



# SASKATCHEWAN POLYTECHNIC STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION INC.

## GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

### Moose Jaw, Prince Albert, Regina & Saskatoon Campuses Rm 156 - Regina Campus Sunday October 15, 2023

**Present:** Executive Council  
Steven Jose, President; Abhishek Jain, VP Moose Jaw Campus;  
Naresh Saroye, VP Prince Albert Campus; Gabriela Pozner, VP Regina Campus and  
Nicole Zalesak, VP Saskatoon Campus

Campus Representatives  
Moose Jaw: Swetal Shah, Siddharth Jain, Het Patel  
Regina: Bhavya Trivedi, Kai Nguyen, Vihang Sadhu  
Prince Albert: Michielin Nguyen, Kevin Duong, Harishgowtham Shanmugam  
Saskatoon: Kriztel Sayana, Daniel Jeong, Luis Aguinaga

SPSA Staff  
Carol Tetreault, General Manager, and Louie Ramos, Executive Assistant

**1. Subject: Call to Order**  
Steven called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m.

The SPSA acknowledges that we are on Treaty 4 and 6 Territory, the Homeland of the Métis. We pay our respect to the First Nations and Métis ancestors of this place and reaffirm our relationship with one another.

#### 1.1 Introduction of New General Council Members

The SPSA would like to welcome the following individuals to the SPSA General Council:

- Campus Representative, Moose Jaw:
  - Swetal Shah
  - Siddharth Jain
  - Het Patel
- Campus Representative, Prince Albert:
  - Diem Huong (Michielin) Nguyen
  - Vinh (Kevin) Duong
  - Harishgowtham Shanmugam
- Campus Representative, Regina:
  - Bhavya Trivedi
  - Van Duc Hai (Kai) Nguyen
  - Vihang Sadhu



- Campus Representative, Saskatoon:
  - Kriztel Sayana
  - San (Daniel) Jeong
  - Luis Aguinaga

**2. Subject: Adoption of Agenda**

MOVED by Gabby, SECONDED by Nicole to accept the Agenda as presented. CARRIED.

**3. Subject: Adoption of Meeting Minutes**

MOVED by Abhishek, SECONDED by Nicole to accept the April 15, 2023, Meeting Minutes as presented. CARRIED.

**4. Subject: Executive Council Reports**

MOVED by Abhishek, SECONDED by Naresh to accept the May 25 - September 20, 2023 Executive Council Reports as presented. CARRIED.

**5. Subject: Sask Polytech Discussion**

**Kendra Strong-Garcia, Director, Student Engagement and Learning Services**

Wellness Fee

- Fitness Facilities in the Saskatoon Campus are not as accessible for students studying in the Saskatoon Satellite Campuses.
- The shower rooms at the Prince Albert Campus location lacks privacy.
- Some students do not have phones to download the Fit & Rec APP, while some are unable to download the APP due to phone compatibility issues.
- SP provide soap for all shower rooms across all campuses.

Kendra will look into General Council's suggestions and noted that the collected Wellness Fee will be used to improve the current fitness facilities and upgrade the fitness equipment at each main campus location. Kendra also indicated that the SPSA Student Affairs Committee can join the Planning Committee which will be implemented this year to further develop the Fitness Facilities.

Housing & Transportation

General Council members indicated that there are housing and transportation issues across all four campuses.

- One major concern that students have brought up is that students do not know which campus they will be attending.
- Students were uninformed when dealing with leasing agents. General Council members suggested that SP be mindful when accepting more International students due to housing and transportation concerns. It was also suggested that resources be made available for students looking for housing.



Kendra explained that the overcapacity was due to the approval of backlog Visas during the pandemic which lead to more students coming to Canada than anticipated. Kendra also suggested creating a committee between the SPSA, International Student Services and Student Engagement to provide them with our suggestions.

#### Campus Security & Safety

General Council members expressed student concerns regarding the security on campus. It was noted that some Commissionaires may not be the best fit for securing the campus grounds. Members also described incidents that have happened on campus. Kendra will look into the roles of the Commissionaires and provide to General Council for review.

#### Cafeteria Concerns

General Council members forwarded student concerns to Kendra, who indicated that conversations are currently ongoing regarding these concerns. Concerns include quality of food, pricing and hours of operation.

#### Locker Concerns

General Council members logged into the locker website and presented their concerns regarding the difficulty in navigating the site and that locker maps and floor plan layouts are complicated to use as well as difficult to read. Members also indicated that students are charged a cancellation fee for switching lockers to a more appropriate location. It was also noted that students prefer to talk to someone in person regarding their locker concerns instead of emailing [lockers@saskpolytech.ca](mailto:lockers@saskpolytech.ca). Members also brought forward locker payment options, as currently, students can only pay with a credit card. Kendra will follow-up with the appropriate departments and provide an update to General Council once available.

#### Campus Health Nurse

General Council inquired about what kind of services would the Campus Health Nurses provide to students. Kendra is currently working on a comprehensive list of services that the Campus Health Nurses will provide but noted that pre-primary healthcare (initial assessments), information, recommendations, advisory and vaccinations are some of the services that the Campus Health Nurse will provide to students.

#### Textbook List

General Council members indicated that students would like to receive their textbook list at least two weeks prior to the program start date. It was also noted that some textbook list that students received was inaccurate and some textbooks were unavailable for purchase in the bookstore. Members also brought forward concerns regarding textbooks being required solely for the online access codes, which provides access to quizzes and exams that students are required to take. Programs such as Business, Computer Systems Technology, Hotel & Restaurant Management, Business Information Systems, Hospitality & Tourism, and Early Childhood Education have been affected by these concerns.

#### Program Schedules

General Council members indicated that students would like to receive their program schedules at least two weeks prior to the program start date to prepare accordingly. Kendra explained that one reason program schedules are late might be due to the manual assignment of classrooms by each campus Facilities Department. Kendra noted that changes to this system will be implemented in the next few years to assist in scheduling rooms for all programs. Members also expressed some concerns regarding changing program schedules in the middle of the semester. Kendra noted that schedule changes are not permitted as per Policy and would look further into this issue.

#### Bike Concerns

Naresh inquired about the possibility of SP providing an indoor bike locker in the Prince Albert Campus to avoid thefts. Kendra will look in this issue.

#### Student Connections

Nicole inquired about the “Student Connections” program that Kendra was working on. This program would connect current students with incoming students and alumni to act as a resource regarding what their program entails and to help acclimate students. Kendra noted that she is in the process of creating a position that will oversee this portfolio.

#### International Student Orientation

General Council members noted that information regarding adjusting to Life in Canada is not readily available for International students. It was noted that the International Student Guide is available online, however, students are not aware of its existence. Members suggested that this guide be promoted more to students and indicated that Zoom sessions discussing what Life in Canada is like would be very beneficial.

#### Laboratory Fees

General Council members indicated that some programs were assessed Lab Fees but did not have a “lab” component in their curriculum. Kendra will investigate this concern.

Executive Council will follow-up on these concerns and report back to General Council.

**ACTION: Executive Council**

*General Council recessed at 11:50 a.m. and reconvened at 12:30 p.m.*

#### **6. Subject: SPSA Presentation**

SPSA Staff members joined the meeting to present information regarding Advocacy and Marketing & Media. Madi Currie, Student Advocate - North and Carrie Woodrow, Student Advocate - South provided a presentation regarding what Advocacy entails and how the Advocates can assist students. Ashley Poole, Marketing Director presented on social media logistics and the other avenues the SPSA utilizes to reach students such as the Swipe and SPSA Connect.

**7. Subject: Action Items**

7.1 OER & Textbook Affordability

Nicole indicated that she is currently working on Open Educational Resources (OERs) and Textbook Affordability. Nicole explained that Sask Polytech is working on strategies to promote OERs more to instructors. It was also noted that producing OERs has been a challenge as it is additional work for instructors. Nicole and the Academic Affairs Committee will work on a textbook policy proposal.

**ACTION: Nicole**

7.2 Tuition & Fees Concerns

Nicole indicated that some International students' tuition increase was significantly higher than the provided tuition estimates in their acceptance letter. It was noted that students would like to receive timely notices for tuition increments to prepare accordingly. Nicole is also in the process of preparing a document to compare tuition rates for the past few years. Once complete, Nicole will forward a listing of programs to SP for review and follow-up.

**ACTION: Nicole**

7.3 Childcare Support for Students

Previous General Council suggested that SP develop a list of daycare centres at each campus location to aid students needing childcare services. Naresh will contact Kendra and Ben Gamble, Manager, Student Experience for an update.

**ACTION: Naresh**

7.4 Parking Concerns

General Council forwarded the students' parking concerns to Kendra earlier today. Naresh will contact Kendra for an update in the next few weeks.

**ACTION: Naresh**

7.5 Cafeteria Concerns

General Council forwarded the students' cafeteria concerns to Kendra earlier today. Kendra noted that she will provide an update to General Council once available.

**ACTION: Naresh**

7.6 Bylaw Amendments

The Bylaws Draft has been forwarded to General Council for review and consideration. It was suggested that a secret ballot vote be utilized for the endorsement of the Bylaws Draft. Gabby, Carol and Louie have been working on proposed Governance Structure amendments which was presented to the General Council. Gabby explained that the proposed changes would include the introduction of Vice President Finance position and the changes to the VP Portfolios and Standing Committees: Student Affairs, External Affairs, Academic Affairs and Governance.

MOVED by Harish, SECONDED by Bhavya to implement a secret ballot vote for the endorsement of the Bylaws Draft. Nine were in favour, eight opposed. *The motion has been defeated.*



MOVED by Gabby, SECONDED by Nicole to present for consideration, the Proposed Governance Structure and Bylaw Amendments to the membership at the November 2, 2023 Annual General Meeting. CARRIED.

#### 7.7 FSAA Membership

Gabby explained that the explained that the Federal Student Advocacy Alliance (FSAA) is a national coalition comprised of the British Columbia Federation of Students (BCFS), the Alberta Students Executive Council (ASEC) and the SPSA. The FSAA aims to provide a unified student voice for Western Canadian students to influence national change. Executive Council has agreed to continue being part of the FSAA for the upcoming Academic Year.

### **8. Subject: New Business**

#### 8.1 YE June 2023 Audited Financial Statements

Abhishek and Carol presented the Year-End June 30, 2023 Audited Financial Statements to General Council for review.

MOVED by Abhishek, SECONDED by Gabby to present the YE June 30, 2023 Audited Financial Statements to the membership at the November 2, 2023 Annual General Meeting. CARRIED.

#### 8.2 SPSA Financials Q1 September 30, 2023

Abhishek and Carol presented the SPSA Financials 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter ending September 30, 2023 to General Council.

MOVED by Abhishek, SECONDED by Nicole to accept the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Financial Statements ending September 30, 2023, as presented. CARRIED.

#### 8.3 SPSA Standing Committee Members

##### Academic Affairs Committee

Nicole indicated that the Academic Affairs Committee's goals include promoting Textbook Affordability (OERs and Textbook Policy Proposal), preparing a Learning Plan Policy Proposal, looking into seat allocation and demographics and ensuring that appropriate academic supports are available to all students.

- Nicole Zalesak, Chair
- Het Patel
- Michielin Nguyen
- Vihang Sadhu

##### Finance Committee

Abhishek noted that the Finance Committee will be reviewing the Monthly Financial Statements, develop transparency practices and look into the Co-op Work Term fees.

- Abhishek Jain, Chair
- Luis Aguinaga
- Harish Shanmugam
- Kai Nguyen

#### Governance & Policy Committee

Gabby indicated that the Governance & Policy Committee will review the Governance and Elections Policies, and develop accountability & confidentiality practices for General Council and Staff.

- Gabriela Pozner, Chair
- Kriztel Sayana
- Kevin Duong
- Swetal Shah

#### Student Affairs Committee

Naresh noted that the Student Affairs Committee's goals include reviewing the Wellness Fee, looking into the Graduate Retention Program and finding solutions to the following concerns: cafeteria, lockers, parking and health services.

- Naresh Saroye, Chair
- Siddharth Jain
- Bhavya Trivedi
- Daniel Jeong

#### 8.4 Upcoming Meetings

##### Annual General Meeting

Louie indicated that the Annual General Meeting is slated for November 2, 2023, at noon. Council members and the membership can join the meeting at the following locations (Zoom Links are available upon request):

- Moose Jaw Rm 2.213
- Prince Albert Board Room, Technical Building
- Regina Rm 336
- Saskatoon Rm 104

##### Council Connect Meetings

Louie explained that Council Connect Meetings are scheduled on a Tuesday monthly. General Council members are expected to attend these sessions to hear about current student issues.

##### General Council Meetings

The General Council Meeting dates are as follows:

- November 18, 2023 (Zoom)
- December 9, 2023 (Zoom)
- January 20-21, 2024 (In Person/Zoom; dependent on weather)
- February 10, 2024 (Zoom)
- March 23-24, 2024 (In Person)
- April 13, 2024 (Zoom)



**9. Subject: Closed Session**

The closed session began at 3:12 p.m.  
The closed session ended at 3:23 a.m.

**10. Subject: Announcements**

10.1 Expression of Gratitude

Steven would like to thank General Council and Staff for their participation at the first General Council Meeting and is looking forward to working with everybody this year.

**11. Subject: Next Meeting**

Saturday, November 18, 2023, 9:00 a.m.

**12. Subject: Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

Date Accepted:

Signature: