

SEPHGSA Executive Council 2023-2024

President	Ishika Obeegadoo	iobee055@uottawa.ca	Present
Vice President	Sumali Mehta	smeht055@uottawa.ca	Regrets
Vice President, Epidemiology Academic Affairs	Sara Siddiqi	ssidd089@uottawa.ca	Present
Vice President, Public Health Academic Affairs	Stephen McCarthy	smcca104@uottawa.ca	Regrets
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	Present
Vice President, Financial Affairs	Renée Schryer	rschr099@uottawa.ca	Present
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 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

- SEPH School Assembly
 - Professor Hawken is putting together a group to facilitate discussions geared towards structuring classes focused on coding and statistics.
 - This workforce/taskforce is looking for the student perspective and have asked SEPHGSA to help recruit students (Rebecca can put out a social post to reach out to SEPH if they are interested, Ishika will provide further information)
 - Raising passing grade for graduate classes (currently at C+, other Epi/Public Health programs have considered raising it, however, need a minimum cut-off)
 - Charles: Currently only professional degrees have a different passing grade system; this process is above departmental decision more so a case for senate to approve
 - Restructuring of both EPI/MPH programs

Vice President

- Faculty of Medicine Graduate Studies Committee
 - Meeting cancelled to next Thursday.
- Faculty of Medicine Faculty Council (Charles)
 - No major updates
 - Epidemiology is pushing for a strong vision for new program structure.

Vice President, Epidemiology Academic Affairs

- SEPH Epidemiology Graduate Studies Council
 - Stephen is away.

Vice President, Public Health Academic Affairs

- SEPH MPH Program Committee Meeting
- Incoming class has been welcomed by the MPH SEC in their own class Facebook group.
- Looking to host a financial planning seminar in the fall to assist MPH students fund their degrees.
 - Motivation: Technical reasons prevented student from applying to OGS online (apparently an issue with a drop-down menu).
- Following new MPH program director announcement in July, we are ready to work with them for co-organizing the MPH Capstone Day in the fall.

Vice President, Wellness

- Wellness Update
 - No major updates
 - Sarah will get in contact with previous VP wellness (Robert Pap) with help of Charles.

Vice President, Social Affairs

- Events Update
 - End of semester social, some students and professors came out (24 total participants)

- 4-5 Faculty members attended
- Looking for events half-way into September

Vice President, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

- EDI Update
 - More training opportunities in EDI via newsletters to students
 - My-An will reach to Sara for details on DEI newsletter and further information

Vice President, Financial Affairs

- Financial Update
 - End of Semester Social April Event: \$290 (spent)
 - Meeting with Scotiabank representative on Monday May 8th with Ishika.
 - Meeting with Haben for final transitions.

Vice President, Administrative Affairs

- Administrative Update
 - Working to get all position bios up on the

Program Representatives

- MSc Epidemiology Update
- MPH Update
- PhD Epidemiology Update

GSAED Director (Vacant) Temporarily updated by Charles.

- 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)
- 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)
- Major updates to university academic regulations involved changes to missing exams and attendance due to medical reasons.

Business Arising

Council Turn-Over

- New members of council (pending):
 - 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!)
 - Please let Sami know if you are having any difficulties.

Vacancies

- PhD Representative(s)
 - This position is currently vacant.
- MSc Representative(s)
 - This position is currently vacant.
- MPH Representative(s)
 - This position is currently vacant.

Collaboration with the MPH Student Experience Committee

- Stephen is away - the following will be discussed at next GSA meeting:
 - 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

- Update on the hoodie order statuses and pending pick-ups.
 - Continuing to respond on a case-by-case basis to coordinate pick-ups, remaining students will be reached out to via department.
 - Charles has been mainly working to coordinate pick-ups and drop-offs.

Main Business

New Council Year

- Vision for the 2023-24 sephgsa
 - Planning of social events
 - Wellness Week, providing timely updates to students to attend in advance.
 - 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

- Updates on event: see council member updates above.
- What went well and did not:
 - Conflict in reservation with quantity of tickets sold and minimum spend threshold.
 - Venues through GASED can help with booking spaces on Campus (reduced rental fee +/- catering)

- Nature Nocturne (past event), type of GALA event SEPHGSA has hosted in the past.

Finances

- Updates on Financial accounts handover:
 - Shannon, Haben, Ishika, and Renée will likely need to arrange a meeting at Scotiabank to formally sign over the account – Updates.
- Budget Concerns:
 - We have contributed to Epidemiology research day awards; we can look into offering a similar contribution to MPH capstone awards. Reaching out to Monique for further information.

Representative Vacancies

- Many positions will be promoted/advertised during orientation in the Fall semester.

Generative AI

- Stephen is away – the following has been moved to next meeting:
 - Stephen worked on a workshop for Faculty and Admin
 - Progress and updates from workshop event.

SEPH Gala

- Rebecca Cano proposes organizing a gala event in the Fall (end of / after reading week, Nov 3rd)
 - Need to be mindful of Nov 18th Faculty of Medicine Gala.
 - Potentially around convocation time (June)
 - Late September/early October, can promote at orientations (MPH SEC has been hosting a cocktail night)
- Collaborating with Renee (Venue: Queens Street Fair), small presentations, professors, end of program celebrations.
- Planning to charge tickets to help off-set costs.

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
- Zoom Account
 - Currently, we are using Charles's Zoom Account, as such the council agreed to implement Microsoft Teams for future meetings.
- Agenda Content
 - In the interest of time, efficiency and agenda content, Sami will be reaching out to collect information 1 week prior to monthly GSA meetings to develop a tentative agenda. Please feel free to reach out to Sami anytime for additions to the agenda for future meeting discussions.
- Timing
 - Sami has sent around a When2Meet poll 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 17:52 pm

Next Meeting

- The next SEPHGSA Executive Council Meeting will be Friday, June 2, at 17:00

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 Wednesday, May 10, 2023 at 17:49:36

