University of Saskatchewan Graduate Students’ Association

University Council Report, October 2020

The GSA continues its efforts to advocate for the needs and concerns of our members and to look for opportunities to create initiatives that will benefit the academic and social experience of our students at the University of Saskatchewan. The GSA is working on the following items:

1. Activities to Support Mental Health and Wellbeing

Part of the GSA’s mission is to promote and create activities that support graduate students and associated members’ mental and emotional well-being. We normally offer several events and activities that promote mental health and cater to the needs of our diverse member’s on-campus throughout the year. Due to COVID-19 we have been working on transferring this over to a virtual platform. As an example of this, we will have virtual yoga classes in conjunction with the Recreation Centre every Wednesday this fall term, which will allow graduate students to de-stress from the comfort of their home. Additionally, the GSA will be hosting a series of seminars, in collaboration with other partners on campus, aimed at bringing awareness to various mental health topics. More information will be shared as the collaboration process unfolds. We are continuing to work on other mental health activities that will support our students and members by working with CGPS, and we hope to see that come to fruition in the near future.

2. Student Engagement

As the GSA is no longer holding regular social activities on campus for this term, we have established social events, such as bi-weekly virtual coffee chats on Thursdays, which will allow
graduate students to network and connect with other students and share their academic experiences while developing a sense of community. More social and professional events are being discussed and/or planned and will be shared at a closer date. Additionally, the GSA understands the financial challenges that students are facing, caused by COVID-19, as such the GSA will be holding a seminar on “financial management” with collaboration from the Edwards School of Business, where students will have the opportunity to interact and engage in discussion and get tips/advice on how to manage finances during these uncertain times.

Additionally, the GSA is constantly informing new graduate students to complete the student-supervisor agreement within the first year of their program and encourages continuing graduate students to make use of the student-supervisor agreement as well.

3. Fall 2020 Bursary
In collaboration with CGPS, the GSA provides the Need-based bursaries for graduate students who are in need and show exceptional academic performance and community engagement. The call for applications for the Fall GSA bursaries is currently open and will remain open until October 31, 2020.

As we move forward, the GSA looks forward to continuing work with our partners on campus and find new ways to interact with our graduate students and campus community. We are always open to meetings and discussions. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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President
Graduate Students’ Association