

**GSA Council Meeting AGENDA**  
Monday, 17 August 2020 at 6:00 pm  
Held online via Zoom

**The GSA respectfully acknowledges that the University of Alberta is located on Treaty 6 territory, traditional lands of First Nations and Métis people.**

**Substantive material** is sent to all GSA Council members at least one week prior to the date of the meeting to give members abundant time to review. Any additional substantive material received after this mailing will be emailed as soon as possible.

**Reports** from committees, Directly-Elected Officers, and GSA Management are emailed the Friday before a Monday meeting so that the content is as current as possible.

**Speaker Pranidhi Baddam in the Chair**

**OPEN SESSION**

**Attached  
Numbered Pages**

1. Approval of the 17 August 2020 Agenda (*suggested time: 1 min*)
2. Approval of the Minutes from the 20 July 2020 GSA Council Meeting (*suggested time: 1 min*)  
*Attachment:*
  - i. Minutes from the 20 July 2020 GSA Council Meeting
3. Changes in GSA Council Membership (*suggested time: 1 min*)
  - i. Introduction of New GSA Council Members (*If you are new to GSA Council, please let us know it is your first meeting*)
  - ii. Farewell to Departing GSA Council Members (*If this is your last GSA Council meeting, or if your last GSA Council meeting is approaching, please let us know*)

**2.0 - 2.5**

**GSA Council Member Announcements**

4. GSA Council Member Announcements (*suggested time: 5 min*)

**Presentations**

5. University of Alberta Academic Restructuring Initiative (*suggested time: 60 min*)  
**Marc Waddingham (President) will present the item and introduce the guest.**

**Guest:** Dr. Steven Dew (Provost and Vice-President Academic)

**Reports** (*suggested time: 15 min*)

6. President (**Marc Waddingham, President**)
  - i. President's Report
  - ii. GSA Board Report
  - iii. GSA Budget and Finance Committee Report (**no written report at this time**)
  - iv. GSA Governance Committee Report (**no written report at this time**)
7. Vice-President Academic (**Sachiketha Reddy, Vice-President Academic**)
  - i. Vice-President Academic's Report
8. Vice-President External (**Anas Fassih, Vice-President External**)
  - i. Vice-President External's Report
  - ii. GSA Awards Selection Committee Report (**no written report at this time**)

**6.0 - 6.1**

**6.2**

**7.0**

**8.0 - 8.1**

- |  |                           |
|--|---------------------------|
| <p>9. Vice-President Labour (<b>Umesh Nimmathi, Vice-President Labour</b>)</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">i. Vice-President Labour’s Report</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">ii. GSA Labour Relations Committee Report (<b>no written report at this time</b>)</p> | <p><b>9.0 - 9.1</b></p>   |
| <p>10. Vice-President Student Services (<b>Sridhar Parasharamatham, Vice-President Student Services</b>)</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">i. Vice-President Student Services’ Report</p>  | <p><b>10.0 - 10.1</b></p> |
| <p>11. Senator (<b>Marla Palakkamanil, Senator</b>)</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">i. Senator’s Report</p>  | <p><b>11.0</b></p>        |
| <p>12. Speaker (<b>Pranidhi Baddam, Speaker</b>)</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">i. Speaker’s Report (<b>no written report at this time</b>)</p>   |                           |
| <p>13. Chief Returning Officer (<b>Michael Huang, Chief Returning Officer</b>)</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">i. Chief Returning Officer’s Report (<b>no written report at this time</b>)</p>   |                           |
| <p>14. GSA Nominating Committee (<b>Radim Barta, GSA Nominating Committee Chair</b>)</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">i. GSA Nominating Committee Report</p>  | <p><b>14.0 - 14.1</b></p> |
| <p>15. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (<b>Jennifer Bertrand, GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Chair</b>)</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">i. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Report (<b>no written report at this time</b>)</p>                     |                           |
| <p>16. GSA Management (<b>Courtney Thomas, Executive Director</b>)</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">i. Executive Director’s Report</p>  | <p><b>16.0 - 16.2</b></p> |

**Question Period**

17. Written Questions (**none at this time**)
18. Oral Questions

**Adjournment**

**GSA Council Meeting MINUTES**  
Monday, 20 July 2020 at 6:00 pm  
Held online via Zoom

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Marc Waddingham (President)	Md Solimul Chowdhury (Councillor-at-Large)	Alexandra San Diego (East Asian Studies)	Valene Cheah (Occupational Therapy)
Sachiketha Reddy (VP Academic)	Mohammad Zubair (Councillor-at-Large)	Jasen Aussant (Economics)	Braden Chow; Shayla Mosley (Oncology)
Anas Fassih (VP External)	Kyla Cangiano (Anthropology)	Lauren Trafford (Educational Psychology)	Matthew Benson (Ophthalmology)
Umesh Nimmathi (VP Labour)	Allan Yarahmady (Biochemistry)	Md Monir Hossain (Electrical & Computer Engineering)	Shubham Soni (Paediatrics)
Sridhar Parasharamatham (VP Student Services)	Jessica Grenke (Biological Science)	Yina Liu (Elementary Education)	Erika Poitras (Pharmacology)
Pranidhi Baddam (Speaker)	Ashmite De (Biomedical Engineering)	Jessica Kennedy (Human Ecology)	Hamdah Al Nebaihi (Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences)
Priyanka Maripuri (Deputy Speaker)	Georgio Cheruvellil (Business MBA)	Muhammad Idrees Afzal (Internetworking)	Paolo Verdini (Philosophy)
Marla Palakkamanil (Senator)	Kylie Heales (Business PhD)	Elaine Yip (Kinesiology, Sport, & Recreation)	Kimberly Dice (Physical Therapy)
Neslihan Akpınar (Councillor-at-Large)	Sophie Keegan (Cell Biology)	Jenn Laskosky (Library & Information Studies)	Clinton Potts (Physics)
Dylan Ashley (Councillor-at-Large)	Omnath Ekambaram (Chemical & Materials Engineering)	Scott Perry (Linguistics)	Robert Reklow (Physiology)
Paramita Chaudhuri Basu (Councillor-at-Large)	Arsh Hazrah (Chemistry)	Ryan Thiessen (Mathematical & Statistical Sciences)	Elise Sammons (Political Science)
Nadia Daniel (Councillor-at-Large)	Fernando Hernandez (Computing Science)	Shahed Taghian Dehaghani (Mechanical Engineering)	Precious Amusan (Psychiatry)
Tejasai Kommanpalli (Councillor-at-Large)	Julie Piche (Dentistry)	Nicole Noel (Medical Genetics)	Carlee Wilson (Rehabilitation Science)
Zeenat Ladak (Councillor-at-Large)	Jennifer McDevitt (Digital Humanities)	Aristeidis Boukouris (Medicine)	Beckett Stark (Renewable Resources)
Rakshith Reddy Gopu (Councillor-at-Large)	Collette Slevinsky (Drama)	Charbel Baaklini; Noam Steinberg (Neuroscience)	Michael Huang (REES)
Yashita Singh (Councillor-at-Large)	Qi Chen (Earth and Atmospheric Sciences)	Sadie Deschenes (Nursing)	Prof-Collins Ifeonu (Sociology)

**Guests:** Sai Swaroop Reddy Pogalla (GSA Deputy Returning Officer candidate; Mechanical Engineering); Amritha Prasad (GSA Chief Returning Officer candidate; Agricultural, Food, and Nutritional Sciences).

Speaker Pranidhi Baddam in the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm. Speaker acknowledged the Traditional Territory of Treaty Six.

**Approval of Agenda****1. Approval of the 20 July 2020 Consolidated Agenda**

Members had before them the 20 July 2020 Consolidated Agenda, which had been previously distributed on 17 July 2020. M Huang **MOVED**; S Deschenes **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes****2. Minutes from the 15 June 2020 GSA Council Meeting**

Members had before them the 15 June 2020 GSA Council meeting minutes, which had been previously distributed on 10 July 2020. J Kennedy **MOVED**; N Daniel **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

**Changes in GSA Council Membership****3. Changes in GSA Council Membership**

- i. **Introduction of New Councillors:** It was the first meeting for N Steinberg (Neuroscience).
- ii. **Farewell to Departing GSA Council Members:** There were no departing GSA Council members.

**GSA Council Member Announcements**

- 4. **GSA Council Member Announcements:** No GSA Council member announcements were offered.

**Action Items****5. 2020-2021 GSA Spring/Summer Term Budget and Expenditure Report**

Marc Waddingham (President and GSA Budget and Finance Committee Chair) presented the item.

**MOTION BEFORE GSA COUNCIL:** That the GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the GSA 2020-2021 Spring/Summer Term Budget and Expenditure Report.

M Waddingham highlighted the projected enrolment decrease in the coming Fall 2020 term (conservatively projected to be 9%) and noted that a higher decrease would trigger re-evaluation of the GSA Budget for the year, potentially resulting in use of the Financial Stabilization Fund. C Thomas (Executive Director) noted that the GSA was budgeting as conservatively as possible for the coming year given that enrolment numbers would not be finalized until September.

In the ensuing discussion, members raised a series of questions, including but not limited to: what accounts for the difference between the 2018-2019 balance and the 2019-2020 balance (end of year balances were redistributed to reserve funds in accordance with recommendations from GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC) and the GSA's auditor) and whether the organization was expecting a deficit (not necessarily given the existence of the Financial Stabilization Fund and some other possible avenues to either generate revenue (such as increasing the GSA membership fee) or scale back expenses existed).

**MOTION:** That the GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the GSA 2020-2021 Spring/Summer Term Budget and Expenditure Report. R R Gopu (Electrical and Computer Engineering) **MOVED**; J Kennedy (Human Ecology) **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

**6. Recommended Changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy Section H: Performance, Conduct, Responsibilities, and Attendance, and the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board, GSA Policy, GSA Standing Committees, GSA Appeals and Complaints Board**

Marc Waddingham (President and GSA Governance Committee Chair) presented the item.

**MOTION BEFORE GSA COUNCIL:** That GSA Council, on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Governance Committee, **APPROVE** recommended changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section H: Performance, Conduct, Responsibilities, and Attendance, and the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board, GSA Policy, GSA Standing Committees, GSA Appeals and Complaints Board, as shown in the attached track changes document and effective upon approval by GSA Council.

M Waddingham noted that the proposed changes would bring the GSA Appeals and Complaint Board into alignment with other GSA standing committees with regards to the procedure for electing Chairs and Vice-Chairs. In addition, currently GSA Policy dictated that terms on the GSA ACB begin in October, which is extraneous and in conflict with current practice.

**MOTION:** That GSA Council, on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Governance Committee, **APPROVE** recommended changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section H: Performance, Conduct, Responsibilities, and Attendance, and the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board, GSA Policy, GSA Standing Committees, GSA Appeals and Complaints

Board, as shown in the attached track changes document and effective upon approval by GSA Council. Aris (Medicine) **MOVED**; Nadia (CAL) **SECONDED**.

M Waddingham and U Nimmathi Abstained. Motion **PASSED**.

## Elections

### **7. GSA Council Elections**

Shahed Taghian Dehaghani (GSA Nominating Committee member) presented the item, outlined the vacancies before GSA Council, as well as the questions put to nominees, and clarified the voting procedure.

- a. GSA Chief Returning Officer (1 vacancy):  
Michael Huang (Resource Economics and Environmental Sociology)  
Rukhmani Narayanamurthy (Pediatrics)  
Amritha Prasad (Agricultural, Food, and Nutritional Sciences)

S Taghian Dehaghani asked the nominees the following questions: “The duties of the CRO position are to oversee the GSA General Election and any By-Elections and referenda by observing the GSA Bylaw and Policy to be fair while respecting the wishes of voters. Given this, can you give us an example of a time when you have demonstrated the ability to act in a neutral fashion?” and “What challenges do you anticipate to encounter in fulfilling the responsibilities of the position of CRO?” Both nominees were present and given the opportunity to respond. GSA Council members then posed questions and the nominees were given the opportunity to respond.

- b. GSA Deputy Returning Officer (1 Vacancy):  
Jacqueline Pelechytik (Business MBA)  
Sai Swaroop Reddy Poglla (Mechanical Engineering)

S Taghian Dehaghani asked the nominees the following questions: “The duties of the DRO position are to assist the CRO as needed and assume all the roles and responsibilities of the CRO if they are absent or unable to complete their duties. Given this, can you give us an example of a time when you have demonstrated the ability to act in a neutral fashion?” and “What challenges do you anticipate to encounter in fulfilling the responsibilities of the position of CRO were you called upon to do so?” The nominees were present and given the opportunity to respond in front of GSA Council members. GSA Council members then posed questions and the nominees were given the opportunity to respond.

## Reports

### **8. President**

#### **i. President’s Report:**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 July 2020. The report stood as submitted. In addition, M Waddingham stated that the GSA was still consulting with the Indigenous Graduate Students’ Association (IGSA) and the Black Graduate Students’ Association (BGSA) concerning a possible GSA committee or subcommittee focused on issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) and that it was hoped GSA Council could be updated in September. GSA Council members asked what actions were being taken to include representation from other groups such as persons with disabilities and the LGBTQ2+ community (it was noted that the aim was to be inclusive beyond ethnicity and that any such group would need to be as diverse as possible; suggestions from members were welcomed and things were only in an initial state of consultation at this point); and how vacancies on the potential group would be advertised (terms of reference would need to be developed and those would likely specify involvement from the GSA Nominating Committee and GSA Council in terms of electing members to the group, consonant with the process for all other GSA committees).

M Waddingham next noted that the Academic Restructuring Working Group would hold three town halls about the University’s academic restructuring initiative. Interested graduate students should contact M Waddingham to get involved. We could also arrange for groups to meet. He also noted that the GSA was exploring hosting its own town halls and having the Provost Steve Dew and President Bill Flanigan present to GSA Council, hopefully in September. The plan was to have recommendations associated with the initiative implemented by Fall 2021 at the latest.

M Waddingham noted that Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees (MNIFs) remain a big question, particularly the Athletics and Recreation fee. That office had offered a one-time 30% reduction for the Fall fee. This would keep pace with the lowered accessibility of facilities but would put strain on the unit’s budget and possible future operations and services. He noted that there were increased costs associated with increased sanitation and that, while teams would not be playing, training would continue. M Waddingham solicited the opinion of GSA Council as to whether they wanted the GSA to move forward with negotiations for a 30% reduction for the Fall.

GSA Council members posed a series of questions and discussion points, including but not limited to: possible plans to increase revenue through public programming (Athletics and Recreation was considering this but lower occupancy and participation were stumbling blocks); the GSA's responsibility to graduate students rather than the financial sustainability of other offices; that offers for fee-reductions should be seized upon, as the office offering knows their own finances best; the uncertainty of whether gym services would be offered at all (relatively confident they would, given current re-opening in wider community the University will likely follow suit); that the fee-reduction may have a minimal effect for graduate students while possibly jeopardizing the future of programs; whether graduate student opt-outs would be possible; the assistance a fee-reduction may provide to graduate students in financial duress; while athletics are a valuable and integral aspect of student life, immediate sacrifices must be made to ensure positive health outcomes for the long term; and anecdotal assurance of the sound financial practices and long-term planning of the unit under discussion. M Waddingham noted that, based on this feedback, the GSA would move forward with negotiating for a 30% reduction in the Athletics and Recreation fee for the Fall.

**ii. GSA Board**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 July 2020. The report stood as submitted.

**iii. GSA Budget and Finance Committee**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 July 2020. The report stood as submitted.

**iv. GSA Governance Committee**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 July 2020. The report stood as submitted.

**9. Vice-President Academic**

**i. Vice-President Academic's Report:**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 July 2020. The report stood as submitted.

**10. Vice-President External**

**i. Vice-President External's Report**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 July 2020. The report stood as submitted. In addition, A Fassih stated that the Michener Park move-out was scheduled to conclude at the end of the month; 31 residents remain and alternate housing has been provided for students in particular need. Residents experiencing difficulty can contact A Fassih. He further reported that the Public Interest Alberta Post-Secondary Task Force discussed a public awareness campaign in response to COVID and cuts in government funding to post-secondary institutions. The Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) will contribute to this campaign. A Fassih then noted that the work of the Search Committee for the Vice-President (Finance and Administration) was underway and that this position was especially important given the current financial circumstances the University faces. In closing, he reported that he had met with Edmonton Students' Alliance (ESA) and decided on key priorities: transportation, student employment, and affordable housing. The group also discussed a research survey and sharing the costs of data gathering to better inform advocacy.

**ii. GSA Awards Selection Committee**

No written report at this time.

**11. Vice-President Labour**

**i. Vice-President Labour's Report**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 July 2020. The report stood as submitted. In addition, U Nimmathi highlighted the value of the Alberta GSA Labour Relation Roundtable (organized by the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC)) as a forum to discuss labour matters with other Alberta GSAs, ongoing Collective Agreement negotiations with the University, the 7% increase in the award component of stipends for academically-employed graduate students (effective 1 September) that reflected the corresponding increase in the Graduate Tuition Fee Index, and the available online resources to support Teaching Assistants.

C Baaklini asked if the 7% stipend increase was fair given that the upcoming tuition increases only applied to course-based students (who will see an increase of 7%), not thesis-based students (who will see an increase of 4%). U Nimmathi clarified that the Graduate Tuition Fee Index was used to negotiate increases in the Collective Agreement depended on various factors. The

increase had already been decided and will happen regardless of current negotiations. E Heiberg (Associate Director) further clarified that the award component increase was based on the Graduate Tuition Fee Index and not directly related to tuition; rather, the amount was based on the index set by the University that related to tuition increases along with other variables.

**ii. GSA Labour Relations Committee**

No written report at this time.

**12. Vice-President Student Services**

**i. Vice-President Student Services' Report**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 July 2020. The report stood as submitted. In addition, S Parasharamatham highlighted recent work on the Infrastructure and Operations Fall Planning Team (of which former University President David Turpin was also a member) and the U-Pass Advisory and Administrative Committees which were currently busy navigating the feasibility of the U-Pass program in Fall 2020 for all Edmonton student associations. In addition, the student associations were navigating upcoming negotiations with ETS for a new U-Pass agreement. With regards to the Graduate Student Assistance Program (GSAP), he indicated there was uncertainty about its future cost due to the University's re-evaluation of their financial contribution to the program, and a cost increase to the program itself beginning in April 2021.

Members raised a number of questions, including but not limited to: the purpose of GSAP and the proportion of students using it (GSAP provides mental health and lifestyle counselling and support, among which are support for smoking cessation and nutrition counselling, its usage has been growing significantly since its introduction in 2012, from 4% of graduate students to 10% of graduate students) and if the GSA had a date in mind by which the discussions surrounding the Fall 2020 U-Pass program and/or the negotiations for the ongoing program were expected to be resolved (unfortunately no, but updates will continue as this is extremely high priority).

**13. Senator**

**i. Senator's Report**

No written report at this time.

**14. Speaker**

**i. Speaker's Report**

No written report at this time.

**15. Chief Returning Officer**

**i. Chief Returning Officer's Report**

No written report at this time.

**16. GSA Nominating Committee**

**i. GSA Nominating Committee Report**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 July 2020. The report stood as submitted. In addition, R Barta reminded GSA Council of the calls for nominations for open positions on GSA Standing Committees; the member-at-large position on the Elections and Referenda Committee and the joint GSA Board (GSAB)/GSA Nominating Committee (GSA NoC) position. S Taghian Dehaghani emphasized the importance of the latter as someone who has served in the position, and clarified the relative ease of the time commitment, noting that the GSA NoC was busy from May – July but most work was done online and over email, not at meetings. R Barta added that this position was a great way to get involved and that the GSA needed a diversity of ideas and opinions.

R Barta also highlighted the new Discover Governance recruitment program being developed – a re-working of the Early Call program – meant to engage graduate students with interest in getting involved with elected positions. Discover Governance would incorporate some of the elements of the Early Call program (get-to-know events and information sessions) while finding new ways to frame engagement and encourage students to empower themselves. A Fassih added that elected leadership positions were critical and would put members closer to decision making with more access to information and a learning opportunity. M Waddingham added that, given the current pace of transformation, these were opportunities for individuals to have a very pronounced impact.

**17. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee**

**ii. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Report**

No written report at this time.

**18. GSA Management****i. Executive Director's Report**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 July 2020. The report stood as submitted. In addition, C Thomas stated that staff were providing support for collective bargaining, U-Pass negotiations, and ongoing talks related to the future of the Graduate Student Assistance Program, while closely monitoring the GSA's financial situation. C Thomas also noted that the GSA anticipated profound effects in terms of how its union operations in relation to Bill 32 and was seeking a legal opinion.

**Question Period**

**19. Written Questions:** No written questions were posed.

**20. Oral Questions**

D Ashley (Councillor-at-Large and former GSA Board (GSAB)/GSA Nominating Committee (GSA NoC), and former Vice-President Academic, echoed what others had said previously about the joint GSAB/GSA NoC position, as he occupied it before S Taghian Dehaghani and enjoyed it so much he chose to run for an elected position. He noted that the GSA NoC component was a very low time commitment and that he had previously expected that service on GSA Council would teach him how the GSA operated but he actually learned much more through GSAB. He noted that it was a good opportunity for learning in a low-stress environment.

S Taghian Dehaghani asked, in reference to the possible establishment of a GSA committee to focus on issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion, if it intended to also include a diversity of political worldviews (M Waddingham responded that a university was supposed to be a place of diverse views as part of the academic process but that tended to be separate from this, which was focussed on characteristics in leadership; it was implicit that from different life experiences came different views and ideas and the idea was that, in focussing on more external characteristics, diverse opinions and ideas would also come to the forefront).

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:54 pm.



**President**  
**Report to GSA Council for the 17 August 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Marc Waddingham  
Date: 14 August 2020

To My Colleagues in Council,

I am happy to provide you with a brief update on my activities over the last month, less the week I had taken for my annual vacation, ahead of what is to be our most interesting fall term yet.

#### EDI Committee

GSA Executive Director Courtney Thomas has begun to draft and discuss preliminary terms of reference (ToR) of a new GSA standing committee dedicated to the discussion and investigation of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion as it relates to graduate studies, the GSA itself, and beyond. The ToR will be finalized pending further consultations with the Black Graduate Students' Association and the Indigenous Graduate Students' Association, among others, with membership open to all graduate students (GSA Council members included). Like our other standing committees, the GSA EDI Committee would be able to propose changes to our governing documents, procedures, and processes for GSA Council to discuss and vote upon. It would also be positioned to discuss advocacy strategies and a range of other strategic issues. I am excited to see this project to fruition, and for the products of the committee itself such that we can continue to improve in our commitment to represent our diverse constituency on campus.

#### Academic Restructuring Working Group

By the time I speak to this report at Monday's meeting, we will already have heard the presentation from University leadership on the University of Alberta for Tomorrow project, and specifically the Academic Restructuring project. While you all will have had an opportunity to ask questions directly to Central Administrators, I suspect that, as the process develops, further questions will come to mind, and the same will be true of our membership-at-large. We are planning to host our own townhalls, whereby graduate students at the University can provide their feedback to myself directly, such that I can bring it to the working group. We are currently aiming towards the end of September for the first town hall, and details will be forthcoming.

#### Alberta 2030

The Ministry of Advanced Education has now fully activated the provincial-wide post-secondary review, led by the American corporate consultancy firm McKinsey & Company. The three provincial student advocacy groups have been offered a single seat for student representation on the so-called "Guiding Coalition," which has been awarded to Rowan Ley, VP External of the UAlberta Students' Union and Chair to the Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS). We will be coordinating closely with CAUS through the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) to offer support throughout the

process, as we suspect that the AB 2030 review will offer some surprises as it proceeds along its ambitious timeline.

### Fall Term 2020

While still in development, the University is moving towards the new frontier of a mainly online learning environment for the Fall 2020 Term. This will have major implications for graduate student life on campus, including but not limited to the new quarantine procedure for incoming international students, online course delivery for teaching assistants, contact tracing requirements, and controlled access to institutional facilities. We will continue to monitor for any issues as they arise, but the first step is to organize locally with your colleagues to best facilitate information sharing and development of support networks in your campus neighborhood. Of course, we stand by, ready to assist whenever our membership needs it.

As always, I welcome your comments, insights, and questions; they are always greatly appreciated.

Kind regards,  
Marc, President 2020-2021

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 20 July 2020 and 17 August 2020 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing. Please also note that I was away from 30 July to 10 August 2020.*

21 July	Meeting with a Graduate Student
21 July	Meeting with B Milne, Vice-Provost and Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Dean
22 July	Student Leader Orientation
22 July	Alberta Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Special Board Meeting
23 July	Meeting with a Graduate Student
23 July	Meeting re Graduate Student Assistance Program (GSAP)
23 July	Meeting with the Indigenous Graduate Students' Association (IGSA)
24 July	Board of Governors (BoG)
27 July	Meeting with UAlberta Association Presidents
28 July	Meeting with C Swindlehurst, Interim Vice-President (University Relations)
28 July	Meeting with a Graduate Student
29 July	President's Installation Committee
29 July	Academic Restructuring Working Group (ARWG)
11 August	Meeting with B Flanagan, University President
12 August	Alberta Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Special Board Meeting
12 August	Academic Restructuring Working Group (ARWG)
12 August	Meeting with a Graduate Student
13 August	Alberta Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Media Training
13 August	Alberta Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Discussion
14 August	Special Board of Governors (BoG) Meeting
14 August	GSA Virtual Game Chill-Out Event

**GSA Board  
Report to GSA Council for the 17 August 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Marc Waddingham, GSA President  
Date: 14 August 2020

The GSA Board (GSAB) reports regularly to GSA Council by listing its agenda items, Motions/agreements, and main items of discussion (meeting reports are also offered at each meeting). Motions of Agenda approval and approval of the Minutes are not included unless there were amendments made. Closed session items are not minuted. GSA Council members are always able to ask questions about items that were discussed in closed session. Open session Minutes are available upon request. The President, Vice-Presidents, and the administrative team will be happy to answer any questions or provide more information at the GSA Council meeting. Also see the weekly Management Reports to the GSAB in Item 16 (Executive Director's Report to GSA Council) on pages 16.1 – 16.2.

**29 July 2020 GSA Board Meeting:**

Main Agenda Items:

COVID-19 Update; GSA Council Debrief; Academic Restructuring Initiative Town Hall; GSA Online Engagement Event; Request from Climate Action Coalition at the University of Alberta; and Meeting Reports.

Motions and Agreements:

Members **AGREED** to move into **CLOSED SESSION**.

Members discussed the **GSA Collective Agreement Negotiations** Meeting.

Members **AGREED** to move out of **CLOSED SESSION**.

**12 August 2020 GSA Board Meeting:**

Main Agenda Items:

COVID-19 Update; Update on Academic Restructuring Initiative Town Hall; Request from Climate Action Coalition at the University of Alberta; and Meeting Reports.

Motions and Agreements:

Board Members **AGREED** to move into **CLOSED SESSION**.

Board Members discussed the **Meeting with B Flanagan, University President**.

Board Members **AGREED** to move out of **CLOSED SESSION**.

Board Members **AGREED** to move into **CLOSED SESSION**.

Board Members discussed the **Meeting re U-Pass Agreement Negotiations**.

Board Members **AGREED** to move out of **CLOSED SESSION**.

**GSA Vice-President Academic  
Report to GSA Council for the 17 August 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Sachiketha Reddy Paspula.  
Date: 14 August 2020

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope you all are doing well in these sunny days and getting ready to start the upcoming wonderful term. The past month was so quiet for me because many of the committees I sit on took a small break and will resume in the next few weeks.

Here are the highlights from the meetings I have attended.

- I had a meeting with a graduate student, who had an academic issue and I suggested they reach out to the Ombudsperson as soon as possible. I want to remind you all that, if you experience any academic issues, please reach out to me and I am happy to meet with you, confidentially, in order to assist.
- I have gone through several training sessions on public speaking and presentations to increase my proficiency and effectiveness. I found these sessions valuable, and I have started practising and implementing the things I learnt.

If you have any concerns about this report/concerns regarding any academic related issue feel free to reach me at [gsavpaca@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsavpaca@ualberta.ca)

I will be more than happy to answer your questions.

Regards,  
Sachiketha Reddy Paspula, Vice-President Academic 2020-2021

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 20 July 2020 and 17 August 2020 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

21 July	Meeting with B Milne, Vice-Provost and Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Dean
4 August	Meeting with a Graduate Student
14 August	GSA Virtual Game Chill-Out Event

**Vice-President External  
Report to GSA Council for the 17 August 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Anas Fassih  
Date: 14 August 2020

Dear Council Members,

I am delighted to share a few highlights about the meetings I attended this month:

- As Marc also reports, on 22 July I attended the student leaders' orientation with the Alberta Ministry of Advanced Education. It was a great opportunity to share ideas about our advocacy priorities with the Ministry staff and fellow student leaders in the province. We were divided into break-out rooms to talk about our advocacy priorities, which are funding for mental health and caregiver students, internships and post-study employment, mobility within post-secondary institutions, permanent residency for international students, funding for digital infrastructure, and affordable housing. The most important highlight is that the Minister is striking a Guiding Coalition for Alberta 2030, which has 17 seats to review post-secondary in Alberta. Only 1 seat is reserved for a student from the province. Rowan Ley from the U of A Students' Union was elected to sit on this committee on behalf of Alberta students.
- On 22 July, I attended a board meeting of the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC). We discussed the resignation of the current ab-GPAC Executive Director, Christopher Bell. We then discussed the salary, benefits, and work load of the new Executive Director, to be effective upon their appointment by the Board of Directors.
- On 23 July, I attended an ab-GPAC Advocacy and Outreach Committee meeting. First, we set the outreach priorities for this year: Raising awareness of ab-GPAC, student stewardship, and advocacy week. Second, we decided to allocate Outreach Committee members to MLAs based on the postcode where they live and to start engaging with these MLAs. We will do some research about them from social media (twitter account) and try to gear that towards what interests us, and then ask to meet them and discuss.
- On 27 July, I attended the Joint Residence Oversight Committee Meeting. 20 family residents are left in Michener Park. Only 2 family residents have not indicated anything about their plans yet, which according to Katherine Huising is totally manageable. Transition is going well. The University has received 1600 applications for campus accommodation for the fall. That amounts to 30% University occupancy. Out of 1600 applications, there are only 190 graduate students, a relatively small number compared to the number of undergraduate students. However, we are not sure if all these students will be able to join us in the Fall. Some may join us mid-Fall, others in Winter and some may even join us in the Fall of 2021. We are in an uncertain time. Moreover, the university has introduced the 'expedition connect' program that connects students who are currently in residence with those who are joining in the Fall or later. From my end, although I do not live in University Residence, I offered to join the program for graduate students just to get to know them and help with any information I have.
- On 27 July, 5 August and 10 August, I attended meetings with the Assistant Dean of Student Residence, Janice Johnson, and other student association members regarding good COVID-19 behaviour in residence. We discussed how to ensure guidelines of social distancing and wearing masks are abided by within the residence without resulting in disciplinary actions against students. What can we do with those students who refuse to cooperate? The last thing we want to do is to kick someone out. We proposed increasing the number of RAs in buildings so that students know that we are taking this seriously. Also important is that we put some reminders in the hallways and elevators. Last, we discussed ways for positive reinforcement; that is, rewarding students who cooperate and abide by the guidelines or possibly an award of 'the Best COVID-19 Behaviour Resident'.
- On 4 August, I had a meeting with the Community Engagement Consultation (CEC) Advisory Committee on behalf of the GSA President. We talked about how to improve our University outreach and raise awareness of the importance of community. Committee members also suggested that the University include

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community engagement as a box that candidates applying for senior administrative jobs in the University have to tick.

- On 5 August I attended a regular board meeting of ab-GPAC. We discussed our budget and the recruitment of a new Executive Director of ab-GPAC. We received 44 applications for the position and I am confident the final candidate will be excellent in the role.
- On 6 August, I had a meeting with the Residence Advisory Committee. The University has improved connectivity across campus residences, especially since everything moved online in this pandemic. Connectivity has been improved for next year without any extra charge. In addition to the 190 graduate students who have applied for spaces in residence (see above), there are 29 graduate students who will participate in the expedition connect program.
- On 7 August, I met with the search committee for the University VP Finance and Administration. We discussed candidates to reduce the number to those who we want to interview. On 12 and 13 August, we interviewed the selected candidates and managed to pick our top candidate for the role a secondary for the wait-list. It was a fair process and I gave my input and made substantial contributions to the selection of the right candidate.

That concludes my monthly report. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask in our Council meeting or reach out to me directly at: [gsa.vpexternal@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsa.vpexternal@ualberta.ca).

Thank you!

Anas Fassih, Vice-President External 2020-2021

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 20 July 2020 and 17 August 2020 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

22 July	Student Leader Orientation
22 July	Alberta Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Special Board Meeting
23 July	Alberta Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Advocacy and Outreach Committee
27 July	Joint Residence Oversight Committee (JROC)
27 July	Meeting re Good COVID-19 Behaviours in Residence
4 August	Community Engagement Consultation (CEC) Advisory Committee Meeting
5 August	Alberta Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Board Meeting
5 August	Supporting Good COVID Behaviours in Residence
6 August	Residence Advisory Committee (RAC)
7 August	Vice-President (Finance & Administration) Search Committee Meeting
10 August	Supporting Good COVID Behaviours in Residence
12 August	Vice-President (Finance & Administration) Search Committee Meeting Interviews
12 August	Monthly Meeting with K Husing, Associate Vice-President (Ancillary Services)
13 August	Alberta Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Media Training
14 August	GSA Virtual Game Chill-Out Event

**2020-2021 Vice-President Labour  
Report to GSA Council for the 17 August 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Umesh Nimmathi  
Date: 14 August 2020

Dear Council Colleagues,

The past few months have been challenging for everyone and I hope that you are all safe and healthy. I want to let you know that wearing a mask is mandatory at all times in campus in indoor common areas and other places where 2-metre social distancing is not possible. If you are working as an employee on campus, then the faculty and/or department is responsible for providing the necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) for your workspace. For more information, please visit: [Update to Safety Measures Directives](#).

- I attended the Alberta GSA Labour Relation Roundtable meeting with GSA President Marc Waddingham and GSA staff hosted by the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC). Graduate student associations (GSAs) from across Alberta updated each other on labour activities such as collective bargaining, training resources for Teaching Assistants, etc. We discussed [Bill 32](#) and how it will impact each GSA. We also discussed about the challenges of recruiting people for the labour-related roles and positions.
- As previously reported, the award component of the stipend for Graduate Teaching Assistants and Graduate Research Assistants is a fixed rate based on the graduate fee index (Collective Agreement Article 11.04). Accordingly, with the increase to the graduate fee index for both domestic and international students in fall 2020, graduate students holding a Graduate Teaching or Research Assistantship contract will receive a 7% increase to the award component of the stipend, effective 1 September 2020. A detailed table of this increase can be found on the [GSA website](#).
- Negotiations for the next GSA Collective Agreement with the University are ongoing and regular updates are being sent. Please note that only those who are currently members of the bargaining unit (ie, hold a current Graduate Assistantship contract) receive these updates, but any graduate student who wants information about the negotiations process, or the Collective Agreement in general, is welcome to contact me. I also request that GSA Council members ensure that all graduate students who are covered under the CA keep an eye out for email updates regarding the negotiations.
- I have also attended a couple of public speaking training sessions in order to best serve graduate students as we will be hosting town halls, etc in advance of any ratification vote for the next GSA Collective Agreement.

If any graduate student comes to you regarding CA issues, harassment, or safety and security issues, please email me at [gsa.vplabour@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsa.vplabour@ualberta.ca)

Best wishes,  
Umesh Nimmathi, Vice-President Labour 2020-21

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*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 20 July 2020 and 17 August 2020 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

20 July	Alberta GSA Labour Relations Roundtable
22 July	GSA Collective Agreement Negotiations
24 July	Meeting with a Graduate Student
28 July	Meeting re Graduate Student Assistance Program (GSAP)
29 July	Meeting with a Graduate Student
12 August	GSA Collective Agreement Negotiation Team Meeting
14 August	GSA Virtual Game Chill-Out Event



**Vice-President Student Services  
Report to GSA Council for the 17 August 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Sridhar Parasharamatham  
Date: 14 August 2020

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope you all are doing well. I give a warm welcome to the new graduate students who are starting their academic programs this fall. Here is the summary from the meetings I attended.

Firstly, I attended a Days of Action (DOA) Committee meeting, where an update on how things are going with different working groups in terms of planning and promotion of different days was given. Working documents were also developed.

Secondly, I have attended several meetings regarding U-Pass. The primary positions of both Edmonton Transit Service (ETS) and the student associations (SAs) for the next U-Pass agreement (2021-2025) have been presented and the first round of negotiations are scheduled for the second half of this month. Also, extensive work is being done to get transit options in place for students for the fall semester. The student associations are meeting with different city councilors and explaining the needs of the broad student community in Edmonton. A proposal will be put forward before City Council on 17 August 2020 and I hope to have more news to report soon.

Finally, the Infrastructure and Operations Team is meeting every week on Thursdays to facilitate the smooth operation for students on campus this fall. The number of buildings to be opened in the fall, along with the timing, is yet to be discussed by the committee. Proper personal protective equipment (PPE) measures are being planned by the committee in terms of providing masks to staff and hand sanitizer in common hallways.

Feel free to reach me for any comments/concerns regarding this report or any other specific issue you want to discuss regarding services to students at [gsavpsse@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsavpsse@ualberta.ca).

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 20 July 2020 and 17 August 2020 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

21 July	Meeting re U-Pass Agreement Negotiations
21 July	U-Pass Advisory Committee
22 July	Days of Action (DOA) Committee
23 July	U-Pass Administrative Committee
23 July	Meeting re Graduate Student Assistance Program (GSAP)
28 July	Meeting re U-Pass Agreement Negotiations
28 July	Public Health Response Team (PHRT) Action Team 4
29 July	World Suicide Prevention Day (WSPD) Working Group
30 July	Infrastructure and Operations Fall Planning Team
4 August	Meeting re U-Pass Agreement Negotiations
4 August	Meeting re U-Pass Agreement Negotiations

6 August	Infrastructure and Operations Fall Planning Team
11 August	World Mental Health Day (WMHD) Working Group Meeting
11 August	Meeting re U-Pass Agreement Negotiations
12 August	Meeting with Graduate Student

**Senator  
Report to GSA Council for the 17 August 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Marla Palakkamanil  
Date: 14 August 2020

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope that all of you are keeping safe and taking time to relax and enjoy these sunny, warm days.

I had the privilege of meeting our new Chancellor, Peggy Garritty, on 29 July in a virtual session along with three other Senators. During our conversation, I raised students' concerns regarding tuition increases, as well as the challenges related to web-based learning. Coincidentally (and as you have previously been updated on by the President and the Vice-Presidents), I received the following information about how fee assessments will work for students this year. These are the mandatory non-instructional fees that are in addition to basic tuition.

*While students completing studies via remote delivery will be assessed tuition and non-instructional fees as they have been approved by the Board of Governors, there are a number of noticeable changes for Fall 2020:*

- *Athletics and Recreation Fee: Assessed at 70% of the approved fee*
- *Student Health and Wellness Fee: Assessed at 100%*
- *Student Academic Support Fee: Assessed at 100%*
- *U-PASS Fee: No Charge*
  - *The student associations are continuing to work with the transit authorities on an alternative for fall.*
- *PAW Centre Fee: No Charge*

*All other fees (GSA/SU Membership, health and dental plans, etc.) are assessed at the approved rates.*

*The following fees will not be assessed for Winter 2021 right now, but once the mode of delivery for the winter semester is confirmed, a decision on assessment levels will be made.*

- *Athletics and Recreation*
- *Student Health and Wellness*
- *Student Academic Support*
- *UPASS*
- *PAW Centre*

Chancellor Garritty emphasized that throughout the fall and into 2021, the Senate will play a unique and important role in assisting President Flanagan to roll out his vision for the U of A for Tomorrow. As such, there will be changes to the Senate committees and task forces this year. More information will follow as plans develop for the fall.

The first Senate Plenary Meeting will take place 24 and 25 September, and will be a critical opportunity to discuss current issues and future initiatives with senior leaders at the U of A. If you have any ideas you feel should be brought to the attention of the Senate, please do not hesitate to contact me at [gsa.senator@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsa.senator@ualberta.ca). I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Marla Palakkamanil, Senator 2020-2021

**GSA Nominating Committee  
Report to GSA Council for the 17 August 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Radim Barta  
Date: 14 August 2020

Dear Council Colleagues,

The report from the GSA Nominating Committee (GSA NoC) this month is a summary of discussions/decisions the committee has made since its last report, together with a list of all vacancies filled and those which will be filled shortly.

GSA Policy governing the GSA NoC is located in GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section E: Nominating. As provided for in its Terms of Reference, the GSA NoC has been conducting business via e-mail.

Sincerely,

Radim Barta, Chair of the GSA NoC

**Memorandum to GSA Councillors**

**As reported previously, there are a number of vacancies, which will be advertised in the coming weeks, on GSA Standing Committees for GSA Council Members (Departmental Councillors and Councillors-at-Large).** These positions play a pivotal role in the GSA's ongoing efforts to keep its processes transparent and itself accountable, since GSA Councillors on these committees help maintain clear and consistent connection between GSA Council and GSA Standing Committees. Long-term vacancies adversely impact these efforts and so GSA Council members are encouraged to consider serving on these committees when vacancies are advertised to you. For example, the current joint vacancy on the GSA Board (GSAB) and GSA Nominating Committee (GSA NoC) has been repeatedly advertised and it is critical that it be filled; Councillors are strongly encouraged to consider putting their name forward.

It is important to note that the time commitment for all of these committees varies greatly. While some meet regularly throughout the year (usually every two (2) to three (3) months – with the GSA Board meeting weekly), others meet less frequently and some do most of their work over email. Additionally, **there is an appreciation of people's schedules and other commitments and accommodations are routinely made for those who cannot attend all meetings.**

**Service on these bodies is an excellent way to make sure your voice is heard and a great opportunity to add to your CV/resume!**

On behalf of the GSA NoC, GSA NoC Chair Radim Barta strongly encourages GSA Councillors to consider the next round of vacancies, which will be circulated to GSA Council electronically and which are listed below. Questions can be directed to GSA NoC Chair Radim Barta at [radim@ualberta.ca](mailto:radim@ualberta.ca) or GSA Elections Coordinator Monica Brzak at [gsa.nomcomm@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsa.nomcomm@ualberta.ca).

**GSA Standing Committees: Upcoming Vacancies**

- 1) **GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (GSA ACB)** (one (1) vacancy for a GSA Councillor)
- 2) **GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC)** (one (1) vacancy for a GSA Councillor)
- 3) **GSA Board (GSAB)** (one (1) vacancy for a GSA Councillor)
- 4) **GSAB and GSA Nominating Committee (GSA NoC) joint** position (one (1) vacancy for a GSA Councillor)
- 5) **GSA Governance Committee (GSA GC)** (two (2) vacancies for GSA Councillors)

**External Committees: Vacancies and Vacancies Filled****1) Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Council (Up to 25 Graduate Student Positions)**

Information regarding twenty (20) Councillor positions and five (5) Alternate positions was circulated in the GSA newsletters of 17 and 24 July 2020 with a deadline of 29 July 2020. **Amanda Greenwall, Armin Norouzi Yengeje, Sai Swaroop Reddy Pogalla, and Sania Amiri-Ishani** were elected to serve as FGSR Councillors. The remaining sixteen (16) Councillor positions and five (5) Alternate vacancies will be advertised again.

**2) Dean Review Committee: Vice-Provost and Dean of Students**

Information regarding two (2) positions was circulated in the GSA newsletters of 26 June, 3, 10, 17 and 24 July 2020 with a deadline of 29 July 2020. **Heba Aref and Jeremy Woo** were elected to serve.

**Executive Director  
Report to GSA Council for the 17 August 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Courtney Thomas  
Date: 14 August 2020

Dear GSA Council Members,

The big projects for the office staff over the past month have related to preparing for the start of the small semester. Typically, at the end of August, we would host our large-scale fall orientation events, which takes the shape of a short presentation followed by refreshments and an information fair. This year we are, obviously, unable to host such an event and so, instead, we have been building a series of e-class modules, in partnership with the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research and the Office of the Dean of Students. Each module features pieces of information typically articulated at Fall Orientation and features interactive quizzes and associated prizes for completion. Additionally, while in August and September we would typically be engaged with sending out small teams of staff members and student leaders to deliver departmental orientation presentations, this year we have developed an online version of those presentations that we will be rolling out over the coming weeks. While obviously not the most desirable means of trying to engage with new GSA members, we are aiming to the best we can with the resources we have.

In the hopes of furthering engagement with members, we are also hosting our first online social event later this afternoon. It will feature icebreakers, games, and prizes and we hope to plan several more such events into the fall. We are also going to be implementing a virtual from desk, beginning Monday, 24 August in order to connect with incoming and continuing students.

In addition to this, we remain engaged with supporting your student leadership team with their work concerning ongoing Collective Agreement negotiations, discussions about the future of the Graduate Student Assistance Program (GSAP), and the negotiations with the Edmonton Transit Service concerning the U-Pass program. The Financial Team, as noted last month, also continues to keep a close eye on enrolment projections and all aspects of the GSA's budget.

My weekly reports to the GSA Board are attached (pages 16.1-16.2) and, as always, I am happy to answer any questions.

Best,

Courtney Thomas, Executive Director

### Management Report to the GSA Board, 29 July 2020

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 15 July 2020:

#### Strategic

- Forward planning for the 2021 GSA General Election and associated referenda (on the GSAP and the U-Pass) that will also occur.
- Reviewing the composition of GSA Council following the move of some graduate programs from the Faculty of Extension to the Faculty of Arts.
- Analyzing the recent changes to the *Labour Relations Code* and the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* enacted by Bill 32, and how they will impact the GSA's work as a labour union for academically-employed graduate students – in the process of soliciting a legal opinion.
- Planning social events for August and into the fall.
- Continued work on a moderate revamp of the GSA newsletter (switching over to a new platform and adding “Did You Know” features to focus on major GSA advocacy and services work to better connect members with the organization and illustrate the GSA's work on their behalf).
- Supporting the current U-Pass negotiations processes.
- Work associated with the Collective Agreement, including supporting negotiations processes (negotiation meeting occurred on 22 July) and planning to research best practices with respect to strike fund establishment, maintenance, growth, and utilization (project temporarily on hold as the upcoming cycle of bargaining unfolds but is being discussed with other GSAs at Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council-hosted labour roundtables and looked at with reference to the provisions of Bill 32).
- Ongoing work associated with remote delivery of GSA orientation (utilizing Articulate to build presentations in eClass, etc and working with the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research to contact graduate program coordinators about departmental orientations) and preparing for the 24 August opening of a virtual front desk.

#### Operations

- Finalizing the content of the 2020-2021 GSA Planner and working to get copies printed.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Nominating Committee; the Dean of Students Review Committee (2 GSA members – currently being advertised), and the replenishment of graduate student seats on the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Council (currently being advertised).
- Facebook = 1,461 likes (up 1 from 15 July) and 1,587 followers (up 26 from 15 July); Facebook posts reached 1,154 users last week and our “post engagement” count was 106. Twitter = 1,048 followers (up 8 from 15 July); our tweets earned 350 “impressions” over the past week. Instagram = 474 followers (up 1 from 15 July); our posts earned 225 “impressions” over the past week.
- GSA Academic Travel Grants = new funding period started 1 July (not accepting applications for travel outside the province; online costs accepted); GSA Child Care Grants = new funding period started 1 July; GSA Emergency Bursaries = no funding periods for GSA EBs; GSA Graduate Student Group Grants = new funding period started 1 July. Next funding periods opens 1 October 2020. All funding is being closely monitored so we can direct it to where the most need is.
- Received Terms of Reference from First Peoples' House and conferring with GSA Awards Selection Committee for confirmation on GSA Indigenous Award.

### Management Report to the GSA Board, 12 August 2020

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 29 July 2020:

#### Strategic

- Forward planning for the 2021 GSA General Election (starting to draft a timeline and a workplan for the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee) and associated referenda (on the GSAP and the U-Pass) that will also occur.
- Reviewing the composition of GSA Council following the move of some graduate programs from the Faculty of Extension to the Faculty of Arts.
- Analyzing the recent changes to the *Labour Relations Code* and the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* enacted by Bill 32, and how they will impact the GSA's work as a labour union for academically-employed graduate students – will be soliciting a legal opinion before the end of the month.
- Preparing for the first online GSA social event – will be planning further events into the fall.
- Assessing needed updates to Section O: GSA Recognition Awards of GSA Bylaw and Policy, now that we have received Terms of Reference from First Peoples' House and are conferring with GSA Awards Selection Committee concerning this GSA award for an Indigenous graduate student.
- Reviewing the GSA's social media plans following feedback from the Vice-President Student Services.
- Supporting the current U-Pass negotiations processes.
- Work associated with the Collective Agreement, including supporting negotiations processes (next negotiation meetings are scheduled for 17 and 28 August) and planning to research best practices with respect to strike fund establishment, maintenance, growth, and utilization (project temporarily on hold as the upcoming cycle of bargaining unfolds but is being discussed with other GSAs at Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council-hosted labour roundtables and looked at with reference to the provisions of Bill 32 and the guidance our lawyer may provide with respect to that).
- Ongoing work associated with remote delivery of GSA orientation (utilizing Articulate to build presentations in eClass, etc and working with the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research to contact graduate program coordinators about departmental orientations) and preparing for the 24 August opening of a virtual front desk.

#### Operations

- Facilitating delivery of the 2020-2021 GSA Planner.
- Preparing for the second mailing of GSA Council meeting materials.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Nominating Committee: replenishment of graduate student seats on the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Council (currently being advertised) and several vacancies for GSA Councillors and GSA members to be advertised later in the month.
- Facebook = 1,470 likes (up 9 from 3 August) and 1,574 followers (down from 29 July); Facebook posts reached 1,145 users last week and our "post engagement" count was 72. Twitter = 1,052 followers (up 4 from 29 July); our tweets earned 540 "impressions" over the past week. Instagram = 474 followers (up 7 from 29 July); our posts earned 291 "impressions" over the past week.
- GSA Academic Travel Grants = new funding period started 1 July (not accepting applications for travel outside the province; online costs accepted); GSA Child Care Grants = new funding period started 1 July; GSA Emergency Bursaries = no funding periods for GSA EBs; GSA Graduate Student Group Grants = new funding period started 1 July. Next funding periods opens 1 October 2020. All funding is being closely monitored so we can direct it to where the most need is.