

GSA Council Meeting AGENDA
Monday, 17 April 2023 at 6:00 pm
Held in-person in Council Chamber

The GSA and the University of Alberta reside on Treaty 6 territory and the homeland of the Métis. This territory is a traditional gathering place for diverse Indigenous peoples including the Cree, Blackfoot, Métis, Nakota Sioux, Iroquois, Dene, Ojibway, Sauteaux, Anishinaabe, Inuit, and many others whose histories, languages, and cultures continue to influence our vibrant community. In acknowledging this traditional territory and its significance for the Indigenous peoples who lived and continue to live upon it, we recognize its longer history that reaches beyond colonization and the establishment of European colonies and recognize the GSA's ongoing collective responsibility in working with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) peoples and what that means for the work of the GSA as it aims to practice the principles of being Good Relations with FNMI peoples, Nations, communities, and lands.

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 Farhan Khalid in the Chair

OPEN SESSION

**Attached Numbered
Pages**

1. Approval of the 17 April 2023 Agenda (*suggested time: 1 min*)
2. Approval of the Minutes from the 20 March 2023 GSA Council Meeting (*suggested time: 1 min*)
Attachment:
 - i. Minutes from the 20 March 2023 GSA Council Meeting **2.0 - 2.5**
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*)

GSA Council Member Announcements

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

Presentations

5. Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Unit Review (*suggested time: 30 mins*)
Bishoi Aziz (Vice-President Academic) will present the item and introduce the guests.

Guest: Dr Roger Epp (Interim Vice-Provost and Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR))
6. Student Experience Action Plan and University Strategic Plan (*suggested time: 25 mins*)
Monisha Vinod (Vice-President Student Services) will present the item and introduce the guests.

Guests: Sarah Wolgemuth (Assistant Dean, Student Life, Student Services) and Logan Mardhani-Bayne (Strategic Development Manager)

Attachment:
 - i. University Strategic Plan Consultation Briefing Note **6.0 - 6.1**

7. Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) (*suggested time: 20 min*)
Janmejay Rao (Acting President and Vice-President External) will present the item and introduce the guests.

Guests: Brandon Simmons (Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Executive Director)

Discussion Items

8. GSA Board Strategic Work Plan (SWP): Update to GSA Council (*suggested time: 20 min*)
Janmejay Rao (Acting President and Vice-President External) will present the item.

Attachment:

- i. GSA Board Strategic Work Plan 2022-2023: Update to GSA Council **8.0 - 8.2**

Elections - None at this time

Reports (*suggested time: 15 min*)

9. President (**Anas Fassih, President**)
- i. President's Report (**no written report at this time**)
 - ii. GSA Board Report **9.0**
 - iii. GSA Budget and Finance Committee Report (**no written report at this time**)
 - iv. GSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee Report **9.1**
 - v. GSA Governance Committee Report (**no written report at this time**)
10. Vice-President Academic (**Bishoi Aziz, Vice-President Academic**)
- i. Vice-President Academic's Report **10.0 - 10.1**
11. Vice-President External (**Janmejay Rao, Vice-President External**)
- i. Vice-President External's Report **11.0**
 - ii. GSA Awards Selection Committee Report (**no written report at this time**)
12. Vice-President Labour (**Hiren Kaklotar, Vice-President Labour**)
- i. Vice-President Labour's Report **12.0**
 - ii. GSA Labour Relations Committee Report **12.1**
13. Vice-President Student Services (**Monisha Vinod, Vice-President Student Services**)
- i. Vice-President Student Services' Report **13.0 - 13.1**
14. Senator (**Ola Mabrouk, Senator**)
- i. Senator's Report (**no written report at this time**)
15. Speaker (**Farhan Khalid, Speaker**)
- i. Speaker's Report (**no written report at this time**)
16. Chief Returning Officer (**Sophie Shi, Chief Returning Officer**)
- i. Chief Returning Officer's Report (**no written report at this time**)
17. GSA Nominating Committee (**Elisabeth Widjaja, GSA Nominating Committee Chair**)
- i. GSA Nominating Committee Report **17.0 - 17.1**
18. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (**Jennifer Bertrand, GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Chair**)
- i. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Report **18.0**
19. GSA Management (**Erika Heiberg, Acting Executive Director**)
- i. Acting Executive Director's Report **19.0 - 19.3**

Question Period

20. Written Questions (**none received at this time**)

21. Oral Questions

CLOSED SESSION

Reports

22. GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (GSA ACB) Chair's Report

OPEN SESSION

Adjournment

GSA Council Meeting MINUTES
Monday, 20 March 2023 at 6:00 pm
Held in-person in Council Chamber (2-100 Van Vliet Complex)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Janmejy Rao (VP External)	Meghana Jois (Chemical & Materials Engineering)	Alain Gervais (Mathematical & Statistical Sciences)	Elham Zohari (Physics)
Monisha Vinod (VP Student Services)	Zachary Schroeder (Chemistry)	Kineshta Pillay (Mechanical Engineering)	Rubio Atonal (Physiology)
Farhan Khalid (Speaker)	AJ Darras (Civil & Environmental Engineering)	Luthfia Friskie (Media & Technology Studies)	Telisa Courtney (Political Science)
Sophie Shi (CRO)	Zia van Blankenstein (Communication Sciences & Disorders)	Simon Walker (Medical Microbiology & Immunology)	Cheryl Pan (Psychology)
Eric Beaudry (Councillor-at-Large)	Ben Smith (Drama)	Charbel Baaklini (Neuroscience)	Emma Forest (Public Health)
Md Saiful Hoque (Councillor-at-Large)	Jonathan Spence (Earth & Atmospheric Sciences)	Nancy Hammer (Nursing)	Wendy Amoako (Rehabilitation Science)
Jeremie Mahaux (Councillor-at-Large)	Jane Allred (History, Classics, & Religion)	Leo Remillard (Oncology)	Yan Xue (Sociology)
Carly Weber (Biomedical Engineering)	Karen Fraser (Human Ecology)	Christina Faig (Pharmacology)	
Carly Weber (Biomedical Engineering)	Maia Trotter; Kylie Day (Library & Information Studies)	Mohamed ElKhatib (Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences)	
Toyin Taiwo (Business MBA)	Aarya Menon (Linguistics)	Eduardo Melo de Andrade Lima (Philosophy)	

Guests: Robin Paches (Program Manager, Studentcare); Elizabeth Widjaja (Agriculture, Food, & Nutritional Sciences; GSA NoC Chair).

Speaker Farhan Khalid in the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 pm. Speaker acknowledged the Traditional Territory of Treaty Six.

Approval of Agenda**1. Approval of the 20 March 2023 Consolidated Agenda**

Members had before them the 20 March 2023 Consolidated Agenda, which had been previously distributed on 17 March 2023. C Baaklini **MOVED**; J Spence **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

Approval of Minutes**2. Minutes from the 16 February 2023 SPECIAL GSA Council Meeting**

Members had before them the 16 February 2023 SPECIAL GSA Council meeting minutes, which had been previously distributed on 17 March 2023. C Baaklini **MOVED**; T Courtney **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

3. Minutes from the 27 February 2023 GSA Council Meeting

Members had before them the 27 February 2023 GSA Council meeting minutes, which had been previously distributed on 17 March 2023. M Vinod **MOVED**; E Beaudry **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

Changes in GSA Council Membership

4. Changes in GSA Council Membership

- i. **Introduction of New Councillors:** M Jois (Mechanical Engineering); E Forest (Public Health); Z Schroeder (Chemistry); T Taiwo (Business MBA).

- ii. **Farewell to Departing GSA Council Members**

This was the last meeting for a GSA Council member: A Gervais (Math & Statistical Sciences).

GSA Council Member Announcements

5. GSA Council Member Announcements

C Baaklini asked how the new tuition fees would affect students enrolled in a Thesis-only course and if there was the potential to advocate for reductions on this front. M Vinod would respond via email and provide more details for members at the next meeting of Council.

Action Items

6. Drawdown of the GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund and GSA Health and Dental Plan Fee for 2023-2024

Monisha Vinod (Vice-President Student Services) presented the item and introduced guest, Robyn Paches (Program Manager, Studentcare).

MOTION 1: That GSA Council **APPROVE**, on the recommendation of the GSA Budget and Finance Committee, that the GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund be drawn down by approximately \$69.44 per Plan member for 2023-2024 to partially offset an increase in the GSA Health and Dental Plan Fee.

MOTION 2: That GSA Council **APPROVE**, on the recommendation of the GSA Board, that the GSA Health and Dental Plan Fee be set at \$604.19/annum, effective 1 September 2023, with collection from graduate students to begin 1 September 2023.

R Paches presented on the history and background of the GSA Health and Dental Plan, noting that this was an extended healthcare plan that went above the publicly available provincial health care. In 2019-2020, after the existing agreement with Studentcare concluded, the GSA solicited Requests for Proposals and received submissions from several brokers. Studentcare was selected again to provide service based on their competitive proposal. The agreement included a two-year rate guarantee, which expired in 2022. After a period of frozen rates and significant increases in plan usage following the pandemic, we were also seeing historic highs in usage, all factors that would drive the plan cost up. R Paches noted usage was trending upward related to previous years and we had seen a steady rise over time with the highest usage to date this past fall. R Paches noted that claims made up the majority of factors taken into consideration for the cost of the plan, and the last full year of data (2021-2022) was the highest number claims in the past five years. The loss ratio was at 102% (quite high) at the end of January 2023, which also signified the need to increase the cost of the plan overall. In short, the cost of delivering the plan had increased so the fee would need to be increased.

R Paches explained that Studentcare's recommendation was reflected in the two motions before members for the coming year's cost and reserve fund drawdown, to approve the plan fee increase of 15% to reduce pressure on the reserve fund and also avoid reducing benefits. This approach – to increase fees plus pulling from the GSA Health & Dental Plan Reserve Fund to cover the difference - would allow GSA members to maintain their current service level. Any changes beyond this would significantly increase the fee, requiring a referendum. Offsetting the entire increase with the Reserve Fund would exhaust the fund and still not cover the necessary increase.

Members asked questions regarding whether this was a choice between utilizing the reserve fund or increasing the fee or a combination of both (R Paches confirmed that the two motions were to do both – to increase the fee and also draw from the reserve fund); if there were any plans to increase services, particularly psychological services (increases were not included in the current proposal; there was still space for discussions about changing services if members wanted to prioritize certain benefits); if underutilized services could be cut to reduce the cost of the plan (underused benefits do not have a cost associated with them so if services weren't being used it did not negatively affect fee); if other funding sources were available to offset the cost (M Vinod clarified that the GSA Health and Dental Reserve Fund was a restricted budget line and this was exactly what it was for; E Heiberg clarified that other GSA budget lines cannot be transferred over to cover the cost of insurance); if the plan had ever created a surplus vs a deficit (R Paches explained that the Reserve Fund was built up in years when the plan fee was higher than the plan premium, which was the case over several years, resulting in a robust fund; now the GSA was in the position where the cost of the plan was higher than the amount brought in with fees so the Reserve Fund would be used to cover the difference).

MOTION 1: That GSA Council **APPROVE**, on the recommendation of the GSA Budget and Finance Committee, that the GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund be drawn down by approximately \$69.44 per Plan member for 2023-2024 to partially offset an increase in the GSA Health and Dental Plan Fee. E Forest **MOVED**; E Lima **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED**. 7 Abstentions (C Baaklini, A Darras, MS Hoque, M Jois, B Smith).

MOTION 2: That GSA Council **APPROVE**, on the recommendation of the GSA Board, that the GSA Health and Dental Plan Fee be set at \$604.19/annum, effective 1 September 2023, with collection from graduate students to begin 1 September 2023. M ElKhatib **MOVED**; K Fraser **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED**. 3 Opposed. 5 Abstentions (C Baaklini).

7. 2023 GSA General Election and Election of the Associate Vice-President Labour Results

Sophie Shi (GSA Chief Returning Officer) presented the item.

MOTION: That GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the results of the 2023 GSA General Election and Associate Vice-President Labour Election wherein the following graduate students were duly elected as President, Vice-President Academic, Vice-President External, Vice-President Student Life, Vice-President Student Services, and Associate Vice-President Labour:

President	Bishoi Hany G Aziz
Vice-President Academic	Rija Kamran
Vice-President External	Hamid Hassani
Vice-President Student Life	Tiffany Kung
Vice-President Student Services	Muhammad Haseeb Arshad
Associate Vice-President Labour	Muneeb Masood Raja

S Shi reported that the election results were announced a couple of weeks ago and members could find more details in the CRO Report to Council. This motion was to transfer signing authority to the incoming DEOs, who would start their new term in May.

MOTION: That GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the results of the 2023 GSA General Election and Associate Vice-President Labour Election wherein the following graduate students were duly elected as President, Vice-President Academic, Vice-President External, Vice-President Student Life, Vice-President Student Services, and Associate Vice-President Labour:

President	Bishoi Hany G Aziz
Vice-President Academic	Rija Kamran
Vice-President External	Hamid Hassani
Vice-President Student Life	Tiffany Kung
Vice-President Student Services	Muhammad Haseeb Arshad
Associate Vice-President Labour	Muneeb Masood Raja

R Atonal **MOVED**; C Baaklini **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** Unanimously.

Elections

8. GSA Council Elections

Elisabeth Widjaja (GSA Nominating Committee Chair) presented the item.

GSA Standing Committees

- a. GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC) (1 GSA member vacancy)

Both of the nominees for the GSA Budget and Finance Committee were not present to address GSA Council.

b. Vice-Provost and Dean of Students Selection Committee (2 GSA member vacancies)

The nominee for the Vice-Provost and Dean of Students Selection Committee was not present to address GSA Council.

Reports

9. President

i. President's Report:

No written report at this time.

ii. GSA Board

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 24 February 2023. The report stood as submitted.

iii. GSA Budget and Finance Committee

No written report at this time.

iv. GSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee Report

No written report at this time.

v. GSA Governance Committee

No written report at this time.

10. Vice-President Academic

i. Vice-President Academic's Report:

No written report at this time.

11. Vice-President External

i. Vice-President External's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 March 2023. The report stood as submitted. In addition, J Rao stated the tuition increase information session where it was discussed how the protest would be structured and that there was distribution in emails and on social media regarding the protest that would be sent the morning of 24 March 2023. J Rao noted he had a meeting with Dr. Epp from the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) and discussed minimum guaranteed funding packages and the external review of the FGSR. He also noted that an offer had been made to a candidate for the GSA Executive Director position and they were currently in negotiations. If negotiations failed, an offer would be sent to the second candidate. An update on the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) included discussing the transition of the new incoming Directly Elected Officers (DEOs), as well as recommending to the government to expand the eligibility criteria for the international immigration stream. C Baaklini asked if a decision for the minimum funding packages would be made for the 2023/24 year, and what the reason the government was not pushing forward the immigration stream. J Rao noted that he was not aware of a timeline for the decision on the minimum funding packages as it was under a different portfolio he was covering, and that with consistent turnover of the government, the Minister, and student leaders, the discussion had to begin new every year. T Courtney asked why there was no graduate student representation at the most recent Board Finance and Property Committee meeting and voiced their frustration that a lot of the DEOs were missing important meetings. J Rao noted that he was not obligated to attend that meeting, it was voluntary, and he was not well that day. Other DEOs had personal matters that they had been attending to.

ii. GSA Awards Selection Committee

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 March 2023. The report stood as submitted.

iii. Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Update to Member Organizations

No written report at this time.

12. Vice-President Labour

i. Vice-President Labour's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 March 2023. The report stood as submitted.

ii. GSA Labour Relations Committee

No written report at this time.

13. Vice-President Student Services

i. Vice-President Student Services' Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 March 2023. The report stood as submitted. In addition, M Vinod highlighted the National Standard of Canada for Mental-Health and Well-Being for Post-Secondary Students survey and consultation opportunities for graduate students to participate in.

14. Senator

i. Senator's Report

No written report at this time.

15. Speaker

i. Speaker's Report

No written report at this time.

16. Chief Returning Officer

i. Chief Returning Officer's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 March 2023. The report stood as submitted. In addition S Shi stated that the 2023 General Election and 2023 Election of the Associate Vice-President Labour took place and the voter turnout had increased from last year. In the 2023 General Election, 8.74% of graduate students voted. In the 2023 Election of the Associate Vice-President Labour, 10.8% of academically employed graduate students voted. There were several alleged breaches of GSA Bylaw and Policy that were brought forward and one formal complaint where penalties were issued. The decisions of the CRO regarding these penalties could be found on the GSA website.

17. GSA Nominating Committee

i. GSA Nominating Committee Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 March 2023. The report stood as submitted. In addition E Widjaja stated that there were many committee vacancies for Councillors, alternates, or Councillors-at-Large to serve on, and to please watch for the upcoming mailing of these vacancies and consider putting your name forward.

18. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee

ii. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 March 2023. The report stood as submitted.

19. GSA Management

i. Acting Executive Director's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 March 2023. The report stood as submitted. In addition, E Heiberg encouraged all to participate in the tuition protest on Friday, 24 March 2023.

Question Period

20. Written Questions

21. Oral Questions

S Shi asked what the contract negotiation with the Executive Director entailed, what was the expected timeline to have someone hired, and were challenges anticipated in onboarding the newly elected Directly-Elected Officials and a new Executive Director? J Rao noted that after consultation with the lawyer, the contract was offered to the first candidate. if they have no questions and accept, they would proceed to sign the contract. The plan was to have this done by the end of the week, but this depended on the lawyer's availability also, he also noted that from his portfolio that he would onboard the new VP External.

C Baaklini asked why the GSA did not consider striking earlier? J Rao responded that we could not strike because they could not do it legally. J Rao noted that contract negotiations had to fail to be legally positioned to strike and that every year the Vice-President Labour entered negotiations with the University regarding research assistantship funding, and salary, and only if that all failed, could we strike.

E Heiberg added that striking could only happen under certain conditions, and it must be during collective bargaining and collective bargaining had to have broken down. She noted the GSA was never in a position where collective bargaining broke down, throughout the bargaining process in the fall, and if we had been, there's quite a long process to this and it's a legal process, including collecting at least 50% of your membership to vote in favour of striking. Mediation must fail and then as long as you have that majority vote, you can consider a strike, but we were never actually in a position to legally strike. C Baaklini noted that he knew a lot of people said that they're willing to strike, so why did we not reach that impasse since most graduate students don't agree on increasing the tuition. E Heiberg replied that tuition is outside of striking, striking has to do with the collective agreement. She noted there seemed to be confusion in the language being used, and that a strike was specific to labor, whereas action taken against tuition increases would be a protest. J Allred asked in regards to striking, if there was any room to make any motions in solidarity, or with non-academically employed graduate students on behalf of tuition increasing. E Heiberg noted that the GSA was tied by the legal side of things, because moving to mediation in bargaining for purposes related to tuition hikes would be considered bargaining in bad faith, which was illegal. You have to stick with the parameters and the scope of what you're bargaining or you can have sanctions put against you. It's more about changing our language and understanding that a protest was a significant action and that the protest could take various forms. K Pillay asked why covering tuition is not part of the collective agreement. E Heiberg noted that it was primarily because less than 50% of graduate students were actively academically-employed, while tuition applied to everyone, and the collective agreement only applied to a small subsection of the student body.

Y Xue questioned if the minimum funding package would include the TAs or RA students were promised when they were admitted. J Rao noted that this would be different for every department. A Darras asked if the minimum funding package would apply retrospectively, and would PhD students in their second year receive this or only newly admitted students. J Rao stated from his point of view only newly admitted students would receive it.

R Atonal asked if we could request another presentation or update from Robyn Paches about information regarding the services that we're currently not using in the GSA Health and Dental Plan and see where we could benefit. E Heiberg noted that asking R Paches back to present on these items was definitely possible.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 pm.

University Strategic Plan (USP) Consultation - *preliminary draft*
April 2023

Background:

The university is in the process of developing our next strategic plan, the successor to *For the Public Good*. Building on the organizational transformation of the last two years and the One University model, the new USP is intended to engage the whole of the university community and shape our aspirations for approximately the next decade.

The USP process is guided by a steering committee, chaired by the Interim Provost & Vice-President (Academic) and including faculty, staff, and students from across the university. Membership is available [here](#).

Consultation process:*First phase, fall 2022*

Informed by a robust [environmental scan](#), the first phase of consultation took place over November-December 2022. This phase was intended to engage the university community as broadly as possible to gather input and identify high-level themes for further development.

Key milestones for the first phase of consultation are as follows:

- Senior leaders retreat – Oct. 31
- Town hall (public launch) – Nov. 2
- Launch of online feedback form – Nov. 2
- Roundtable discussions (approximately 30, held across all faculties and major administrative portfolios and for other stakeholder groups) – Nov. 3-Dec. 7
- GFC engagement session – Nov. 14
- Discussion with Students' Council and Graduate Students' Association Council – Nov. 15-21
- Alumni Council retreat – Nov. 26
- Senate Plenary – Dec. 1-2

In addition, the university has retained Higher Education Strategy Associates to manage a process of consultation with external stakeholders, which is currently ongoing. This includes interviews and focus group sessions with stakeholders from government, funding agencies, industry, economic development agencies, the non-profit sector research partners, donors, and other thought leaders in higher education.

Second phase, early 2023

In the second phase of consultation, the Steering Committee administered targeted surveys to the university community (launched mid-January) to allow for deeper engagement on key themes. At the Board/GFC/Senate summit in January, attendees received a summary of feedback from external stakeholders and discussed emerging critical directional questions.

“What We Heard”

In February, the Steering Committee released a “What We Heard” consultation summary document, and conducted additional consultation with the university community and GFC to validate themes and provide input on major topics. The document is available [here](#).

Preliminary draft

Attachment one provides a preliminary draft of the proposed USP. Input on the preliminary draft is requested. The draft will be released to the community for feedback in mid-April.

The Steering Committee will review input and submit a final draft for endorsement by GFC and the Board in the May/June cycle.

An implementation plan will be developed in the next academic year, identifying specific initiatives, timelines, and indicators.

Discussion questions

All input on the draft plan is welcome. Input on the following questions is particularly requested:

1. Does the draft USP articulate the right ambitions to engage and inspire our community and position our university for long-term success?
2. After reading the Education with Purpose section, which goals or ideas resonate with you the most? Why?
3. After reading the Research with Purpose section, which goals or ideas resonate with you the most? Why?
4. After reading the Engagement with Purpose section, which goals or ideas resonate with you the most? Why?
5. What else would you like the Steering Committee to consider as it revises the draft USP?

Attachments

[Draft University Strategic Plan](#)

2022-2023 GSA Board Strategic Work Plan 17 April 2023 Update to GSA Council

Each spring the GSA Directly-Elected Officers (hereafter referred to, informally, as the student executive team) work with the GSA Board to produce a Strategic Work Plan (SWP). The SWP is the document that steers and prioritizes the work and initiatives of the GSA, and is subject to revision as opportunities arise, shifting directions as needed. The SWP reflects the GSA's vision and mission to advocate for all graduate students to the University of Alberta and the Alberta Government for a safe, supportive, respectful, accessible, and inclusive community that fosters the multi-faceted roles played by graduate students.

This year's consultation initiatives were carried out in Summer 2022 and yielded a significant amount of feedback which helped shape the 2022-2023 SWP. The final document was then approved by the GSA Board and received by GSA Council for information at their July meeting. It can be viewed [on the GSA website](#). As in previous years, updates are scheduled to be brought to GSA Council in October 2022, January 2023, and April 2023.

A selection of ongoing work and new initiatives pursued and undertaken by the 2022-2023 student executive team (President Anas Fassih, VP Academic Bishoi Aziz, VP External Janmejay Rao, VP Labour Hiren Kaklotar, and VP Student Services Monisha Vinod), in accord with the 2022-2023 SWP, can be found below.

Earlier updates were shared with GSA Council in October and January and can be viewed [on the GSA website](#); thus this document is the third and final installment of updates in the 2022-2023 term.

- Continued collaboration with Dr. Roger Epp, Interim Vice-Provost and Dean of FGSR, on moving forward with a proposal on institutional minimum for doctoral funding packages. This pursuit remains a high priority for the GSA, and the Office of the Provost and FGSR have been pivotal in moving these ideas forward. A survey was completed to show the gaps in funding across campus and work continues to find how these gaps can be closed;
- Tuition has been extremely pivotal in these last few weeks, as we've worked with colleagues in the Students' Union and across campus to protest the proposed increases at the Board of Governors' meeting on 24 March. The GSA continues to advocate for the most equitable fee structure pairs with a robust offering of services and academic offerings;
- In January, the VP External participated in the Alberta Provincial Advocacy Council's (ab-GPAC) Advocacy Week with provincial political leaders. Tuition was an important advocacy topic and we were encouraged by the announcements by the provincial government to cap tuition increases starting in 2024-2025, extend the interest-free grace period for student loans, increasing the threshold for the Repayment Assistance Plan, and expand the Alberta Student Grant.
- The VP External has been working with the ab-GPAC in collaborating across the province for a Get Out the Vote (GOTV) campaign. The GSA is excited to collaborate in this effort to promote civic engagement and encourage participation in the democratic process;
- The VP Academic is currently serving as a member of the Academic Integrity Policy Working Group and engaging in conversations relating to generative AI technologies and the effects these have on the academic environment. The committee is currently working to develop guidelines for University governing bodies regarding the use of these technologies;
- The VP Academic has been actively engaged with the FGSR and the external review process of the Faculty to better understand the role of FGSR in the evolving campus structure, and advocating for graduate student supports on campus;
- The team is continuing to engage the graduate student body through in-person events with the aim of advancing community building and wellness. The GSA Coffee Breaks are continuing to be held in Triffo

Hall, and we held a successful GSA Winter Social, in Dinwoodie Lounge. The latter was a chance to bring a larger cohort of graduate students together for an evening of mingling, games, and food;

- We were also able to celebrate the numerous students who serve on our various committees through the Volunteer Appreciation Night in early March;
- The GSA Awards Night returned for the first time since 2019 with a full suite of guests, including distinguished speakers, award recipients, family and friends to celebrate the accomplishments of graduate students and other members of our community for the 2022-2023 academic year.
- The final draft of the 2022-2024 GSA Collective Agreement has been published and includes the following additions: salary increases in Winter 2023 and Fall 2023, a designated leave for academic conferences, a designated leave for traditional Indigenous practices, and more detailed language on working additional hours;
- The VP External has been collaborating with ab-GPAC to advocate to the provincial government to expand the eligibility criteria of the Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program to allow for more opportunities for international graduate students to remain in Alberta after completing their degree. The GSA believe this is an excellent opportunity to not only support students as they move out of the University, but to also support a growing economy in the province;
- The VP Student Services has been working to engage more meaningfully with the Student Innovation Centre and expand opportunities for graduate students to explore the innovation and entrepreneurship space with external start-ups as well as innovation hubs on campus;
- The VP Student Services has been engaged in the student space design competition for the University Commons, which encourages student involvement in developing sustainable practices and solutions for how space can be more optimally used on campus;
- During the funding period spanning 1 January 2023 and 1 April 2023, the GSA disbursed \$707,061.71 as Academic Travel Grants, Child Care Grants, Emergency Bursaries, and Graduate Student Group Grants. Eligibility criteria and usage of GSA grants, awards, and bursaries are being closely monitored to continue to ensure they are in alignment with the needs of graduate students;
- The GSA continues to support the Office of the Dean of Students in their efforts to implement the [National Standard on Mental Health and Wellness for Post-Secondary Students](#). VP Student Services is dedicated to serving as representative of the graduate student voice in conversations with the Office of the Dean of Students;
- The VP Student Services has been serving as a co-sponsor for the Student Experience Action Plan, participating in engagement sessions across campus and gathering feedback from staff and students. More information and ways to participate can be found on the project's [website](#).
- The use of the GSA Health and Dental Reserve Fund (GSA HDPRF) to the amount of \$69.44 per student to help offset upcoming increases to the cost of the GSA Health and Dental Plan. The annual cost of enrolment for this plan was frozen for a period of two years as part of the previous round of negotiations with Studentcare. Since then, as a result of increasing usage, the cost of the plan has continued to grow. With the two-year freezing period ending in August 2022, and further easing of covid restrictions resulted in increased use of the plan the per-person fee of the plan for the 2023-2024 academic year was reported at \$673.63. Thus the GSA Board and GSA Budget and Finance Committee have opted to utilize the GSA HDPRF to help offset this increase for the duration of the 2023-2024 academic year, meaning that the existing per-person cost will see a 15% increase to \$604.19. Work to evaluate coverage offerings under the Plan is ongoing; *and*



- The GSA Board has successfully hired a new Executive Director this April. Further updates on the process will be brought to GSA Council.

The student executive team will continue to work diligently in accordance with the 2022-2023 SWP until the conclusion of the 2022-2023 term on 30 April 2023. Thereafter, the proverbial baton will be passed to the 2023-2024 student executive team.

**GSA Board
Report to GSA Council for the 17 April 2023 Meeting**

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 Directly-Elected Officers 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 19 (Acting Executive Director's Report to GSA Council) on pages 19.1-19.3.

22 March 2023 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

GSA Academic Travel Grants, Child Care Grants, and Emergency Bursaries: Reallocation of Graduate Student Support Fund Rolling Opening Balances; Council Debrief; Meeting reports.

Motions and Agreements:

None to report.

29 March 2023 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

GSA Academic Travel Grants, Child Care Grants, and Emergency Bursaries: Reallocation of Graduate Student Support Fund Rolling Opening Balances; GSA Acting President; GSA Board Strategic Work Plan Update to Council; Meeting reports.

Motions and Agreements:

MOTION: That the GSA Board **APPROVE** the reallocation of the amounts remaining in the budgets and contingency budgets for GSA Academic Travel Grants, GSA Child Care Grants, and GSA Emergency Bursaries in 2022-2023 as follows: ~\$98,364 to the 2023-2024 budget line for GSA Academic Travel Grants, ~\$50,000 to the 2023-2024 budget line for GSA Emergency Bursaries, and ~\$120,222 to the 2023-2024 budget line for GSA Child Care Grants. JR **Moved**. MV Seconded. **CARRIED**.

MOTION: That the GSA Board **APPOINT** Janmejay Rao to the Acting President of the GSA until 30 April 2023. BA **Moved**. MV Seconded. **CARRIED**.

5 April 2023 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

GSA Board Strategic Work Plan Update to Council; Meeting reports.

Motions and Agreements:

None to report.

**GSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee
Report to GSA Council for the 17 April 2023 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Monisha Vinod
Date: 14 April 2023

Dear Council Colleagues,

The GSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (EDIC) met on 23 March 2023. While we were not able to meet quorum, I am pleased to report that members were able to have an engaging informal discussion on the Student Experience Action Plan (SEAP).

Sincerely,
Monisha Vinod, Vice-President Student Services and Vice-Chair of the GSA EDIC

**Vice-President Academic
Report to GSA Council for the 17 April 2023 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Bishoi Aziz
Date: 13 April 2023

Dear Council Colleagues,

I can't imagine that my first term is coming to a close. It has been a great honor for me to represent graduate students over the past year in the different venues. It is my pleasure to report to you on the most recent work I have been doing. Unfortunately, losing Anas at that critical time has put a huge overload on the DEOs to take over his role. However, we remain committed to support the graduate students' community.

Board of Governors

- As Anas wasn't able to return back to the office, and we had a critical Board of Governors meeting on the 24 March, I cut my paternal leave short to accept an early appointment to the Board of Governors. This was to ensure that the GSA had a voice and vote on the tuition proposals. In the meeting, I spoke against the proposal and highlighted how the graduate programs enrollment growth was less than 1% over the past year. I argued that making education more expensive would continue to negatively impact graduate enrollment. I also presented a petition letter from the Halt the Hike group, a letter that was signed by different constituencies on- and off-campus, but mainly graduate students, to the Board Chair. Unfortunately, the tuition proposal was approved.
- Despite approving the tuition proposal, the GSA and the Students' Union (SU) managed to get some gains from the University. The SU managed to get a commitment from the University to offer extra funds to the Campus Food Bank to start a food pantry on campus. We also managed to start a working group with the Provost that will include representation from both the GSA and the SU to reassess the cost of living in Edmonton. This will aim to address the current state inflation to better direct future tuition proposals.

GSA Awards Night

- In March, we had the opportunity to recognize the great work of graduate students, staff, and supervisors at the GSA Awards Night. Engagement in the night was magnificent and we are proud to be able to return to such a large scale for the event.

PhD Guaranteed Minimum Funding Package

- The Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) has finished collecting the data of the environmental scan regarding the state of the PhD funding on campus. As a whole, all PhD programs are supportive of the project. However, smaller programs are concerned that the project may lead to shrinkage in their graduate programs, including the master's programs. Currently, FGSR is proposing a package of 25,000 CAD per year to PhD students for four years. This aligns with the highest number any U15 is offering. I tried to push to increase the amount, or at least to have a higher amount for international students to cover the differential in the tuition, however, FGSR estimated a gap of around 8 Million CAD to cover the non-funded students. FGSR is currently discussing with the University different strategies to supplement that gap, and also a road map for governance approval. We anticipate the project to be submitted very soon.

Dean of Students Selection Committee

- Currently, I sit on the Dean of Students selection committee and bring the graduate student voice to the process. I won't be able to report more on that as the work of the committee is confidential.

General Faculties Council (GFC) Composition

- This month, an Association of Academic Staff at the University of Alberta (AASUA) member in GFC brought forward a motion to increase the AASUA representation in GFC to 51%, a proposal that would negatively impact students' voices on GFC. Currently, there's an equal representation between students and AASUA, which ensures effective student advocacy. The motion came to the GFC Executive Committee (GFC EXEC), where I

spoke against it highlighting the value of having a strong student voice in GFC and bringing up the example of the passing the graduate supervisor guidelines. I also submitted a letter to GFC to ask the members to vote against it. In GFC EXEC, the motion was defeated unanimously. I hope that the same will happen in GFC.

GSA Transition

- Lately, the outgoing DEOs have been busy with on boarding the new GSA executives. We have individual meetings and group meetings in addition to job-shadowing in the different committees and administration meetings. I am pretty confident in the abilities of the new team and we will continue to convey to them the full history and experience we obtained over the past year so they are in a strong position when they start.

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 23 March 2023 to 14 April 2023 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

23 March	Board of Governors Members only Dinner
24 March	Board of Governors
24 March	No Tuition Hikes Protest
24 March	GSA Awards Night
27 March	Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Graduate Program Support Team
27 March	Meeting with a Graduate Student
27 March	General Faculties Council Executive Subcommittee on Governance and Procedural Oversight (GFC Exec GPO)
28 March	Provost's Task Force on Artificial Intelligence
28 March	Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees (MNIF) Joint Oversight Committee
28 March	Meeting with R Epp, Interim Vice-Provost and Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR)
29 March	Dean of Students Selection Committee
29 March	Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees (MNIF) Joint Oversight Committee
30 March	Dean of Students Selection Committee Town Hall
30 March	General Faculties Council Council on Student Affairs (GFC COSA)
31 March	University Research and Innovation Advisory Committee (URIAC)
31 March	GSA Coffee Break
31 March	University of Alberta Festival of Teaching and Learning Keynote Panel
3 April	General Faculties Council Executive Committee (GFC EXEC)
6 April	Meeting with R Epp, Interim Vice-Provost and Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) and C Ayranci, Associate Dean (Awards and Scholarships)
11 April	Dean of Students Selection Committee
13 April	GSA Transition
13 April	General Faculties Council Programs Committee (GFC PC)
13 April	Meeting with D Vethanayagam – General Faculties Council (GFC) Rep to Board of Governors
13 April	GSA General Faculties Council (GFC) Caucus
13 April	U of A Board Orientation
14 April	GSA Transition
14 April	Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees (MNIF) Joint Oversight Committee
14 April	Board of Governors (Special Meeting)

**Vice-President External
Report to GSA Council for the 17 April 2023 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Janmejy Rao
Date: 14 April 2023

I sincerely hope that everyone is doing well and had a wonderful winter session. As this is my final Council meeting of my tenure, I warmly welcome the incoming team. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all the Council members for their active involvement and enthusiastic participation in our meetings. Despite the challenges we faced this year, your unwavering support made everything feel remarkably seamless. Here are my updates on the important meetings.

Tuition Hike Protest:

As there has been an increase in tuition fees by 5.5% for the 2023-24 academic year, the GSA and the Students' Union jointly organized a protest against the tuition hike on March 24th, 2023.

GSA Executive Director Hiring:

I am pleased to inform you that I have officially signed the contract with the incoming Executive Director in the presence of the VP Academic (witness).

Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC):

The ab-GPAC board of directors planned a meeting with Rajan Sawhney, Minister of Trade, Immigration and Multiculturalism on 27th March primarily to talk about internationalization and growth of Alberta. The meeting was rescheduled multiple times and was eventually cancelled. This is a poor reflection on the current government and its efforts to internationalize the economy of Alberta and attract global talent. ab-GPAC will be submitting a written report mentioning the asks.

University Strategic Planning (USP) Steering Committee

The purpose of the Steering Committee is to provide overall guidance and oversight of the process to develop the University Strategic Plan (USP) and to present a draft Strategic Plan to President Flanagan for submission to General Faculties Council (GFC) and the Board of Governors. I attended these meetings to offer suggestions and comments on behalf of graduate students, regarding what they would like to see included in the plan.

Apart from the aforementioned updates, I also spent time on internal management meetings.

These were the main highlights in terms of my meetings. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to ask in the GSA Council meeting or reach out to me via (gsa.vpexternal@ualberta.ca).

Thank you,
Janmejy Rao, Vice-President External 2022-2023

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 21 March to 17 April 2023 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

22 Mar	Meeting with Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) and Students' Union (SU)
24 Mar	No Tuition Hikes Protest
24 Mar	GSA Awards Night
29 Mar	University Strategic Planning (USP) Steering Committee
29 Mar	Alumni Careers Committee
31 Mar	GSA Coffee Break
5 April	Public Health Response Team Update
12 April	General Faculties Council Academic Planning Committee (GFC APC)
13 April	GSA Transition

**Vice-President Labour
Report to GSA Council for the 17 April 2023 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Hiren Kaklotar
Date: 14 April 2023

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope all the council members are doing well. I was on leave for most of the last month due to academic term-ending work. Mostly I was involved in tuition hike protest planning with the Students' Union (SU) and Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), and solidarity meetings.

Solidarity Meeting:

Similar to work that was done last spring by the labour associations around the province, currently PSAC is supporting concerns raised by graduate students. Several concerns were discussed and documented for support from various groups. Due to confidentiality, the formal document will be made public once it is submitted to the government.

Executive Director Hiring Committee:

The hiring committee's work is now concluded. An offer has been accepted by a candidate. The new Executive Director will begin 19 April 2023.

Transition for Incoming Associate Vice-President Labour (AVPL):

I met with Muneeb Raja, incoming AVPL to explain to him the labour portfolio and priorities for the year. We also discussed potential work areas which could be beneficial for academically-employed graduate students (AEGSs). Further training is also scheduled throughout April.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any concerns or suggestions. I'm here to serve you!

In solidarity,
Hiren Kaklotar, Vice-President Labour 2022-2023

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 20 March 2023 and 17 April 2023 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

30 Mar	Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) Solidarity Meeting
6 April	Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) Solidarity Meeting
13 April	GSA Transition
13 April	GSA Labour Relations Committee (GSA LRC)
13 April	Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) Solidarity Meeting

**GSA Labour Relations Committee
Report to GSA Council for the 17 April 2023 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Hiren Kaklotar
Date: 14 April 2023

Dear GSA Council Colleagues,

The GSA Labour Relations Committee (GSA LRC) met on 13 April 2023. At this meeting, members were introduced to the incoming Associate Vice-President Labour, and we did a review of the activities and goals accomplished for the past year, with suggestions on how to continue building our outreach and benefits for academically-employed graduate students, including building the faculty steward network.

If you are a Councillor in the following faculties, please consider reaching out to your department for interest in being a Faculty Steward:

- Business
- Campus St. Jean
- Education
- Kinesiology, Sport and Recreation
- Law
- Nursing
- Public Health
- Rehabilitation Medicine

Members of the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) also attended and we discussed lobbying efforts ahead of the provincial election and the various services that PSAC can provide via our service agreement.

I am happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,
Hiren Kaklotar, 2022-2023 Vice-President Labour and Chair of the GSA LRC

**Vice-President Student Services
Report to GSA Council for the 17 April 2023 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Monisha Vinod
Date: 14 April 2023

Dear Council Colleagues,

As my term with the GSA is wrapping up and transition to the incoming executive is occurring, and as I shared priorities and updates to the strategic work plan in an end-of-the-year report, I reflect on all that we have accomplished together.

Here are some of the highlights from the past month. Most were confidential.

- As co-sponsor of the Student Experience Action Plan, we have begun the next round of consultation on the draft student commitment statement and underlying principles. The survey will run from the 3rd of April to the 21st of April and I encourage you to submit feedback [here](#). Faculty feedback mechanisms will launch shortly and engagements with prospective students and alumni are being planned for. I will also be participating in the second workshop that is happening mid-May. There was an update given to the General Faculties Council on Student Affairs as well.
- Winners for The Student Space Design Competition for University Commons were selected by the adjudication panel I sat on. The hope is to have constructive conversations with Facilities & Operations around sustainable practices to ensure optimization of space everywhere on campus with the submitted ideas for newly renovated University Commons building. I foresee this to be a co-creation project as well.
- Advocacy and collaboration on space ideas are in discussion with facilities & operations: projects for a second pantry location perhaps in Rutherford Library, a community garden space, and land in East Campus Village to build a for-purpose community kitchen facility.

As always, I am open to feedback and questions and can be reached at gsa.vpstudentservices@ualberta.ca

Thank you and with Warm Regards,
Monisha Vinod, Vice-President Student Services 2022-2023

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 21 March to 17 April 2023(not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

21 Mar	Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees (MNIF) Joint Oversight Committee
22 Mar	Meeting with Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) and Students' Union (SU)
22 Mar	Marshall Pre-Protest Review and Training
23 Mar	GSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (GSA EDIC)
23 Mar	Student Mental Health Network
24 Mar	Coalition for Action on High Risk Drinking (CAHRD)
24 Mar	No Tuition Hikes Protest
24 Mar	GSA Awards Night
28 Mar	University Commons Student Design Competition
29 Mar	University Commons - Student Space Design Intro
30 Mar	Presenting the Student Experience Action Plan at General Faculties Council Council on Student Affairs (GFC COSA)
28 Mar	Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees (MNIF) Joint Oversight Committee
29 Mar	Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees (MNIF) Joint Oversight Committee
30 Mar	General Faculties Council Council on Student Affairs (GFC COSA)

31 Mar	GSA Coffee Break
4 April	Student Experience Action Plan Sponsor Update
6 April	Campus Food Bank Board
11 April	Dean of Students Selection Committee
13 April	GSA Transition
13 April	Students Who Parent Working Group
14 April	National Standard Advisory Committee
14 April	Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees (MNIF) Joint Oversight Committee
17 April	Meeting with K Friese, Assistant Dean Health and Wellness, Student Services, Dean of Students

**GSA Nominating Committee
Report to GSA Council for the 17 April 2023 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Elisabeth Widjaja
Date: 14 April 2023

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,
Elisabeth Widjaja, Chair of the GSA NoC

Memorandum to GSA Councillors

As reported previously on multiple occasions, there are a number of vacancies on GSA Standing Committees for GSA Council Members (Departmental Councillors, Alternates, and Councillors-at-Large). These positions play a pivotal role in the GSA's ongoing efforts to keep its processes transparent and itself accountable and long-term vacancies adversely impact these efforts. **GSA Councillors (including Alternates) are strongly encouraged to consider serving on these committees.**

It is important to note that the time commitment for these committees varies greatly. While some meet regularly throughout the year (usually every two (2) to three (3) months) others meet less frequently, and some do almost all 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, I strongly encourage GSA Councillors (and Alternates) and Councillors-at-Large 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 me at ewidjaja@ualberta.ca or GSA Elections Coordinator Monica Brzak at gsanomco@ualberta.ca.

GSA Standing Committees

1) GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (GSA ACB) (Two (2) GSA Councillor Positions)

Information regarding the positions for two (2) GSA Councillors was circulated via email to GSA Council on 31 March ad 6 April with a nomination deadline of 11 April 2023. **No nominations were received; these vacancies will be advertised again.**

2) GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC) (One (1) GSA Councillor Position)

Information regarding the position for one (1) GSA Councillor was circulated via email to GSA Council on 31 March and 6 April with a nomination deadline of 12 April 2023. **No nominations were received; this vacancy will be advertised again.**

3) GSA Governance Committee (GSA GC) (One (1) GSA Councillor Positions)

Information regarding the position for one (1) GSA Councillor was circulated via email to GSA Council on 31 March and 6 April with a nomination deadline of 12 April 2023. **No nominations were received; this vacancy will be advertised again.**

4) GSA Board (GSAB) (One (1) GSA Councillor Position)

Information regarding the position for one (1) GSA Councillor was circulated via email to GSA Council on 31 March and 6 April with a nomination deadline of 12 April 2023. **No nominations were received; this vacancy will be advertised again.**

5) GSA Board and GSA Nominating Committee (GSAB/NoC) (One (1) Joint GSA Councillor Position)

Information regarding the position for one (1) GSA Councillors was circulated via email to GSA Council on 31 March and 6 April with a nomination deadline of 12 April 2023. **No nominations were received; this vacancy will be advertised again.**

External

1) General Faculties Council (Nine (9) Positions for GSA Members)

Information regarding the positions for nine (9) GSA members was circulated via the GSA newsletters of 24 and 31 March with a nomination deadline of 5 April 2023. **Four nominations were received; Danielle Gardiner Milln, Divya Maisuriya, Chathuranga De Silva, and Waji Ali were elected; the remaining vacancies will be advertised again.**

2) Vice-Provost and Dean of Students Search Committee (Two (2) Positions for GSA Members)

Information regarding this position for two (2) GSA members was circulated via the GSA newsletters of 3 and 10 March with a nomination deadline of 15 March 2023. **GSA Nominating Committee agreed for Vice-President Student Services Monisha Vinod to serve.**

**GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC)
Report to GSA Council for the 17 April 2023 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Jennifer Bertrand
Date: 14 April 2023

Dear GSA Council Members,

The GSA ERC met to debrief the 2023 GSA General Election and Election of the Associate Vice-President Labour on 22 March 2023. We discussed potential GSA Bylaw and Policy changes to align with what was done in practice during the 2023 elections processes. The committee discussed various alleged breaches and complaints that were brought up during these elections and how to mitigate these in the future. As well, we discussed voter turnout and future ways to spread awareness about the elections and to encourage voting. The committee will continue to discuss possible future strategies to increase voter turnout.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Bertrand, Chair of the GSA ERC

**GSA Acting Executive Director
Report to GSA Council for the 17 April 2023 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Erika Heiberg
Date: 14 April 2023

Dear GSA Council Members,

In the weeks following the last meeting of GSA Council, the office team has been engaged with: planning for the beginning of the terms of the new team of Directly-Elected Officers (DEOs) that will happen at the start of May; the closing out of the GSA's fiscal year on 31 March; supporting the tuition hike protest; hosting GSA Awards Night; opening a new funding period for GSA grants and bursaries (new granting period opened on 1 April); planning for the start of a new Executive Director; and supporting the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee as it debriefs the 2023 GSA General Election and identifies potential revisions to GSA Bylaw and Policy on elections and referenda to enhance clarity.

As this is the final meeting before a new team of Directly-Elected Officers takes office, I would also like to take this opportunity to offer my thanks to the outgoing members of the current team. We are happy to be able to continue working alongside the current Vice-President Academic for another year and, along with all the members of the office team, I wish the outgoing members of the current team all the best in their future endeavours and thank them for their service.

I am happy to answer any questions and, as always, the weekly reports from myself to the GSA Board are attached (pages 19.1-19.3).

Best,

Erika Heiberg, Acting Executive Director

Management Report to the GSA Board, 22 March 2023

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 15 March 2023:

Strategic

- Preparing for transition to a new executive team at the end of the month.
- Preparing for the fiscal year end.
- Developing the final Board Strategic Work Plan update to GSA Council and a timeline for the development of next year's plan.
- Drafting several GSA reports to University governance bodies.
- Working with the Students' Union and Public Service Alliance of Canada to provide resources to the March 24 tuition protest event.
- Human resources work – additional student support hired to assist with events and strategic planning.
- Seeking a legal opinion on Workplace Harassment and Violence Policy drafts, as required for Occupational Health and Safety Legislation
- Work associated with the Collective Agreement (soliciting expressions of interest for the steward network, advising individual graduate student workers, and supporting the work of the GSA Labour Relations Committee, distribution of new agreement).

Operations

- Action arising from the recent GSA Council meeting.
- Preparing for the opening of a new granting period.
- Council remuneration for 2021-2022.
- Final planning for GSA Awards Night (24 March).
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Nominating Committee has vacancies on the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (advertised directly to Council), GSA Governance Committee (advertised directly to GSA Council), GSA Board (advertised directly to GSA Council), GSA Board/GSA Nominating Committee (advertised directly to GSA Council), GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (advertised directly to Council), General Faculties Council (GFC) (advertised via Newsletter), and Vice-Provost and Dean of Students Search Committee (advertised via GSA newsletter).
- Facebook = 1972 followers (up 5 from 13 March); Facebook posts reached 97 users since 13 March. Twitter = 1,341 followers (up 2 from 13 March); our tweets earned 247 "impressions" over the past week. Instagram = 1005 followers (up 1 from 13 March); Instagram posts reached 271 users over the last week.
- GSA Academic Travel Grants = new funding period to start 1 April; GSA Child Care Grants = new funding period to start 1 April; GSA Emergency Bursaries = no funding periods, new fiscal year to start 1 April; GSA Graduate Student Group Grants = new funding period starts 1 April. All funding continues to be closely monitored so we can direct it to where the most need is.

Management Report to the GSA Board, 29 March 2023

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 22 March 2023:

Strategic

- Preparing for transition to a new executive team.
- Preparing for the fiscal year end.
- Developing the final Board Strategic Work Plan update to GSA Council and a timeline for the development of next year's plan.
- Drafting several GSA reports to University governance bodies.
- Working with the Students' Union and Public Service Alliance of Canada on the March 24 tuition protest and follow up from the event.
- Seeking a legal opinion on Workplace Harassment and Violence Policy drafts, as required for Occupational Health and Safety Legislation
- Work associated with the Collective Agreement (soliciting expressions of interest for the steward network, advising individual graduate student workers, and supporting the work of the GSA Labour Relations Committee, distribution of new agreement).

Operations

- Preparing for the opening of a new granting period.
- Council remuneration for 2021-2022.
- GSA Awards Night (24 March) and wrap up.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Nominating Committee has vacancies on the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (advertised directly to Council), GSA Governance Committee (advertised directly to GSA Council), GSA Board (advertised directly to GSA Council), GSA Board/GSA Nominating Committee (advertised directly to GSA Council), GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (advertised directly to Council), General Faculties Council (GFC) (advertised via Newsletter), and Vice-Provost and Dean of Students Search Committee (advertised via GSA newsletter), and Civil & Environmental Engineering Graduate Students' Association (advertised directly to CEE graduate students).
- Facebook = 1972 followers (up 0 from 20 March); Facebook posts reached 571 users since 20 March. Twitter = 1,343 followers (up 2 from 20 March); our tweets earned 652 "impressions" over the past week. Instagram = 1016 followers (up 11 from 20 March); Instagram posts reached 716 users over the last week.
- GSA Academic Travel Grants = new funding period to start 1 April; GSA Child Care Grants = new funding period to start 1 April; GSA Emergency Bursaries = no funding periods, new fiscal year to start 1 April; GSA Graduate Student Group Grants = new funding period starts 1 April. All funding continues to be closely monitored so we can direct it to where the most need is.

Management Report to the GSA Board, 5 April 2023

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 29 March 2023:

Strategic

- Preparing for the fiscal year end (processing any remaining invoices, considering the timing of the audit, etc).
- Developing the final Board Strategic Work Plan update to GSA Council (and preparing to redraft based on feedback from members) and a timeline for the development of next year's plan, as well as developing the 2022-2023 annual report.
- Preparing for the first mailing of GSA Council meeting materials.
- Preparing a submission to the Board Finance and Property Committee concerning the GSA fees to be collected in 2023-2024.
- Hosting transition programming, coordinating job shadowing, and planning 101 scheduling by portfolio, etc.
- Starting to draft some minor proposed revisions to GSA Bylaw and Policy on elections and referenda following a recent meeting of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee.
- Seeking a legal opinion on Workplace Harassment and Violence Policy drafts, as required for Occupational Health and Safety Legislation
- Work associated with the Collective Agreement (soliciting expressions of interest for the steward network, advising individual graduate student workers, and supporting the work of the GSA Labour Relations Committee, distribution of new agreement).

Operations

- Opening of a new granting period.
- Council remuneration for 2021-2022.
- GSA Awards Night (24 March) and wrap up.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Nominating Committee has vacancies on the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (advertised directly to Council), GSA Governance Committee (advertised directly to GSA Council), GSA Board (advertised directly to GSA Council), GSA Board/GSA Nominating Committee (advertised directly to GSA Council), GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (advertised directly to Council), General Faculties Council (GFC) (advertised via Newsletter), Renewable Resources (RenR) Graduate Students' Association (advertised directly to RenR graduate students), and Civil & Environmental Engineering Graduate Students' Association (advertised directly to CEE graduate students).
- Facebook = 1974 followers (up 2 from 27 March); Facebook posts reached 571 users since 27 March. Twitter = 1,343 followers (up 0 from 27 March); our tweets earned 259 "impressions" over the past week. Instagram = 1016 followers (up 0 from 27 March); Instagram posts reached "unknown" users over the last week.
- GSA Academic Travel Grants = new funding period started 1 April; GSA Child Care Grants = new funding period started 1 April; GSA Emergency Bursaries = no funding periods, new fiscal year started 1 April; GSA Graduate Student Group Grants = new funding period started 1 April. All funding continues to be closely monitored so we can direct it to where the most need is.