 25 to pay full price when purchasing their monthly transit pass. While lifting this age limit has been a priority of the external portfolio this year, our research with PGSS has shown that it would be unrealistic for us to expect the STM to lift this restriction given their current deficit. Therefore, instead of trying to arm-wrestle an agreement from them, we presented them with a revenue neutral idea. The external affair officers of PGSS-McGill and GSA-Concordia met with Ms. Isabelle Ouellet (the director of marketing at the STM) on April 17th to discuss the creation of a new university fee that would give Montreal students full access to STM services.

Our proposition emphasized the following points: -The possibility of all Montreal based student associations to opt-into this system

-The possibility for all students to opt-out of the system

-The inclusion of part-time student and 25+ students

-That the fee be payable on a semester basis

Task Update:

We are pleased to announce that our proposition was very well received by the STM it would likely be revenue neutral and allow them to expand its customer base. Furthermore, this will likely be immensely beneficial for the image of Montreal as a university city.

1. Partners - Student Associations

All of the student associations we approached have either officially committed themselves or showed significant interest in part in this project. These include Polytechnique (undergrads), Concordia (grad and undergrads), McGill (grad and undergrad), University of Montreal, and UQAM management.

2. Partners - Sponsorships

In an attempt to provide additional support and to cut to cost pertaining to this system, we plan on approaching a number of potential sponsors.

3. NEXT meeting in JULY first week:

We will be discussing on the pool of sponsors and their category in terms of their fossil fuel investments.

6. Orientation:

Will be working together with the executive team on orientation planning and execution.

If you have any question please feel free to reach me at external@gsaconcordia.ca

Campaigns Budget: (please scroll down)



Campaigns Budget (Summer 2015)	
Tuition/ Anti austerity	\$2,000
Research (Graduate Students)	\$1,000
Information/ Educational material/ Posters/ Flyers	\$500
BDS	\$500
Information/ Educational/Posters Flyers	\$200
Panel Discussion/ Speaker Series	\$300
Divest/ Tar Sands	\$500
Information/Educational/ Posters/ Flyers	\$200
Speaker series/ Panel	\$300
Other Expenses	\$400
Travelling	\$250
Meeting/ Miscellaneous Expenses	\$100
Budgeted	\$3,400
Estimated Actual	\$2,850
Surplus (Deficit)	\$550

VP Academic & Advocacy

Summer Semester Goals

- Planning and Execution of Orientation for Fall 2015.
- Planning for First Council Meeting
- Planning for Canada Day Celebration
- Communicating with Chairs of all Departments.



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Activities

- Meeting with Dean of Student office (Andrew Woodall, Laura Glover and Terry Kyle) on June 2, 2015.
- Executive Discussions (June 6 and 7 , 2015)
- Rearranging Executives office space (June 7, 2015)
- Staff meeting (June 12, 2015)
- Executive meeting (June 12, 2015)
- Executive Meeting(June 26, 2015)
- Canada Day Celebration Planned for June 30, 2015 in GSA Lounge
- First Council Meeting Planned for June 29, 2015
- Meeting with CSU (Marion Miller, VP Academic & Advocacy)
- Meeting with Trevor Smith(Former VP Academic & Advocacy)
- Replying to students E-Mails

Outcomes

- Reordering GSA office and Lounge under process
- Wishing for great success of First Council Meeting and Canada Day Celebration

VP Mobilization

1. GSA website update & GSA Handbook – I had Mailed every Council Member and have collected the data (biography, agenda & picture) for the GSA Handbook.
2. June 30th event in GSA- I have prepared poster for the 30th June event regarding the Canada Day and I am making preparations for mobilizing the event on social media.
3. Campaign Budget – I have prepared the summer campaign budget with VP External which is attached with this report.
4. GSA lounge renovation- we are planning to renovate the GSA lounge with new floor and furniture.



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Service Manager

Hi Council,

Welcome to the GSA and welcome to my very last report as Service Manager. It's true, I have left for vacation in New Brunswick and I won't be returning to GSA when I come back. Some of you I have not yet had the pleasure of meeting and so I wish you a fruitful time with GSA and best of luck with your studies. To those of you who I have had the pleasure of working with, it's been a blast. Thanks for sharing your ambitions with me and the rest of the team. I hope that you continue to do so and also good luck with your studies.

Over the past month, I have submitted a funding report to COI, worked with the new finance manager to pass on the knowledge I have about that role, gotten to know the new execs, passed on my knowledge and contact information regarding orientation and the service manager position, and now I'm looking forward to new adventures.

All the best,

Liz

Manager Department/Faculty Student Association

Campaign Advocate

Dear councillors,

Welcome to the first council meeting of your mandate! A new academic year is starting and I wish you all a good one at GSA.

As Department & Campaign Manager I mainly work on the relation we have with departmental and faculty Student association as well as on campaigns mandates that our members adopted. One of the first steps that happens each year is the registration of the student association under GSA's umbrella. The representatives of the departmental and faculty student associations must fill a form on the Dean of Student website and bring it to us for approval. This process helps us update the contact information we have. Some associations have already brought their form so the work has started, but more will come in the Fall and afterward when those associations have their elections. A Departmental Newsletter, to welcome the associations in the new academic year and ask them to inform us in case of recent executive change, has been prepared and should hopefully be sent before the end of June.



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We currently have an issue related to departmental and Faculty associations as well as some groups who applied and got accepted for funding last year. One Departmental association as well as one group only have an Internal account (an account within Concordia and managed by the university finance services) and no external bank account (an account with a bank like National Bank, Desjardins or Bank Scotia). Before we tried the usual way with Internal account meaning an internal transfer. In short you fill out a form that you send to Concordia Financial services for them to transfer the money between GSA and the association/group internal accounts. The problem was that the transfer took around 3 months and by that time we weren't able to know where the money was and the student association was complaining that the money wasn't received. After that we tried writing a cheque directly in the name of the group, it worked once and then Concordia refused the others. In the actual situation if we continue to work with the internal accounts there is problem on both sides. For the associations/groups, the delay for receiving the money is unpredictable, they cannot ensure a follow up and it can be lost. On GSA's side, the internal account are represented by numbers and, from what I was told, there is no way to verify to whom the account really belong which could make us infringe our Funding policy and the actual system makes it really difficult to ensure a proper follow up which means that the money could be lost, sent to the wrong internal account or sent multiple times. Now the question is should we ask groups and associations to have an external bank account, taking into account that the vast majority of them already have one or can team up with other associations? Note that one group already agreed to team up with their departmental association to use their external bank account.

On a different topic, in the context of my work at GSA I had to work on policies and by-laws. During the last mandate we worked on a new set of by-laws and the question of money borrowing by GSA was brought up. A fair share of student associations in Quebec already have provisions that prevents them from borrowing money, one of the main argument was that some people could burry the association under debt. So at the end of the last mandate I proposed a draft of a policy to institute an emergency fund at GSA. The goal of this fund would be to put money in it each year in case there is an emergency and we need more money then what is in the account. It is an important question on which you should take time to reflect. You should find a copy of the draft attach to this email.

I wish you all a great year and if you have any question do not hesitate to communicate with me!

All the best,

David