

Executive Council Meeting

March 31, 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	Present
Vice President, Administrative Affairs			
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 Friday of each month at 16:00**. We currently hold our meetings on Zoom 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 Zoom Meeting: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88552931410?pwd=SFZLTS9McCttekx6WllYbDZsMjF2UT09>

Meeting ID: 885 5293 1410

Passcode: 183364

Council Member Updates

President

- The SEPH School Assembly has not met since our last meeting

Vice President

- The Faculty of Medicine Graduate Studies Committee has not met since our last meeting
- The Faculty of Medicine Faculty Council has not met since our last meeting

Vice President, Epidemiology Academic Affairs

- The SEPH Epidemiology Graduate Studies Council has not met since our last meeting

Vice President, Public Health Academic Affairs

- The SEPH MPH Program Committee Meeting has not met since our last meeting

Vice President, Wellness

- Wellness Update

Vice President, Social Affairs

- Events Update
 - See Main Business below

Vice President, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

- No EDI Update was given at this meeting

Vice President, Financial Affairs

- Financial Update
 - See Main Business below

Vice President, Administrative Affairs (Vacant)

- Administrative Update

Program Representatives

- MSc Epidemiology Update
- MPH Update
- PhD Epidemiology Update

GSAED Director

- GSAED Elections are ongoing as we speak! Check your student emails for a voting link
 - There will be a by-election to fill vacant roles including the SEPH representative at GSAED. If you are interested, please reach out to elections@gsaed.ca to put your name forward
- There will be a luncheon at GSAED with uOttawa leadership on Thursday, April 6 at 12:00pm if you are interested in attending. An attendance sheet can be found [here](#)
- GSEAD is migrating to Outlook as their email client in an attempt to avoid issues they have been having with uOttawa IT and spam filters for student accounts

- They are additionally looking at making official Departmental Association emails (e.g., sephgsa@gsaed.ca)

Business Arising

Council Turn-Over

- Welcome new members of council!
 - Please send a short Bio and avatar to uo.sephgsa@gmail.com for the [About](#) section of the website (Avatars should be an SVG vector file from [GetAvataaars](#)–select transparent background!)
 - Charles has reached out to connect all members of council with their outgoing counterparts. Please let him know if you are having any difficulties scheduling a time for a handoff!

Vacancies

- President
 - Ishika Obeegadoo has expressed interest in the role of President and was elected unanimously to the position by the current members of council
- Vice President
 - Sumali Mehta has expressed interest in the role of Vice President and was elected unanimously to the position by the current members of council
- Vice President, Wellness
 - Sarah Syed has expressed interest in the role of Vice President, Wellness and was elected unanimously to the position by the current members of council
- Vice President, Administrative Affairs
 - Sami Aftab Abdul has expressed interest in the role of Vice President, Administrative Affairs
 - A vote on his appointment was circulated for approval during the council meeting for approval by members of council

Collaboration with the MPH Student Experience Committee

- Stephen McCarthy, co-chair of the MPH Student Experience Committee is interested in collaborating in more social events with the SEPHGSA to foster more intermingling between the programs
- He also expressed an interest in creating some formalization of the MPH SEC under the SEPHGSA Constitution in order to ensure that the committee is not wholly reliant on SEPH

Merchandise

- No update on the hoodie order has been received at this time
- We have received several emails from students inquiring about the order. Charles has been responding with a standard “we will reach out with information when we have more details”
 - Charles will continue to respond on a case-by-case basis; may draft an update email depending on the length of delay in the order

Website

- We need to re-write the [SEPHGSA funding blog](#) to address these changes. For the moment it has been unpublished from the website to avoid confusion
 - Stephen and Sara will take on rewriting the Funding Blog with Ian and Monique

Main Business

New Council Year

- Team Icebreaker!
- Vision for the 2023-24 sephgsa
 - Plan lots of social events
 - Bring back vibrancy of in person student interaction
 - Bridging the strengths of the MPH SEC and SEPHGSA for better student cohesion
 - Build a sense of community at SEPH – handling the isolation of graduate studies
 - Promote student wellness among MPH and EPI students
 - Social wellness and building friend groups
 - Addressing financial struggles of graduate students in Canada

Inter-Program Social Event

- Potential combined VP Social event between the MPH and EPI programs
 - Faculty need 3 weeks notice
 - Casual social event Friday April 28 or Saturday April 29 with Students and Faculty
 - Craft Beer Market at Lansdowne
 - No cost for reservation, but want to avoid booking too many and leaving the restaurant with empty tables
 - Aim is to reserve 25 spots and update if necessary
 - Hope is to budget around \$500 for the event
 - Some food items will be covered (TBD) but not alcohol

Finances

- Financial accounts handover
 - Haben has notified Scotiabank of our leadership changes
 - Charles has drafted and circulated a statement on official letterhead from the sephgsa for the formal transfer of responsibilities
 - Charles will reach out to Haben to ensure that the handover is in process
 - Shannon, Haben, Ishika, and Renée will likely need to arrange a meeting at Scotiabank to formally sign over the account

Generative AI

- Stephen is working on a workshop for Faculty and Admin (Monique, Ian and Melissa are aware of my request), because apps like Chat GPT 4.0 are coming fast, and higher education needs to adapt not

only to allow this type of technology, but how to succeed along with it

- Interest in developing or joining a working group on AI at FoM
- Concern about link between Chat GPT and plagiarism – how do we manage AI generated assignments and program components
 - The uOttawa Academic Regulations require that students declare their use of AI on any assignment or program component and include a statement about what the AI was used to accomplish. These are not considered plagiarism cases unless the AI usage was not declared, but they may result in a failure on the assignment if the professor deems the usage to have defeated the spirit of the assignment
- Sylvan Charbonneau mentioned at the Town Hall on Thursday that there would be an announcement on AI at uOttawa in the near future

Future Meetings

- In person/Online
 - We will start holding meetings in a Hybrid format with the same Zoom link and a room booked at Peter Morand for those who wish to attend in person
- Timing
 - Sami will send around a poll with meeting times for future meetings to ensure that they are held at a time that works best for everyone

Varia and Adjournment

Varia

- No items were raised in varia

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 17:17

Next Meeting

- The next SEPHGSA Executive Council Meeting will be **Friday, May 5, at 16:00**

Administrative Note

This meeting was held in a hybrid format on Friday, March 31 at 16:00 due to the Good Friday statutory holiday

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>

