

## SEPHGSA Executive Council 2020-2021

President	Hira Khan	hkhan117@uottawa.ca	Present
Vice President	Charles Thickstun	rthic032@uottawa.ca	Present
Vice President, Academic Affairs	Baies Haqani	bhaqa044@uottawa.ca	Regrets
	Irina Podinic	ipodi039@uottawa.ca	Present
Vice President, Wellness	Julia Shaw	jshaw012@uottawa.ca	Present
	Zaina Kahliel	zkahi017@uottawa.ca	Present
Vice President, Financial Affairs	Chau Huynh	chuy097@uottawa.ca	Present
Vice President, Administrative Affairs	Emily Thompson	ethom069@uottawa.ca	Present
Vice President, Social Affairs	Samantha Lancione	slanc008@uottawa.ca	Present
	Dilan Patel	dpate051@uottawa.ca	Present
Vice President, Communications	Shannon Thomspson	sthom0193@uottawa.ca	Present
Vice President, Web Design	Sebastian Srugo	ssrug082@uottawa.ca	Present
Vice President, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion	Zahra Clayborne	zclay068@uottawa.ca	Present
MSc Epidemiology Representative(s)	Zobaida Al-Baldawi	zalba014@uottawa.ca	Present
	Rola Hashem	rhash064@uottawa.ca	Present
PhD Representative(s)			
MPH Representative(s)	Nick Brisebois	nbris080@uottawa.ca	Regrets
	Amy Li	yli847@uottawa.ca	Present
PHRAM Representative(s)	Natalie Jensen	njens090@uottawa.ca	Present

## Welcome New Members!

### MSc Epidemiology Representatives

- Zobaida Al-Badawi
- Rola Hashem

## MPH Representatives

- Nick Brisebois
- Amy Li

## PHRAM Representative

- Natalie Jensen

## Non-Executive Members

- Danielle Roy
- Danielle Marion
- Ammar Saad

## Updates/Discussion Points from VP Admin

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### Deadline for e-mail sign-up: Nov 15th

- Confirmed and approved by council

### Google drive folder

- Will give full access to Sebastian
- Everyone else can e-mail Emily for access, as needed

### Irina + Baies: Preliminary results from student survey

- Over 20 responses, GSC very receptive to the results
- Baies will create a brief summary to be shared with Julian Little (Grad studies director)
  - Send results to Emily to add to google drive when available

## Townhall Ideas + Attendance from GSA Council

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### In collaboration with Melissa Brouwers

- Emily, Sam, and Hira have met with her already to discuss topics and timing
- First meeting will be an AMA – unstructured meet and greet on Nov 4th
- Second meeting will be a discussion of PhD fast-track vs thesis vs research paper streams
- VP Admin will be there to help facilitate the discussion, take notes, and field questions + will need at least one additional GSA volunteer
- Good opportunity for first year students to also get involved

## SEPH Sweater Orders Update

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## Laptop stickers for EPI+PHRAM+MPH - good for students who are not in country or Ottawa so we can ship the stickers to them

- 40c per sticker
- Thinking about getting three different designs and ordering 20 of each to start in case demand is low
- We will need 4 to 5 people to buy each sticker to break even

## Update From Each Member

### President

- No further updates

### Vice President

- Charles has had a couple faculty meetings since the last council meeting
- High level future direction theoretical planning: new research tower
- Strategic plan for 2025 is getting settled
- Graduate studies faculty council - funding has changed; most newly entering MSc student funding will be cut by 1500; 8.0 to 9.0 GPA required for future funding;
  - Had a meeting with the Vice Dean; university central administration made this decision without faculty or student involvement in the decision;
  - The money is being reallocated to PhD students so they get guaranteed funding;
  - Charles argued against this decision at the meetings; faculty has been helpful in supporting this stance
  - Vice Dean has agreed to have a meeting with vice provost dean.

### Vice President, Academic Affairs

- Reached out to OCSEB President Mary Scott for workshops
- Initially was going to plan a tutorial for intro to EPI but there was some difficulty in cooperating with faculty
- CSEB relationship has been established for future potential events
- Established a relationship with CMM VP Academics for future workshops about scholarship applications; thinking/planning about a workshop for scholarship application these days
  - Council members asked to reach out to Irina & Baies about being on a panel - Zaina & Sebastian volunteered
  - Shannon recommended reaching out to people who have previously received the award + to contact professors to be on the panel
  - Charles suggested offering a peer-review service as this maybe the most effective use of time; students could bring in their drafts to get feedback from the panel
  - Zobaida: CSEB did something similar like a peer-review process so she's wondering if we could do it in a more structured way by having upper-years do the review process rather than peers who may be first years and not be very knowledgeable on the process

## Vice President, Wellness

- Collaborating a lot with CMM and BMI reps
- Working closely with Sam & Dilan
- Most recent wellness event: yoga night
  - It went really well; people who attended enjoyed it
  - Kylie who is a yoga therapist and is willing to continue to support students on a continual basis. Could discuss the finances.
- The next wellness is being organized by BMI on October 30th.
  - Halloween trivia night planned for next Friday.
- CMM will be doing the main event for November, but have not yet planned it so more info yet to come.
- SEPHGSA will take over the December month events
- Some ideas for the new year – will be brought up next council meeting
- Nadine sent an email about a pilot project: “academic GPS” virtual study space with peers and moderator. A type of online mentoring/buddy system.
  - Will meet with the other VP wellnesses to discuss this further

## Vice President, Financial Affairs

- No updates

## Vice President, Social Affairs

- Collaborating frequently with CMM/BMI
  - SEPHGSA will be handling event planning for the holiday season (i.e., thinking about what to do in December)
  - Jeopardy was a stressful event to host and will likely sub it with regular trivia in the future as a result
  - Would like to include the representative members where possible in future events promotion
- Future events
  - Halloween Night October 30th (long event of pumpkin carving, movie, etc. – details coming soon, so they will keep us updated)

## Vice President, Communications

- No updates

## Vice President, Web Design

- Getting the SEPHGSA website up and running
  - Working with other SEPHGSA members to put resources up onto the website so that current and future students can access information that is difficult to find on the SEPH website
  - Resources include contact information for each of the SEPHGSA members and also blogs!
- Editing blog drafts sent by SEPHGSA members and mounting them onto a Google drive.
  - Blogs range in terms of topic and cover funding, working in grad school, differences between the MPH and MSc Epi programs, self-care/wellness in grad school, etc.
  - The following link was shared in the meeting with all members, who were encouraged to look through all of the blogs and to verify content (i.e., ensure information seems to be correct in

each of the blog): <https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1LnwFMIR2pmSeSWBfyTvVrvhsS-W28v-b>.

- Please reach out to Sebastian if you have additional blog ideas!
- In particular, now that we have some SEPHGSA members who are familiar with the MPH program, perhaps we can add more blog content targeted to students from that program.
- Creating sticker designs to be sold to SEPH students. Sebastian and Samantha have both been working on these, and they shared 5 or 6 designs in the meeting. The designs were well received.
  - Charles suggested that perhaps they should also make a sticker with the SEPHGSA logo on it.
  - We will hear more about the stickers soon and will be given the opportunity to vote on designs that will eventually be offered for purchase by SEPH students.
  - Stickers are quite inexpensive for SEPHGSA to purchase as well.

## Vice President, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

- EDI Student Committee Meeting on October 9th
  - Ran out of time to discuss all items of interest - will extend future meets past 60 minutes
- Hiring practices at the school
  - Faculty of Medicine Hiring and Retention Policy: Zahra provided her highlights and feedback on the document, although she also indicated that the makers of the document were not receptive on getting feedback
    - One of the critiques of the document is centered in on its use of vague language in directives that are extremely important and should be elaborated on further (e.g., “adequate effort or attempt should be made [to ensure fairness in hiring practices as it relates to equity, diversity and inclusion]...”). Zahra stressed that hiring is an important issue for the Faculty to get right as we are supposed to be hiring a couple of new faculty members at SEPH in the near future.
  - Hiring committees should be diverse and ideally should allow students to provide input on candidates for positions at the Faculty.
- Changes to funding at the Faculty of Medicine
  - Graduate Studies Scholarship is being replaced by the Admissions Scholarship, which will be offered for 1 year to MSc students and will not be renewable for a second year
  - Admissions Scholarship will not be available to students in the MPH program; it is not yet clear whether SEPH will be required to commit matching funds to students with the Admissions Scholarship)
  - Funding will look different for Masters and PhD students at SEPH going forward, and we need to understand how this will impact our students.
  - Vivian Welch will be sitting as the co-chair of the EDI Committee. Zahra and Vivian communicated about the appropriateness of sending out a survey to students (and ideally faculty) to gauge what funding for students is like. This survey did not get sent out during the pandemic but should be sent out.
  - Zahra received a copy of the 2018 Student Satisfaction Survey and has data for 55 SEPH students who responded to that survey. Key findings: (a) 80% of respondents reported that they had the admission or excellence scholarship (evidently, many students rely on funding of this type, and the approaching changes to funding at the graduate level for SEPH students may

very well negatively affect most of our student funding) (b) 67% of respondents reported that they did not have external funding (while the effects of changes to funding provided by the School may be downplayed using the excuse that many students have external funding, this survey indicates otherwise) (c) over 50% of respondents cited their primary concern at the School as being financial in nature.

- Should gauge what the financial situation is like for our students this year using a survey. We especially need to know what things are like for the MPH students, as their tuition is quite high and they will not be able to receive the Admission Scholarship of \$7500 in their first year
- Zahra will distribute the copy of the financial survey Beth made last year and will consolidate the questions into a new version that can be distributed to students and possibly faculty.
- The school has funding for a seminar series.
- Can the GSA take up an advocacy stance and act on issues as a group?
  - Charles would be happy to have SEPHGSA take on more of an advocacy role on these issues. However, as a cautionary note, we need to be aware that if we start having an advocacy voice, we need to be consistent/ We need to make sure we have an ear to the ground on what the pertinent issues are and keep on top of those concerns. Perhaps a working group could be in charge of keeping on top of those issues and writing stances that we can disseminate through social media.
- Zahra will organize another EDI working group meeting
  - All members we are free to join in on their Zoom call
  - The meeting is conversation based.
  - If we want Zahra to share the results of the Student Satisfaction Survey to the broader group, she's happy to do that. She also invited people to provide perspectives on the survey.

## MSc Reps

- No updates at the moment

## MPH Reps

- MPH reps: Amy asked if there is a portal for students in SEPH programs to anonymously submit feedback to the SEPHGSA.
  - Currently there is no formal anonymous process to do this, but that we are happy to present issues that arise from a student concern anonymously (and of course representatives are key in this role).
  - Sebastian added that he could ensure an anonymous online feedback channel is added to the SEPHGSA website. On the page, we could write "Anonymously send questions to the SEPHGSA here". Sebastian indicated that he can make it so that a student does not have to associate a name with a comment.

## PHRAM Rep

- N/A

## Reminders

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1. Join the SEPHGSA Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/832774063421219>
2. VP Communications is the Designated Manager of SEPHGSA Twitter Account: @SEPH\_GSA & Facebook Account
3. VP Admin is the Designated Person for Emailing List + Manger of SEPHGSA Emails
4. Suggestions/Concerns

## Administrative Note

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### SEPHGSA Archives Project

These minutes were compiled as part of an archival project to collate the minutes of past SEPHGSA Executive Council Meetings into a complete archive on the SEPHGSA website. The goal of this project is to provide a complete record of SEPHGSA activities in so far as we are able

As these minutes are being formally compiled after the fact, there may be information that is missing or incomplete as it was not included in the written record at the time. If you have any questions about the archival project – or have information about missing or incomplete records of SEPHGSA activities – we encourage you to reach out to [uo.sephgsa@gmail.com](mailto:uo.sephgsa@gmail.com) or visit the contact form on the SEPHGSA website at <https://www.sephgsa.ca/contact>

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 Friday, March 24, 2023 at 14:51:49

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