



## **GSA Council Meeting Agenda**

**Date:** Friday, August 02, 2024

**Time:** 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM

**Venue:** MB14.250

**Chair:** Sai Abhinav Tadepalli (President - GSA)

**Minute Taker:** Umair Hussain

### **Agenda:**

#### **1. Attendance sheet verification**

##### **Present:**

##### Directors:

1. Mahimur Rahman Khan
2. Narayana Vedula
3. Chidamar Joshi
4. Sania Zain Roshan
5. Sanjana Farial Oishee
6. Shahul Hameed Pichhi Thameenansari Syedmeeran
7. Sujith Kumar Kumaravel
8. Varda Nisar
9. Vijaya Chandra Yesupogu
10. Zoya Ahmed
11. Gopal Jain
12. Clair Begbie
13. Shuvanidhi Suresh
14. Pragya Jain

##### Non-Voting Members:

15. Sai Abhinav Tadepalli
16. Vijayraagavan Vijayathirupathi
17. Aditya Deepak Thakkar
18. Duraipaandian Anbunami Poogothai
19. Venkata Sai Pavan Kumar Maniyambakam
20. Alba Clevenger
21. Julia Pascoal
22. Umair Hussain
23. Siva Sankar Reddy Veluri

##### **Absent:**

24. Sovit Singh
25. Rozhin Saebi

##### **Excused:**

1. Enmanuel De Jesus



## 30 minutes Q&A session

- I. One of the GSA members expressed concern about his ongoing court case with the LIC being terminated on August 31st. He highlighted the urgency of his situation, noting his multiple court appearances and the interim period without legal coverage. He requested a personal response from the GSA regarding his legal support. He has a court hearing coming up on September 19<sup>th</sup> and hence needs immediate support.
- II. Sai Abhinav Tadepalli assured the GSA member that the matter with LIC, which is working until August 31st, would be discussed in this meeting, and an alternative solution would be provided starting September 1st. Sai will approach the GSA member personally after the meeting to discuss further. He mentioned that the LIC termination issue would be discussed further in the agenda.
- III. Varda Nisar emphasized the need for a clear timeline for the solution, noting that the GSA plans to cancel LIC by August 31st and should have an alternative in place.

### 2. Call to order

<b>Motion Number: Motion CO-20240802-01</b>	
<b>Motion Agenda:</b>	BIRT chair moved to call the meeting to order
Moved	Sai Abhinav Tadepalli
Seconded	Varda Nisar
For	Unanimous
Against	None
Abstain	None
Adopted	Yes

The meeting is called to order at 2:30 PM

### 3. Adoption of the agenda

- i. Varda Nisar raised concerns about the agenda shared in the meeting, stating that it was new and not the one previously shared. She mentioned that according to Bylaw 8.2, the agenda must be shared 5 days prior to the meeting. Since "Student Care" was not mentioned in the original agenda, Varda emphasized that no decision should be made on this topic during the meeting.



- ii. Alba Clevenger explained that points could be added during the "Adoption of the Agenda" time. He advised following the original agenda and adding new points when it is time for adoption. This process ensures that any new points are officially included.
- iii. Sai Abhinav Tadepalli acknowledged Varda's concerns and began going over the agenda at 2:38 PM. He asked if there were any changes to the agenda and requested participants to raise their hands if they had any.

#### Off Topic Discussion on Student care

- i. Varda Nisar questioned the council's interest in the benefits of privatizing legal health services at Concordia, expressing the need for clarity before listening to the Student Care proposal. She inquired about the basis of negotiations, the financial implications, and what would happen if the pilot program did not work within a year. She also sought clarification regarding the ethics of adopting Student Care without proper procedures.
- ii. Sai Abhinav Tadepalli responded that the current discussion was about interim measures and potential future adoption. He acknowledged that if the reference for LIC (Legal Insurance Coverage) takes time to implement, interim measures would need to be considered. Sai clarified that any decision made would be through a referendum with votes held to ensure proper approval.
- iii. Alba Clevenger emphasized following proper procedure, noting that points need to be added to the agenda before they can be discussed. He assured that discussions on these points would happen later, following the correct process.
- iv. Aditya Deepak Thakkar reiterated that the current focus was on interim measures and that the discussions were not about adopting Student Care immediately but rather about presenting and proposing potential solutions.
- v. Varda Nisar highlighted that a minority voice was expressing concerns about the decisions being made and the lack of representation in approving Student Care at this meeting. She stressed the importance of ensuring that all voices are heard and properly represented before any decision is finalized.
- vi. Sai confirmed that any significant decision, especially regarding the adoption of Student Care, would be made by referendum, ensuring that votes would be held to determine the outcome.



Duraipaandiyaan addressed that the Statement by Bangladesh Student Association is already addressed and it redundant, Varda Nisar seconds it and as it was proposed by her, it has been removed directly.

<b>Motion Number: Motion CO-20240802-02</b>	
<b>Motion Agenda:</b>	BIRT VP-Mobilization moved to add "Student Care" to be added to the Agenda
Moved	Aditya Deepak Thakkar
Seconded	Shahul
For	9
Against	0
Abstain	5
Adopted	Yes

Note by the President: The adoption of this service at the end is the decision of the graduate students via a referendum, and hence the student's voices/ votes will be heard.

<b>Motion Number: Motion CO-20240802-03</b>	
<b>Motion Agenda:</b>	BIRT VP-Academic moved to remove the advocacy center from the agenda
Moved	Duraipaandiyaan
Seconded	Shahul
For	4
Against	0
Abstain	0
Adopted	Yes



<b>Motion Number: Motion CO-20240802-04</b>	
<b>Motion Agenda:</b>	BIRT VP-Academic moved to add specific events to Frosh events
Moved	Duraipaandiyaan
Seconded	(GAP)
For	7
Against	0
Abstain	0
Adopted	Yes

<b>Motion Number: Motion CO-20240802-05</b>	
<b>Motion Agenda:</b>	BIRT Director moved to add and agenda to set the GA date and Townhall date before the budget discussion.
Moved	Varda Nisar
Seconded	Clair Begbie
For	4
Against	5
Abstain	0
Adopted	No



<b>Motion Number: Motion CO-20240802-06</b>	
<b>Motion Agenda:</b>	BIRT chair moved to adopt the agenda
Moved	Sai Abhinav Tadepalli
Seconded	Clair Begbie
For	8
Against	0
Abstain	6
Adopted	Yes

#### **4. Legal Essentials by “Student Care”**

##### Presentation

An overview of services was provided. Student care is a health benefits provider since 1996, founded by a student at McGill University. We have collaborated with GSA and CS since the 90s, serving over one million students nationwide. Our services include mental health, virtual health, and legal support, with efforts underway to extend coverage to international students with the GSA.

An update on legal services revealed that GSA would terminate LIC on August 31, 2024, resulting in no legal coverage post-September 1st. Currently, our legal services support 300k students across Canada, including most student groups in the Montreal area, such as Dawson. Starting September 1st, there will be no upfront cost for a trial basis.

The discussion then detailed the services provided. Legal access addresses the high costs and lack of student-specific legal centers, offering affordable and accessible solutions. All students, whether part-time, full-time, or international, have access to these services, with an option to opt out and receive a refund. Consultations can be booked within 48 hours to provide advice on issues like traffic violations, speeding tickets, housing issues, accommodations, immigration questions, and real estate. Legal representation is provided for housing, employment, academic disputes, human rights, and small claims, including direct negotiation with landlords and formal documentation.

The program's impact was highlighted, noting partnerships with 47 associations across Manitoba, BC, Ontario, and the Montreal region. An example scenario was provided: traditional legal cases, such as landlord deportation, costing around \$6500, are fully covered by Student Care.



The proposal outlined a cost-effective program at \$30 per year, covering consultation and full representation up to the Supreme Court, with no out-of-pocket costs for GSA members. The proposed trial start is Fall 2024 with no upfront cost. The fee structure includes \$30 for Fall 2024, up to \$24 for Winter 2025, \$36 for Fall 2025 to cover Fall 2024 costs, and \$20 for Winter 2026. These costs will be fixed in the agreement.

In the event of a failed referendum, the program will end in the referendum month with no cost for GSA. If passed, CSU will conduct the referendum, and voting will be done.

### **Question 1: Varda Nisar**

- Question: What services are not covered under the program?
- Answer (Alex): The program is designed primarily for students and covers the majority of cases related to housing, accommodation, and work. Criminal law is not covered, although consultations on any area of law can be done. Protests in Canada are also not covered as a separate category but are treated as academic issues.

### **Question 2: Alba Clevenger**

- Question: During the first trial period, is there room to take cases from LIC that might not cover dental and health issues?
- Answer (Alex): The program should be open to the entire membership. However, we currently only have access to the health and dental plan list. Starting January 1st, everyone can access the services regardless of their enrollment in the health and dental plan.

### **Question 3: Varda Nisar**

- Question: According to the law, Student Care is not responsible for the quality of services received. Is there a clause in the contract about this, and can we have a copy of the contract?
- Answer (Alex): There is no point in the contract that absolves Student Care of responsibility. The agreement will be shared, and the President will answer this question.

### **Question 4: Varda Nisar**

- Question: Is Student Care responsible for the quality of the services received?
- Answer (Sai): The contract will be shared for transparency.

Comment by Alba Clevenger:

- Stressed the need for one person to speak at a time and mentioned that the agreement would first go to the health care and budget committee.



#### **Question 5: Varda Nisar**

- Question: Is there any oversight of the partnered law firm by GSA?
- Answer (Alex): The partnered law firm is in Quebec. There is a provision for secondary opinions and transferring cases to another law firm if a student is unsatisfied. Most issues are resolved by the first lawyer.

#### **Question 6: Bla Amachi**

- Question: GSA is made up of international students, and not all cases are academic, housing, or employment. What about cases like ticketing and harassment?
- Answer (Alex): The program handles civil cases and consultations for any questions, but not criminal cases. The program is designed for common student issues, with harassment covered under human rights.

#### **Question 7: Varda Nisar**

- Question: Who decides the category of the case?
- Answer (Alex): The lawyer decides the category of the case. The partnered firm is Novum.

#### **Question 8: Varda Nisar**

- Question: If a case goes to the Supreme Court and doesn't fall under covered categories, what happens?
- Answer (Alex): 99% of cases are resolved at the first instance. However, consultation is available for any topic.

#### **Question 9: Varda Nisar**

- Question: What does the \$25 fee in Winter 2025 cover that the \$2.75 fee does not?
- Answer (Alex): There is no mention of a \$25 CAD fee. The program launched at \$26, now it's \$30, which is far less than inflation. The services provided go far beyond just consultations, covering case resolution even after graduation.

### **5. Collection of law signatures**

- i. Sai Abhinav Tadepalli stated that he hopes that I hope all directors have sent their signatures





## 6. Approval of June 28<sup>th</sup> council meeting minutes

- i. Sai Abhinav Tadepalli presented the June 20<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes for review and asked if any further changes were required after Varda pointed out that the minutes presented were not correct. He provided the corrected minutes and requested Varda to review them to confirm if all corrections, including the spelling of her name, were made correctly.
- ii. Varda Nisar mentioned that she had made some comments on the minutes, but they were not visible. She also noted that her name was spelled incorrectly in the minutes and requested that every instance of the incorrect spelling be checked and corrected.
- iii. Alba Clevenger explained that it was her first meeting, and she made the minutes based on the notes Emmanuel left. She assured the attendees that the minutes would be received in PDF format and any changes would be discussed during the meeting. She proposed postponing the approval of the meeting minutes to the next meeting, emphasizing the importance of bringing any incorrect details upfront.

<b>Motion Number: Motion CO-20240802-07</b>	
<b>Motion Agenda:</b>	BIRT chair moved to postpone approval of June 28 <sup>th</sup> Council Meeting Minutes
Moved	Sai Abhinav Tadepalli
Seconded	Varda Nisar
For	6
Against	None
Adopted	Yes

## 7. Council Chair and Minute Taker Introductions



## 8. Approval of committee reports

### Budget & Funding Committee

- i. Sai Abhinav Tadepalli presented the Budget and Funding monthly report and requested members to inform him of any changes needed. He noted that there were a few corrections, specifically two items that were not approved. Sai Abhinav Tadepalli also started a discussion on the evaluation of the Frost event and the proposal for a game room and new furniture for the GS house. He explained that the game room is planned for the basement store room downstairs but mentioned it could be discussed and potentially changed to a different location.
- ii. Varda Nisar Inquired about the location of the proposed game room and expressed concerns about the feasibility of the basement space, noting that it is not suitable.

<b>Motion Number: Motion CO-20240802-08</b>	
<b>Motion Agenda:</b>	BIRT chair moved the approval of the Budget and Funding monthly report
Moved	Sai Abhinav Tadepalli
Seconded	Narayana Vedula
For	8
Against	None
Adopted	Yes

### Hiring Committee

Sai Abhinav Tadepalli reported that candidates have been shortlisted and interviews were conducted based on the questions asked. Approvals were made following the interviews.

<b>Motion Number: Motion CO-20240802-09</b>	
<b>Motion Agenda:</b>	BIRT chair moved the approval of Hiring decisions
Moved	Sai Abhinav Tadepalli
Seconded	Shahul
For	6
Against	None
Adopted	Yes



### Appointment Committee

Duraipaandiyaan Anbumani Poongothai reported that appointment committee volunteers were to be hired. Interviews were conducted on July 30th with three applications received, and all applicants were interviewed. The committee decided to appoint two candidates, Patrizio and Samuel.

<b>Motion Number: Motion CO-20240802-10</b>	
<b>Motion Agenda:</b>	BIRT chair moved to approve new appointments
Moved	Sai Abhinav Tadepalli
Seconded	Shuvanidhi
For	7
Against	None
Adopted	Yes

### Student Life Committee

Venkata Sai Pavan Kumar Maniyambakam reported that a meeting was held on July 17th to discuss various events, including Frosh, and to plan other events for the academic calendar. The minutes of this meeting have been presented, and the events have also been mentioned in the agenda.

<b>Motion Number: Motion CO-20240802-11</b>	
<b>Motion Agenda:</b>	BIRT chair moved the approval of July 17 <sup>th</sup> Student Life Committee Meeting Minutes
Moved	Sai Abhinav Tadepalli
Seconded	Shahul
For	7
Against	None
Adopted	Yes



<b>Motion Number: Motion CO-20240802-12</b>	
<b>Motion Agenda:</b>	BIRT Director moved to have a break for 15minutes
Moved	Shahul
Seconded	Narayana
Amendment #1	Chair asked to have a 5min break to finish the rest of agenda in time.
For	3
Against	0
Amendment adopted	Yes
For	4
Against	None
Adopted	Yes

Chair mentioned that the break is till 4:10 PM.

<b>Motion Number: Motion CO-20240802-13</b>	
<b>Motion Agenda:</b>	BIRT chair moved to resume the meeting
Moved	Sai Abhinav Tadepalli
Seconded	Sania
For	6
Against	None
Adopted	Yes



Meeting resumed at 4:11PM

The chair advised the directors to maintain proper decorum.

Varda Nisar stated: I would like it to be pointed out that several members of the Council chose to act unprofessionally towards me because I was doing my job by asking questions. The concern was pointed out by a GSA member, though since I was online I don't know who it was.

## 9. Annual Budget Discussion

<b>Motion Number: Motion CO-20240802-14</b>	
<b>Motion Agenda:</b>	BIRT Chair moved to have an emergency budget & funding committee to discuss the budget
Moved	Sai Abhinav Tadepalli
Seconded	Varda Nisar
For	5
Against	None
Adopted	Yes

## 10. Frosh Events

- i. Venkata Sai Pavan Kumar Maniyambakam reported on the planning of several events, including a city tour scheduled for August 27th in collaboration with the Student Success Center, starting from Hall Building to Old Port/Underground City. A campus tour covering SGW and Loyola campuses is also planned. The library tour is set for September 10th to familiarize students with the library. Additionally, a furniture swap event where students can showcase and sell their furniture to new students will be held, with a budget of \$500 for food to encourage participation.
- ii. Venkata Sai Pavan Kumar Maniyambakam also mentioned a kayaking event scheduled between September 10th and 14th, with a budget of \$1,500, though the actual quote ranges from \$2,000 to \$3,000 for 100-150 participants. They are partnering with Lachine Canal vendor, 2 Adventures, offering a 30% discount, resulting in a \$15 student price. A laser tag event near St. Catherine Street has been planned with a vendor quote of \$2,200 for booking and playing, plus \$300-500 for food, totaling \$2,500, with an additional \$900 required to conduct the event. A scavenger hunt is planned for September 7th in collaboration with the Orientation Committee, and goodies for Frosh



will be distributed during all events, ending on September 7th. Further, the Mont Royal event is scheduled for September 20th, with a budget for food and refreshments. A significant Loyola picnic event has a budget of \$10,000, and there is a collaboration with ECSGA for a Calypso water theme park event. The CSU has not accepted the proposal for the Calypso event. Only the ECSGA has approved it. A meeting to discuss the event

further will be held soon. Regarding the CAEC workshop, the workshop could not be accommodated.

- iii. Varda Nisar mentioned that the budget committee did not provide information from two different vendors and clarified that Frosh is primarily for new students
- iv. Sai Abhinav Tadepalli announced the distribution of jackets and t-shirts for quality purposes. He emphasized the need for volunteers for tabling and the picnic event.
- v. Venkata Sai Pavan Kumar Maniyambakam Explained that multiple vendors were consulted for kayaking, with options including 2 Adventures at Lachine Canal and another at Parc Jean-Drapeau, ultimately choosing Lachine Canal.

#### **11. Frosh Events Volunteers**

Chair mentioned that there is a requirement of volunteers for various events and tablings and that the directors are requested to get in touch with the executives or staff to volunteer via an email.

#### **12. CEAC BIM Workshop**

Chair mentioned that after careful consideration, the BIM Workshop is cancelled for now.

#### **13. Calypso Event (Collab with CSU & ECSGA)**

Chair mentions that the CSU has not accepted the proposal and hence the event would be continues with ECSGA only.

#### **14. Game Room**

- i. Varda Nisar provided insight into a previous situation where a game room at GSA had its equipment stolen. This incident highlights the need for careful planning and security measures for the new game room to prevent similar issues.
- ii. Sai Abhinav Tadepalli discussed the current status of the game room planning. They are actively working to review the archives to gather relevant information about the previous game room. Sai noted that the staff members were not present during that period of time and are not aware that we had a gameroom earlier. Sai assured that they are making progress and will provide updates as soon as more information is available.



### 15. Summer Funding Approval

<b>Motion Number: Motion CO-20240802-15</b>	
<b>Motion Agenda:</b>	BIRT VP-Internal moved to discuss the Summer Funding Approval in the Emergency Budget and Funding Committee meeting
Moved	Vijayraagavan
Seconded	Shahul
For	6
Against	None
Adopted	Yes

### 16. JMSB Committee Appointments

Sai Abhinav Tadepalli began by asking about the current JMSB members present at the meeting. Sai then inquired if anyone was interested in joining various committees.

Committee Assignments:

- **Hiring Committee:** Pragya Jain
- **Budget Committee:** Bhopal
- **Appointment Committee:** Pragya Jain
- **Student Life Committee:** Gopal
- **GA Committee:** Pragya Jain
- **Health Care Committee:** Gopal
- **Sustainable Committee:** Pragya Jain
- **Policy Committee:** Gopal
- **Student Handbook:** both Gopal and Pragya passed on this.

<b>Motion Number: Motion CO-20240802-16</b>	
<b>Motion Agenda:</b>	BIRT Chair moved to have Alba as the temporary Chair for the approval of Executive Monthly Reports
Moved	Sai Abhinav Tadepalli
Seconded	Narayana Vedula
For	8
Against	None



Adopted	Yes
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Alba is made the temporary Chair to discuss the EMRs.  
All the EMRs are approved

### 17. Adjournment

- i. Duraipaandiyaan Anbumani Poongotha insisted all directors who represent their department to please bring up ideas for any academic events.

<b>Motion Number: Motion CO-20240802-17</b>	
<b>Motion Agenda:</b>	BIRT chair moved to adjourn the meeting
Moved	Sai Abhinav Tadepalli
Seconded	Shahul
For	10
Against	None
Adopted	Yes

Meeting adjourned at 4:57 pm