

Executive Council Meeting

July 6, 2023



SEPHGSA Executive Council 2023-2024

President	Ishika Obeegadoo	iobee055@uottawa.ca	Present
Vice President	Sumali Mehta	smeht055@uottawa.ca	Present
Vice President, Epidemiology Academic Affairs	Sara Siddiqi	ssidd089@uottawa.ca	Present
Vice President, Public Health Academic Affairs	Stephen McCarthy	smcca104@uottawa.ca	Present
Vice President, Wellness	Sarah Syed	ssyed020@uottawa.ca	Present
Vice President, Social Affairs	Rebecca Cano	rcano028@uottawa.ca	Present
Vice President, Equity Diversity, and Inclusion	My-An Auprix	maupr046@uottawa.ca	Regrets
Vice President, Financial Affairs	Renée Schryer	rschr099@uottawa.ca	Regrets
Vice President, Administrative Affairs	Sami Aftab Abdul	sabdu070@uottawa.ca	Present
MSc Epidemiology Representative(s)			
MPH Representative(s)			
PhD Representative(s)			

Administrative Note

Time and Location

Unless otherwise specified in the minutes, meetings of the SEPHGSA are held on the **first Thursday of each month at 17:30**. We currently hold our meetings on Microsoft Teams and intend to continue in an online or bimodal manner for the foreseeable future. All active members of the SEPHGSA (students currently enrolled in the Master of Science in Epidemiology, the Doctor of Philosophy in Epidemiology, the Master of Public Health, or the Graduate Diploma in Population Health Risk Assessment and Management) are welcome to attend the monthly Executive Council Meetings and may do so using the following information:

Join Microsoft Teams Meeting: <https://tinyurl.com/4vu3vztf>

Meeting ID: 211 529 625 126

Passcode: MUAMMY

Council Member Updates

President

- SEPH School Assembly Update
- Updates from Dr. Brouwers:
 - Received approval for presentation of specific awards at Gala for each program, provided there is mindful selection and attribution of awards with regards to EDI for each program (MSc, MPH)
 - Program representatives at Fall Orientation:
 - Dr. Brouwers would like the VP of Academic Affairs (Sara & Stephen) to hold student office hours/meeting times at the Fall Orientation for incoming students.
 - At orientation there should be a slide/presentation to discuss where Dr. Brouwers and other relevant staff's offices are located and to reach out various staff (emails, locations, times, office hours, etc.)
 - "Sit with SEPH" Meeting/Officer Hours:
 - What: A semi-frequent on a per semester basis "officer hours" time for current SEPH students to meet with Dr. Brouwers to discuss things about the program/Q&A, offering time to speak directly with the school director.
 - Notes: MPH program students have advisors for the program and the capstone project; thus, these meetings may not be entirely necessary, however may be useful for MSc/PhD students in EPI.
 - Notes: Could be useful for first year students to discuss their opinions on program direction and student perspectives.
 - New positions will be opening at the faculty level to cover openings/empty positions.
- GASED:
 - Are looking to create new departmental/association official emails and are looking for input with regards to branding/naming conventions from the associations, including SEPH.
 - These emails are to encourage a smooth transition for future association members and to regulate communications between GSAED and council
- The SEPH-EDI Contact is Dr. Alison Krentel, should VP of EDI need it.

Vice President

- Faculty of Medicine Graduate Studies Committee
- Faculty of Medicine Faculty Council (Charles)
 - Sumali received the invite to join the council. Outstanding actions include signing privacy agreement forms.
 - Meeting was cancelled, no updates.
 - Charles Council Updates:
 - Mandate has been renewed for Vice-Dean Langston
 - New building (Peter Morand)
 - FOM is looking to improve graduation/convocation ceremony.

Vice President, Epidemiology Academic Affairs

- SEPH Epidemiology Graduate Studies Council
 - Attended Meeting in June.
 - Council is working on compiling a resource guide for supervisors and students (detailing what courses to take, thesis deadlines, etc.), with the goal to having it go live in September.
 - Changes to MSc/PhD minimum stipends will go into effect for coming year.
 - Opt-out form will be provided for students with external stipends/salaries on a case by case basis.
 - Concerns regarding this policy as it relates to securing external awards but losing entrance stipends need to be discussed. A possible solution includes offering a bonus top-up to encourage securing external awards as opposed to relying on minimums.
 - Review of Policy for Thesis Advisory Council
 - C-7.8.1 Before the student submits the thesis for written evaluation, the thesis supervisor must confirm that they have examined the thesis and that it is suitable for submission to the jury for evaluation. If a thesis advisory committee (TAC) is in place, the thesis supervisor approves on behalf of the TAC.
 - C-7.1 Definitions: “thesis advisory committee” designates the individuals, including the thesis supervisor, who guide the student from the beginning of their research work to the final submission of their thesis. All members, excluding the thesis supervisor, may be part of the jury.
 - TAC and Examining committee currently will not and cannot overlap
 - Admissions Update (
 - 25 MSc Epi Students have accepted their offer, more offers will go out soon.
 - Funding:
 - 7 PhD Scholarships (all students received it last year), some did not receive it this year due to more PhD applicants than available scholarships.
 - Hawking Seminar Series.
 - Scheduling issue with “Introductory Epi” course (change in date and time, location of room remains)

Vice President, Public Health Academic Affairs

- SEPH MPH Program Committee Meeting
 - Meets every 3 months, no meeting this month (update post-phoned).
- MPH Updates
 - Co-op Connect to encourage networking given many students will move to different institutions for their practicums.
 - Tara is the new program director, will have meetings every two weeks.
- SEC:
 - Created a welcome student guide distributed to incoming cohort (~45 students)
 - Facebook group has been created and meeting today for introductions and Q&A.
 - Orientation week, need to meet soon to discuss planning (Sept 11-15).
 - Sami (VP Admin) will send out poll.
 - Hoping to run a financial planning (scholarships and banking info) night/event.

- International student orientation night/event
- Academic events can be subsidized via GASED: <https://gsaed.ca/en/academic-group-project-funding/>

Vice President, Wellness

- Wellness Update
 - Reached out to health promo about wellness week (no response yet).
 - Planning a scholarship session (Nadine & Shawn)
 - Looking at developing a Proposal/Thesis writing help workshop for students (Guide) -> Might be interesting to involve Grad Med in general for all Faculty of Medicine graduate students.
 - Blog Post for how to fast track, thesis resources (Sumali will lead).

Vice President, Social Affairs

- Events Update
 - Connected with Faculty (Dr. Melissa Brouwers) from School Assembly SEPH about GALA (many have been supportive of the idea)
 - Issues with reserving Venue (Dr. Brouwers will help)
 - We need a VEMS account, melissa has offered to help with booking.
 - Looking to get a quote.
 - Picnic or Beach/Volleyball (in 2-3 weeks at around 4-5pm)
 - Seek approval for budget \$60-80(drinks) for or \$150.00 (food/snacks)
 - Stephen received temporary approval of council for budget

Vice President, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

- EDI Update
 - My-An away, update post-phoned.

Vice President, Financial Affairs

- Financial Update:
 - \$50.00 deposit into SEPH GSA account (cash from the April Social Event - for individuals who had to purchase tickets)
 - Likely not contributing financially to the "awards" portion of the MPH Capstone Symposium, but may be able to contribute to the event itself (food etc.) - Stephen can speak more on this (discussed at MPH SEC meeting), can be further discussed at the next monthly meeting.

Vice President, Administrative Affairs

- Administrative Update
- No Major Update.

Program Representatives

- MSc Epidemiology Update
- MPH Update
- PhD Epidemiology Update

GSAED Director (Vacant)

- GSAED Board of Directors
- Bi-Election for Senate Positions, one positions is open for School of Epidemiology and Public Health representative (temporarily attended by Charles).
- Council on Graduate Studies (University of Ottawa) -> Time commitment to review program changes, currently a position held by Charles as senator (Bilingual position)

Business Arising

Fall Orientation:

- The fall orientation BBQ will be held on Tuesday September 5 at noon. In the morning there is likely going to be a SEPH-specific series of sessions for the first years. SEPH would like to know if the Association would like to partner on this event. "The BBQ is open to ALL students if you want to let the student community to hold the date".
- MPH-SEC and EPI will meet over the course of the next few weeks to plan how they would like to organize orientation events/information nights for Fall.

Main Business

Website – MSc/MPH Supervisor Info

- Set up meeting between program directors and VP of Epidemiology Academic Affairs (Sara) and Public Health Academic Affairs (Stephen) to update information on securing thesis/project supervisors prior to Fall 2023 on SEPH-GSA website.

Varia and Adjournment

Varia

- No items were raised in varia.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 18:39.

Next Meeting

- The next SEPHGSA Executive Council Meeting will be Thursday, August 3, at 17:30

Minutes

SEPHGSA minutes are compiled as soon as possible after meetings and hosted on a public webpage for review. These can be accessed from the SEPHGSA website at the following link:

<https://www.sephgsa.ca/documents>

The minutes from this meeting were last edited on Monday, July 10, 2023 at 00:34:36

