

GSA Council Meeting AGENDA
Monday, 18 September 2022 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, Saulteaux, 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

<u>OPEN SESSION</u>	Attached Numbered Pages
1. Approval of the 18 September 2023 Agenda <i>(suggested time: 1 min)</i>	
2. Approval of the Minutes from the 17 July 2023 GSA Council Meeting <i>(suggested time: 1 min)</i> Attachment: i. Minutes from the 17 July 2023 GSA Council Meeting	2.0 - 2.3
3. Changes in GSA Council Membership <i>(suggested time: 1 min)</i> i. Introduction of New GSA Council Members <i>(If you are new to GSA Council, please let us know it is your first meeting)</i> ii. Farewell to Departing GSA Council Members <i>(If this is your last GSA Council meeting, or if your last GSA Council meeting is approaching, please let us know)</i>	
<u>GSA Council Member Announcements</u>	
4. GSA Council Member Announcements <i>(suggested time: 5 min)</i>	
<u>Presentations</u>	
5. President of the University of Alberta – President Flanagan <i>(suggested time: 35 mins)</i> Bishoi Aziz (President of the GSA) will present the item and introduce the guest.	
6. Restorative Justice <i>(suggested time: 20 min)</i> Tiffany Kung (Vice-President Student Life) will present the item and introduce the guest. Guests: Dini van Eck and Ken Chan	
<u>Elections</u>	
7. GSA Council Elections <i>(suggested time: to be determined)</i> Violet Sun (GSA Nominating Committee Member) will present the item.	7.0 – 7.2
a. GSA Council-Elected Officer Positions <i>Attachment:</i>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Nominees for DRO (1 GSA Member vacancy) 	
<p>GSA Standing Committees</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. GSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (GSA EDIC) Attachment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Nominees for the GSA EDIC (4 GSA Councillor vacancies) <p>Farhan Khalid (GSA Speaker) will present the following item.</p>	<p>7.3 – 7.14</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. GSA Board (GSAB) and GSA Nominating Committee (GSA NoC) (2 vacancies for GSA Councillors) Attachment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Nominees for the GSAB/GSA NoC (2 vacancies) <p>Reports (suggested time: 15 min)</p>	<p>7.15 – 7.16</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8. President (Bishoi Aziz, President) 	<p>8.0-8.1</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. President’s Report ii. GSA Budget and Finance Committee Report (no written report at this time) iii. GSA Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee Report 	<p>8.2</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Vice-President Academic (Rija Kamran, Vice-President Academic) 	<p>9.0-9.1</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Vice-President Academic’s Report 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Vice-President External (Hamid Hassani, Vice-President External) 	<p>10.0-10.2</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Vice-President External’s Report ii. GSA Awards Selection Committee Report (no written report at this time) 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Vice-President Student Life (Tiffany Kung, Vice-President Student Life) 	<p>11.0-11.1</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Vice-President Student Life’s Report ii. GSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee Report (no written report at this time) 	

<p>12. Vice-President Student Services (Haseeb Arshad, Vice-President Student Services)</p> <p>i. Vice-President Student Services' Report</p>	12.0-12.2
<p>13. Associate Vice-President Labour (Muneeb Masood Raja, Associate Vice-President Labour)</p> <p>i. Associate Vice-President Labour's Report</p> <p>ii. GSA Labour Relations Committee Report (no written report at this time)</p>	13.0-13.1
<p>14. Speaker (Farhan Khalid, Speaker)</p> <p>i. Speaker's Report (no written report at this time)</p>	
<p>15. Chief Returning Officer (Sophie Shi, Chief Returning Officer)</p> <p>i. Chief Returning Officer's Report (no written report at this time)</p>	
<p>16. GSA Nominating Committee (Violet Sun, GSA Nominating Committee Member)</p> <p>i. GSA Nominating Committee Report</p>	16.0 – 16.1
<p>17. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (Devansh Patel, GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Vice-Chair)</p> <p>i. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Report (no written report at this time)</p>	
<p>18. GSA Management (Lewie Moodley, Executive Director)</p> <p>i. Executive Director's Report</p>	18.0-18.4
<u>Question Period</u>	
c. Written Questions (none received at this time)	
d. Oral Questions	
<u>Adjournment</u>	

GSA Council Meeting MINUTES
Monday, 17 July 2023 at 6:00 pm
Held in-person in Council Chamber and electronically via Zoom

IN ATTENDANCE:

Bishoi Aziz (President)	Arseniy Belosokhov (Councillor-at-Large)	Montse Rodriguez Cornejo (Educational Policy Studies)	Constantin Mouzaabar (Ophthalmology)
Rija Kamran (VP Academic)	Sandeep Kumar (Councillor-at-Large)	Karen Fraser (Human Ecology)	Janyne Johnson (Pharmacology)
Hamid Hassani (VP External)	Laura Manerus (Councillor-at-Large)	Hannah Louis (IGSA)	Ahmed Ahmed (Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences)
Tiffany Kung (VP Student Life)	Goldy T.R. (Councillor-at-Large)	Kylie Day (Library & Information Studies)	Eduardo Melo de Andrade Lima (Philosophy)
Muneeb Masood Raja (AVP Labour)	Andrew Pohlka (Biochemistry)	Natasha Daley (Linguistics)	Victoria Young (Political Science)
Farhan Khalid (Speaker)	Chris Keen (Biomedical Engineering)	Pouneh Mohammadi Nejad (Mathematical & Statistical Sciences)	Connor Lambert (Psychology)
Camila Rodrigues de Freitas (Deputy Speaker)	Zain Patel (Cell Biology)	Kineshta Pillay (Mechanical Engineering)	Wendy Amoako (Rehab Science)
Sophie Shi (CRO)	Meghana Jois (Chemical & Materials Engineering)	Simon Walker (Medical Microbiology & Immunology)	Yan Xue (Sociology)
Ola Mabrouk (Senator)	Kiera Greenaway (Civil & Environmental Engineering)	Saeed Ataei (Neuroscience)	Diksha Sharma (Surgery)
Eric Beaudry (Councillor-at-Large)	Zia van Blankenstein (Comm Sciences & Disorders)	Rebecca Reif (Obstetrics & Gynecology)	

Guests: Monisha Vinod (Graduate Student Project Sponsor, Student Experience Action Plan); Carmen Norris (Senior Service Designer, Student Experience Action Plan); Kathra Black (Student Life, Student Services, Student Experience Action Plan).

Speaker Farhan Khalid in the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm. Speaker acknowledged the Traditional Territory of Treaty Six.

Approval of Agenda**1. Approval of the 17 July 2023 Consolidated Agenda**

Members had before them the 17 July 2023 Consolidated Agenda, which had been previously distributed on 14 July 2023. Z Patel **MOVED**; H Hassani **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

Approval of Minutes**2. Minutes from the 19 June 2023 GSA Council Meeting**

Members had before them the 19 June GSA Council meeting minutes, which had been previously distributed on 7 July 2023. M Jois **MOVED**; Z Patel **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

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

i. **Introduction of New Councillors:** S Ataei (Neuroscience); H Louis (IGSA).

ii. **Farewell to Departing GSA Council Members:** None

GSA Council Member Announcements**4. GSA Council Member Announcements**

T Kung highlighted the drop-in wellness group for graduate students, which meets every Tuesday from 11am to 12pm in SUB-402, and encouraged members to check the GSA Newsletter for updates and to share with members.

Presentation

5. Student Experience Action Plan (SEAP)

Tiffany Kung (Vice-President Student Life) presented the item and introduced guests, Monisha Vinod (Graduate Student Project Sponsor), Carmen Norris (Senior Service Designer) and Kathra Black (SEAP Team member).

C Norris provided a recap of the purpose of the project and the consultation process. The University is preparing to grow so it is essential to keep an eye on the student experience as we do so. The SEAP Team is actively engaging with students and co-creating with students, staff, and faculty in over 60 engagement efforts so far. The group completed its second co-creation workshop in May and were now drafting the plan and planning for the last co-creation workshop in August, with a planned rollout of the plan in October.

M Vinod discussed the vision for the plan, and the importance of student development and opportunities for growth if challenges are approached in the right way. M Vinod highlighted that since the SEAP Team last presented to GSA Council, most of the project's principals have remained the same. The team continues to embrace challenges with a growth mindset and to actively seek out these challenges as opportunities for change.

K Black reviewed the results of the feedback that had been consolidated thus far, having received responses from over 8,000 students throughout their Student Survey, noting that 23.3% of respondents were graduate students. She then reviewed topics including affordable non-academic expenses and tuition transparency, accessible campuses, support for students, beautiful campuses, support academic success, and building supportive relationships.

Members of GSA Council then asked a series of questions, including but not limited to, whether or not the GSA Strategic Work Plan takes the SEAP findings into account (T Kung explained that as the GSA SWP is a guiding document for the GSA Board that is developed every year, and the SEAP results were not yet available when the Board developed the current SWP, this was not possible but we can now see where they align; B Aziz also explained that the work of the SEAP team is not done annually and represents a significant initiative undertaken by the University as a result of restructuring, it isn't possible to base the annual GSA Board SWP directly on their findings. While they align in many ways - which is good - they serve different purposes. C Norris added that the SEAP is meant to be a guiding post so different bodies, like the GSA, can align with the goal posts going forward); if the data can be separated so a grad student-oriented report could be provided (C Norris confirmed this and that there is a significant report in the works; appendices will be available in the public document and they will also be able to create separate reports).

Information Item

6. 2023-2024 GSA Board Strategic Work Plan

Bishoi Aziz (President) presented the item.

MOTION: That GSA Council **RECEIVED FOR INFORMATION** the 2023-2024 GSA Board Strategic Work Plan.

B Aziz presented the 2023-2024 GSA Board Strategic Work Plan, noting the feedback previously sought from Council members and GSA members through online surveys and via the opportunity to attend a town hall. B Aziz explained that some of the priorities of the Plan were built upon previous work done by the GSA, while others were the result of feedback received and discussion by the executive team. B Aziz further noted that he welcomed feedback from members on the initiatives outlined in the SWP, as well as the three pillars on which it was structured, as this is a living document that can change and grow in response to new developments or priorities as they arise. B Aziz noted that major areas of focus include further advocacy for guaranteed minimum funding packages and an equitable and sustainable funding model, ongoing advocacy at General Faculties Council and the Board of Governors, continued support for the Campus Food Bank, ongoing external advocacy to the Government of Alberta and at the federal level, and improving University communications with graduate students.

MOTION: That GSA Council **RECEIVED FOR INFORMATION** the 2023-2024 GSA Board Strategic Work Plan. R Kamran **MOVED**; A Poholka **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** Unanimously.

Reports

7. President

Prepared by M Brzak and F Robertson for GSA Council 17 July 2023

/Users/dept1/Library/CloudStorage/GoogleDrive-gsadept1@ualberta.ca/Shared drives/GSA OFFICE/GSA Council/Meetings/2023-2024/July 2023/Transcripts & Minutes/Minutes GSA Council 17 July 2023.docx

i. President's Report:

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 14 July 2023. The report stood as submitted. In addition, B Aziz highlighted work that was starting with the Advisory Working Group on moderate standard of living to gather information about the cost of living and how this affects student life and education.

ii. GSA Board

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 14 July 2023. The report stood as submitted.

iii. GSA Budget and Finance Committee

No written report at this time.

iv. GSA Governance Committee

No written report at this time.

8. Vice-President Academic

i. Vice-President Academic's Report:

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 14 July 2023. The report stood as submitted.

9. Vice-President External

i. Vice-President External's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 14 July 2023. The report stood as submitted. In addition, H Hassani highlighted his attendance of the ab-GPAC meeting where many important advocacy issues were discussed.

ii. GSA Awards Selection Committee

No written report at this time.

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

No written report at this time.

10. Vice-President Student Life

i. Vice-President Student Life's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 14 July 2023. The report stood as submitted.

ii. GSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee Report

No written report at this time.

11. Vice-President Student Services

i. Vice-President Student Services' Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 14 July 2023. The report stood as submitted.

12. Associate Vice-President Labour

i. Associate Vice-President Labour's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 14 July 2023. The report stood as submitted.

ii. GSA Labour Relations Committee

No written report at this time.

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 14 July 2023. The report stood as submitted.

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 14 July 2023. The report stood as submitted.

Question Period

19. Written Questions:

20. Oral Questions

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:19 pm.

**GSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE (GSA NoC)
DEPUTY RETURNING OFFICER (DRO) (ONE (1) POSITION FOR A GSA MEMBER): TWO (2) NOMINEES FOR DRO**

As per GSA Bylaw and Policy, the GSA NoC will open nominations for CRO and DRO “on or about 1 May of every year” and nominations will be submitted in writing to the GSA NoC “by 30 May or the next working day” (Section D.BYL.3.1.b and Section D.BYL.3.1.c). This position was advertised in the GSA newsletters 25 August, and 1 and 8 September 2023, with a deadline of 13 September 2023. Two (2) nominations were received for the position of DRO.

There will be a paper ballot vote held at the 18 September 2023 GSA Council meeting.

If you and your alternate are unable to attend the Monday 18 September meeting of GSA Council and would like to cast an electronic vote for this position, you must contact the GSA Elections Coordinator (gsanomco@ualberta.ca) BEFORE 3:00 PM on Monday 18 September 2023 in order to cast your vote in advance of the GSA Council meeting.

Nominees for this position are listed in alphabetical order by last name. ‘None of the Candidates’ will also be considered a nominee.

- 1. Zain Patel (Cell Biology, PhD)**
- 2. Umar Shareef (Mechanical Engineering, PhD)**

Jurisdiction:

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section D.BYL.3.1.d

“The Speaker, Deputy Speaker, CRO, and DRO will be elected by a simple majority vote of GSA Council.”

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section E.POL.3.2.a

“The GSA NoC provides GSA Council with the names of nominees for all GSA Council-Elected Officer positions. These positions will be advertised at least twice in advance of the nomination deadline noted in the advertisement.”

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section E.POL.3.2.b

“Prior to forwarding the names of nominees for GSA Council-Elected Officer positions, the GSA NoC will review the resumes and bios received with reference to eligibility criteria as set out in GSA Bylaw and Policy and will forward the names of nominees who meet the eligibility criteria to GSA Council.”

Biographies and brief resumes of the nominees for the DRO are BELOW on pages 7.1-7.2. Biographies and brief resumes have been attached as received (i.e. not edited).

**Nomination for DEPUTY RETURNING OFFICER
(ONE (1) VACANCY FOR A GSA MEMBER)
Two (2) Nominees**

1. Zain Patel

Statement of Interest
<p>I have served as a Council Member for the GSA since November 2022. In the last several months, I've gained a lot of insight into the operations of the GSA and have gained an appreciation for its importance in ensuring voices of graduate students are heard. With that, I understand and respect the need to ensure that the elections process for directly-elected officers must be fair to ensure that the students that are being represented have a fair opportunity to have a say in who represents them.</p> <p>I would like to take on the role as Deputy Returning Officer to be able to offer a fair and impartial perspective when assisting the CRO and ERC with crucial decision-making to ensure fairness during the elections process. I also intend to further my knowledge and appreciation for the elections process and operations of the GSA, and thus increase my involvement with the GSA and challenge myself in a different role and build upon my skills in student leadership, situation management and conflict resolution.</p>
Bio
<p>I completed a BSc Honors in Pharmacology degree at the University of Alberta in 2021 before initiating graduate studies in the Fall 2021. During my undergraduate program, I was extensively involved in a number of initiatives on campus. Of note, I assisted the Faculty of Science with prospective student recruitment initiatives, and was involved in the Science Mentors program. These opportunities enlightened me on the importance of ensuring students' voices are heard and needs are met, especially prospective and new first-year students.</p> <p>I also served as an executive member for the Pharmacology Students' Association (PSA) between 2018 and 2021, where I took on various roles and positions including serving as a representative for the Class of 2021, as well as VP Social. In my final year with the PSA, I assisted with the selection process of new executive members and aided with onboarding and the transition to the next executive team. In my time as an executive member of the PSA, I developed a fundamental appreciation in ensuring student voices are heard and acknowledged, and ensured that members of the executive team are held accountable at all times. Currently, while I represent my department on GSA Council, I also aid my departments' student association with event planning including social events within the department as well as our departments' annual research day, our largest event of the year.</p> <p>Over the past six years, I have been significantly involved with the Week of Welcome program at the University. I have been involved at both the general and senior level, taking on various roles and duties. Through this opportunity I have developed a number of skills including effective communication, team leadership, and restorative justice. A bulk of my experience and skill set has come from being a senior volunteer in the Week of Welcome program. In this role, I received extensive training in leadership, service, conflict resolution, and communication with team members and clients. I have put these skills into practice numerous times throughout my tenure as a senior volunteer to ensure the success of teams within the program, as well as the program as a whole.</p>

Other ventures on campus that I have been involved with include: acting as a Presenter/Lecturer for a workshop series run by NeurAlbertaTech, a NPO student group on campus, as well as serving as a teaching assistant/course marker for the Department of Cell Biology. Currently, I am working as a Department Web Assistant for the Departments of Cell Biology, Medical Genetics, Pharmacology and Physiology.

Taken together, I recognize that there is still much for me to learn, but I believe that the skills I've developed and the experiences I have had over the years will provide an essential framework for my success in the position of DRO. My aim is to contribute and assist the CRO and ERC in ensuring that the elections process remains fair and equitable as much as possible, and I believe that my experiences and my desire and passion to learn more make me a suitable candidate for this position.

2. **Umar Shareef**

Statement of Interest
To be an important part of the GSA, and serve GSA and the community at large in a better way.
Bio
I have about a decade of experience in management at different roles. I think my previous experience can help me a lot to achieve the goals required by this position.

GSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE (GSA NoC)
**GSA EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE (GSA EDIC) (FOUR (4) POSITIONS FOR GSA MEMBERS): FIFTEEN (15)
 NOMINEES**

Information regarding the positions for four (4) GSA members was circulated via the GSA newsletter on 25 August, and 1 and 8 September 2023 with a nomination deadline of 13 September. Fifteen (15) nominations were received.

The GSA EDIC “works to ensure that the GSA reflects the principles of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) for all its members in the interests of enhancing the graduate student experience and ensuring the existence of a welcoming environment and cohesive community for graduate students on campus” (GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section F.POL.5.2).

There will be a paper ballot vote held at the 18 September 2023 GSA Council meeting.

If you and your alternate are unable to attend the Monday 18 September meeting of GSA Council and would like to cast an electronic vote for this position, you must contact the GSA Elections Coordinator (gsanomco@ualberta.ca) BEFORE 3:00 PM on Monday 18 September 2023 in order to cast your vote in advance of the GSA Council meeting.

Nominees for this position are listed in alphabetical order by last name. ‘None of the Candidates’ will also be considered a nominee.

- 1. Goodluck Agu (Mechanical Engineering)**
- 2. Catalina Torres Benjumea (Digital Humanities)**
- 3. Kelly Bennett (Business - MBA)**
- 4. Jennie Burton (Elementary Education, PhD)**
- 5. Emma Chambers (Public Health)**
- 6. Sandra Fahl (Mining Engineering, PhD)**
- 7. Vanessa Ho (Biological Sciences)**
- 8. Sedigheh Izadi (Earth and Atmospheric Sciences)**
- 9. Hero Laird (Law)**
- 10. Soumya Kulal (Computing Science)**
- 11. Stephanie Christabel Osae Ofei (Earth and Atmospheric Sciences)**
- 12. Mohamed Sabek (Civil and Environmental Engineering)**
- 13. Umar Shareef (Mechanical Engineering, PhD)**
- 14. Erin Tichenor (Rehabilitation Sciences)**
- 15. Tianxu Wang (Mathematical and Statistical Sciences)**

Jurisdiction:

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section F.POL.5.1.c

“The GSA EDIC is composed of “a minimum of seven (7) and up to nine (9) GSA members elected by GSA Council as voting members. The GSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (GSA EDIC) Chair, in consultation with the GSA EDIC Vice-Chair and the Chair of the GSA Nominating Committee, can decide to increase the number of GSA members on the GSA EDIC.”

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section E.POL.3.1.a

“The GSA NoC provides GSA Council with the names of nominees to fill vacancies on GSA Standing Committees, ad hoc committees, and subcommittees, unless otherwise noted. All vacancies will be advertised at least twice in advance of the nomination deadline noted in the advertisement.”

The names and biographies received for the fifteen (15) nominees are BELOW on pages 7.4-7.13. The biographies and resumes are presented as received (i.e. not edited).

**NOMINATIONS FOR GSA EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE (GSA EDIC)
(FOUR (4) VACANCIES FOR GSA MEMBERS)
FIFTEEN (15) Nominees**

1. Goodluck Agu (Mechanical Engineering)

Other governance bodies you currently serve on (whether GSA or UAlberta)	
Statement of Interest	
<p>As a black graduate student pursuing a master’s degree in mechanical engineering, I have often found myself in spaces with little to almost no representation of individuals like me. The principles of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion are, therefore, not just theoretical concepts to me but profound ideologies that can directly influence the quality and richness of our lived experiences.</p> <p>In the past, I have taken up several volunteering roles, chiefly focused on economically disadvantaged areas. I have seen firsthand how uneven privileges could impact our lived experiences, and I am passionate about leveraging my position for societal good. It is this passion that now guides my interest in serving on the EDIC, where I hope to leverage my knowledge and experience to advocate for an environment where graduate students, regardless of their background, can thrive and realize their highest potential.</p> <p>I hope to serve on this committee to bring my unique experiences as a black mechanical engineering graduate student from a Sub-Saharan African country who has strong commitments to social justice. I am eager to collaborate with other committee members, pooling our shared experiences to foster impactful change and amplify the voices of those often unheard. I will be delighted to contribute and learn from the diversity of the entire graduate community and together ensure that the GSA reflects unequivocally the principles of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.</p>	
Bio	
<p>I hold a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering, and I am currently pursuing a master’s degree in engineering management (mechanical engineering). Throughout my academic career, dating back to high school, where I was senior prefect, I have sat on several committees implementing innovative ways to address social matters.</p> <p>During my undergraduate years, I was on several occasions engaged in volunteering activities targeted at marginalized communities_one of which involved providing clean water to a rural community, replacing their reliance on an unhealthy stream. Another, which I remember quite fondly, from the smiles etched on their faces, involved the donation of menstrual pads to an all-girls school in a rural community. While these experiences, at first look, may not seem traditionally connected to EDI, more introspection reveals that I possess a knack for addressing marginalization. I am simply not content with being a bystander, and my experiences so far have grounded my understanding of EDI.</p> <p>Given this blend of practical, academic, and volunteering experience, I have no doubt that I will contribute positively to the GSA EDIC. What I may lack in direct EDI experience, I suffice for in raw passion. I look forward to working in tandem with other members to make lasting impacts on the graduate students’ community.</p>	

2. Catalina Torres Benjumea (Digital Humanities)

Other governance bodies you currently serve on (whether GSA or UAlberta)	DHSA
Statement of Interest	
I have always been considered part of a minority and my experience at the U of A has been one of belonging and finding a place where I am not discriminated against or isolated. I would like, as a Latina woman, to be able to help students find their place without being forced to hide their beliefs, tastes, or backgrounds.	
Bio	
I have been a book editor for over 10 years and the most valuable thing for me is being able to relate to diversity up close and I understood that kindness is always the right way to live. My experience with people has been from a 12-step program in which I found that the only way to keep happiness is to help others and that is the phrase that guides my actions since 2007.	

3. Kelly Bennett (Business - MBA)

Other governance bodies you currently serve on (whether GSA or UAlberta)	Nonprofit Board Internship with Radius Health in progress (2023/24) Work related governance: OHS committee member, Quality committee member, Social committee member, HSAA group representative
Statement of Interest	
In my 2022/23 experience, EDI is an underrepresented committee at the graduate level.	
Bio	
Hi! My name is Kelly and I'd love the opportunity to join the EDIC. I am a lesbian and proud Mama of four kids and a sheepadoodle puppy. My eldest son has developmental disabilities, and I have been heavily involved in pursuing family managed care and inclusive education at MacEwan University for him. I have been able to advocate for him, with a shout out to Inclusion Alberta, to provide him the tools to live his best life. I've worked as a Pharmacist (since I graduated from the U of A in 2002) with diverse populations in both community and acute care settings. I'm back twenty years later, working on obtaining my MBA with a goal to better serve Alberta's healthcare needs in the community setting. I am no stranger to committee work and I'd be happy to join the GSA in this capacity.	

4. Jennie Burton (Elementary Education, PhD)

Other governance bodies you currently serve on (whether GSA or UAlberta)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. University Appeal Board (UAB)/Student Misconduct Appeal Panel (Aug, 2023 – Aug 2025) 2. Treasurer for Elementary Education Graduate Student Association (EEGSA) 3. Graduate student at-large member for the Student Engagement and Action Plan (SEAP)
Statement of Interest	
I would like to volunteer to sit on the EDI Committee (GFC) because I am interested in learning and being a part of the University of Alberta initiatives working to create learning and working spaces that are equitable	

and inclusive for all diverse members. I am interested in taking an active role in the community to support students and faculty on this journey of acceptance, decolonization, belonging, and accessibility. I understand various forms of intolerance are rooted in our historical ways of knowing and there is a need to address the systemic barriers that reinforce assimilation. This is work that I continue to do in the educational field, specifically looking at policy and the ways in which dominant discourses are naturalized as practice (the core premise of my candidacy work). I am seeking opportunities to engage deeply with policy, action, and language to develop my capacities to be an equitable, diverse, and inclusive resource and advocate as I continue on my own personal journey.

Bio

I have been an elementary teacher for 15 years. This year, I am transitioning full time to the University. I am a principal instructor in the elementary department and I work as a graduate research assistant for my supervisor, Dr. Hayley Morrison. I have been an inclusive advocate in my teaching and personal life, with a primary focus on educational access and accommodations for autists. I believe that the educational inclusion of autists will provide opportunities to construct a shared language and understanding that can help break down systemic barriers that interfere with autonomy, accessibility, and belonging. I believe being an advocate for equity, diversity, and inclusion requires personal motivation and work, a journey I began over 10 years ago. I am a trauma survivor and I have first-hand knowledge of the difficulties resulting from emotional, physical, and mental challenges. I have moved several times being an able body and a disabled body, as well as experienced these challenges with my family members. In my personal life, I actively study and exercise trauma informed practices and continue to develop my capacities, to not only manage my own wellbeing, but also to support others. I have recently completed training to be an Options Navigator for the disclosure of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence at the University of Alberta. Finally, I am passionate about educational leadership as a means to acknowledge and identify inequities and to identify and hold space for others. Similarly, I have come to reconceptualize my notions of leadership from formal appointments towards an informal pursuit (and often unrecognized) to create the conditions that allow for others to step in and grow their sense of autonomy and agency.

5. Emma Chambers (Public Health)

Other governance bodies you currently serve on (whether GSA or UAlberta)	
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Statement of Interest

In my time at McGill University (2015-2019), I co-founded and held committee positions for the Gender, Sexuality, Feminism, and Social Justice Student’s Association with my cohort. I miss hashing out political affairs of the institution and its contentious situation on stolen and pre-repatriated lands. I miss organizing with fellow students at large for the betterment of those made marginalized under this institution, and wider systems of oppression. I would like to be better tapped into the specific needs of those at U of A, to inform how to conduct myself as a student here. I would also like to provide a missing perspective on substance use at U of A and how to best support students using substances.

Bio

I am a support worker and outreach worker who works, lives, and parties in the Downtown Eastside of ‘vancouver’. I have been working these roles in various formal and informal ways for the past 5 years, be it as the first hire for the first and only sex work-only shelter in ‘canada’, in housing outreach, harm reduction outreach, or my own pro-bono informal support work (food delivery, emotional support, intermittent financial support, pet and child support, service resource distribution, home cleaning + maintenance, etc.) for local Indigenous land defenders. I do overdose responses, bad date reports, wound care, and linking people with resources, in my everyday life - be it at work or in life. I’m getting my master’s so that I can facilitate workshops in sexual health and substance use, which are my biggest passions. We must do more for students using substances in any and all capacities. I received an honors of Gender, Sexuality, Feminism,

and Social Justice with distinction and a minor in Indigenous studies BA, and spent a summer semester on exchange at Oxford University, studying migration and the history of medicine. I am also a white, able-bodied, middle class, dyslexic, mentally ill, substance using, non-binary queer citizen, which I imagine will be the descriptors or many I think that the combination of my academic, professional, and volunteer history and present would be an asset to this position, and to the student body at large.

6. Sandra Fahl (Mining Engineering, PhD)

Other governance bodies you currently serve on (whether GSA or UAlberta)	N/A
Statement of Interest	
<p>Since last April I have been recognized as severely disabled. During my undergraduate and masters studies I already constantly faced the “real-life” difficulties of studying while being different from the majority. It even took several years until I was taught the term for most of these difficulties – ableism. Yes, there is the goal of inclusion but problems still exist.</p> <p>With my participation on this committee I would like to work with the instances at the University of Alberta that are able to change circumstances for marginalized groups. I would like to tell people that EDI are not just meaningless phrases. Behind every say in decisions of University governance bodies are real students which need to be represented. I am able to relate to those students because of my own personal experience. I am also interested to hear the stories of other students and represent their opinions in the committee.</p>	
Bio	
<p>I am a female, international graduate student in the field of Engineering. I like to listen to people to understand their needs and worries. Also, I sometimes like to find out where their anger or frustration comes from. Then I would like to help them solve these problems at the University. Doing this, I have served on various governance bodies of my former University RWTH Aachen for a duration of five years. Starting as a “week of welcome” organizer, I later became elected president of the mining club and then elected member of the general student council. While representing students university wide, I was elected as deputy member of the University senate. In the two years serving in this position I only missed one meeting. Although I was only a deputy member, I was the only student representative from my faculty and one of the few females. I led several committees of the university senate. My main task was to coordinate the other student representatives and ensure that our voices were heard in the committees. I sat on election committees for new professors in my department and university wide committees for the selection of scholars. Always I tried to include a more diverse perspective. Apart from this, I worked part-time in the students’ union social counselling department and always loved to hear personal stories from the students I represented. For a long time, I still had regular office hours in the mining club to be in touch with students and hear their opinions. In addition, I worked in the quality assurance of study courses with a special focus on EDI and the implementation of these principles at the accredited Universities. This work took me to several German Universities and to the RUDN University in Russia.</p> <p>When I am not busy with my research or volunteering I like reading and doing various sports. Archery and swimming are some of my favorites.</p>	

7. Vanessa Ho (Biological Sciences)

Other governance bodies you currently serve on (whether GSA or UAlberta)	N/A
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Statement of Interest
Serving on the Equity Diversity & Inclusion Committee would be a great opportunity for me to learn how to take initiative on causes I care about and learn from more experienced members in a student governing body. I have always taken an interest in social causes particularly when it comes to racial representation in positions of leadership and authority, but have never joined a committee and worked directly with these systems to provide input on initiatives. While I have learned about and am continuing to educate myself on identifying these dynamics in my everyday life and the broader community, I realized I need to do more than just talk about these issues and to enact change. I want to be able to participate in the work that directly involves a community that I am a part of. I think it's important to ensure that my community is a safe and inclusive environment where its members can see themselves reflected in its leaders and know that their interests are protected and that we listen to what they have to say.
Bio
I study the physiology and comparative biology of sponges. As a person of colour in the biological sciences, I noticed that there is a lot of diversity in the student population, but less so at higher levels. In many academic settings such as at conferences and in research stations, I noticed that I am often one of few women of colour present, and usually the only woman of colour in my physiology niche. The Asian women studying physiological systems that I've met are typically involved in medical or medical-related sciences (including my sister!). Previously, I was part of the executive team of the University of Alberta Chapter of the Wildlife Society as the secretary, and I was the only woman of colour in a leadership position in the organization. I want to represent the folks who choose a less conventional/traditional path in the sciences that is usually expected of us from our families and cultures. I have several years of experience working as a medical office receptionist in the biggest medical clinic in my hometown prior to moving to Edmonton. My experience working my way up through the ranks gave me valuable insight into many aspects of running the clinic, to which I would often be asked to provide input for improving daily clinic activities for staff, doctors, and patients. It also exposed me to a huge range of people in all walks of life, and has made me conscientious of the experiences of other people and how decisions made by governing bodies can affect individuals.

8. Sedigheh Izadi (Earth and Atmospheric Sciences)

Other governance bodies you currently serve on (whether GSA or UAlberta)	N/A
Statement of Interest	
To support students like myself that are so engaged in their new life and educational duties that may not have the chance to work on their financial and non-instructional aspects of their lives. In this way, they will have a better experience and will remember this period of their life. Besides, I can make up for the part of services the GSA has provided me as a graduate student so far.	
Bio	
To begin with, I have been studying engineering (Petroleum) back in my home country plus that I have been working in the industry for ten years as a female engineer. So I have dealt with many challenges to make progress in my career and education as a woman. In my Bachelor's, I was elected as the female student representative in the Students' Union of Petroleum University of Technology (PUT), in 2005. That was when none of the female students volunteered for candidacy because the university had such a competitive atmosphere at that time, and all of them were working hard to get a higher GPA and win scholarships. While relying on my leadership spirit and intention for encouraging other women to get leadership roles, I started my mission and saw the direct impact on our student life quality. We developed two petitions to improve the quality of food and also build a new dorm	

for students and both were successful. I was admitted to a good university for graduate studies after graduation from PUT.

The country that I come from and the company I worked for (National Iranian South Oil Company) both have open gender discrimination. At the company, for example, men’s families could use the company’s recreational facilities and medical services for free while women’s families could not. In 2022 when I was working for the oil company, I started a petition to change this unfair policy so that women’s families had the right to use the free medical services of the company. I did this voluntarily as the representative of our department and led other sections’ working women. Eventually, we managed to get this right for women’s families.

To end, now that I am studying Ph.D. and I have a young child to care for as well as doing my educational duties, I know how difficult studying is for women, especially those who have family responsibilities like me to do at the same time. I am able to leverage my experience in all these contexts to make the situation better for the female student, because I totally understand how vulnerable they might be during this time.

9. Hero Laird (Law)

<p>Other governance bodies you currently serve on (whether GSA or UAlberta)</p>	<p>N/A, although I am involved in community governance – Volunteer Alberta, Digital Law & Innovation Society (both nonprofits where I sit on the Board of Directors), and informal groups as well</p>
<p>Statement of Interest</p>	
<p>I believe that everyone has agency in the systems we create, and I want to make sure that I stand up for systems and institutions that work for all of us, not just a few. I see this also as a part of my professional duty as a lawyer, to apply my education for the benefit of society. As an incoming graduate student, I would like to get involved.</p>	
<p>Bio</p>	
<p>I am a lawyer, currently working at the Wahkohtowin Law and Governance Lodge to uphold Indigenous law through community-led initiatives that we support.</p> <p>I have served on a number of formal boards, as well as informal governance at the grassroots and across advocacy networks. I have worked and lived in the Middle East, multiple jurisdictions across Canada and Turtle Island more broadly, with a focus on social justice, systems change and institutional reform. I have also worked in the Alberta and Canadian government administrations in a variety of change-oriented roles.</p> <p>Positionally, I am a queer, non-binary female of caucasian heritage and Canadian citizenship. I take seriously my identity as a Treaty person here in Treaty 6, and where I was born in Treaty 7, as well as my role as a settler in the unceded territories of the Coast Salish people.</p> <p>I hope that my combined professional, volunteer and life experiences have provided me with some technical, governance and political skills, as well as an expanded heart and open mind, to bridge differences, design and implement effective strategies for change, and that this might support the GSA’s efforts.</p> <p>If this committee is not the best fit, I would also be happy to consider other roles within the GSA. Thank you for considering this application. If you have further questions please do not hesitate to reach out. To end, now that I am studying Ph.D. and I have a young child to care for as well as doing my educational duties, I know how difficult studying is for women, especially those who have family responsibilities like me to do at the same time. I am able to leverage my experience in all these contexts to make the situation better for the female student, because I totally understand how vulnerable they might be during this time.</p>	

10. Soumya Kunal (Computing Science)

Other governance bodies you currently serve on (whether GSA or UAlberta)	N/A
Statement of Interest	
<p>Volunteering is a meaningful way to contribute and bring joy through our actions. Throughout my life, I've actively embraced volunteering opportunities and always had a desire to give back to the community. My introduction to volunteering began during my childhood, as I observed my parents' active involvement in various committees and NGOs dedicated to volunteering. From a young age, I accompanied them, participating in a range of NGO activities. This early exposure ignited my passion for volunteering, which I carried with me into my school and college years.</p> <p>During my college tenure, I seized the opportunity to join several committees, including the Student Council. As a member of the Student Council, my responsibilities involved organizing events, fostering connection with students and faculty, and ensuring events ran smoothly and effectively.</p> <p>In addition to my role on the Student Council, I took on the role of treasurer for the E-cell committee. This role involved managing budgets and maintaining financial records for entrepreneurship events and student projects.</p> <p>Moreover, I actively contributed to the CSI committee, where I played a part in organizing technical events such as workshops and ethical hacking competitions while seeking sponsorships to support these initiatives. Outside of college, I volunteered with the Isha Foundation, an NGO in India. Here, I contributed by organizing events, coordinating with participants, and supervising logistical aspects like food and decorum. Seeking to broaden my volunteering experiences on a larger scale, I decided to take a seven-month career gap to volunteer full-time with the Isha Foundation. This experience exposed me to a diverse group of international volunteers working across various departments and causes. I engaged in activities ranging from serving in the dining hall to participating in tree planting, farming, and maintaining sacred sites. I was also involved in supporting initiatives like the Save Soil movement and event coordination for international visitors. During this period, I managed my finances without hesitation, thanks to the unwavering support of my family, who encouraged me to contribute to global causes.</p> <p>This immersive journey widened my perspective and intensified my dedication to the well-being of humanity as a whole, surpassing the boundaries of religion and community. It gave me a deep sense of responsibility towards addressing the challenges faced by people worldwide.</p> <p>I firmly believe that joining the Global Student Association (GSA) offers a similar opportunity to make a significant and positive impact. I'm truly enthusiastic about utilizing my skills and unwavering dedication to tackle student issues by upholding the university values. I have complete confidence in my capacity to contribute wholeheartedly and create a substantial positive impact within the GSA and the larger university community.</p>	
Bio	
<p>My name is Soumya, and I'm from India. I've been raised with a strong sense of responsibility, and it has been a guiding force in shaping my life decisions. In terms of academics, I consistently ranked among the top 5 students during my school years. My parents inculcated in me a well-rounded approach to life, encouraging me to explore various activities beyond academics, such as sports, dance, and music. Their support led me to complete a diploma in Classical Dance by the age of 15.</p> <p>Later, I pursued a bachelor's degree in engineering with a focus on Information Technology, graduating in 2019 from Mumbai University. I've always been fascinated by image processing, and that curiosity drove me to pursue a diploma in animation. This exploration sparked my interest in the intersection of AI and multimedia, setting the stage for my journey at the University of Alberta.</p> <p>When it comes to volunteering, I have actively participated in various committees, including E-cell, the Student Council, and CSI. In these roles, I took on leadership responsibilities while maintaining a balanced approach to my studies. My commitment to personal growth is reflected in my academic performance, consistently trending upward.</p>	

Moreover, I devoted a significant portion of my time to volunteer work at the Isha Foundation, an NGO in India, where I immersed myself in a seven-month residential program. During this transformative experience, I pushed my limits daily, interacting with new people, contributing to various aspects of the organization, and engaging in activities like serving in the dining hall, welcoming guests, and participating in temple activities. I also embraced physically demanding tasks like farming and plantation activities. Despite the challenges, my unwavering commitment to serving others kept me going. I financed this volunteering experience from my personal savings, with my deep commitment of helping others.

These volunteering experiences never hindered my academic journey. In fact, my master's program equips me with the knowledge and skills to contribute to the medical sector and serve society. This path aligns perfectly with my enduring commitment to nurturing and supporting the nation. My parents played a significant role in shaping this mindset by involving me in volunteering activities from a young age.

I am genuinely eager and willing to take on a role within the GSA, as it aligns with my dedication to making a positive impact and standing by the values I hold dear.

11. Stephanie Christabel Osae Ofei (Earth and Atmospheric Sciences)

Other governance bodies you currently serve on (whether GSA or UAlberta)	N/A
Statement of Interest	
I believe that it is only by learning to appreciate and respect our unique differences , by embracing differences in identity and thought, and resolving inequities, that we discover the strength we need to combat the challenges that the future presents. As such, I am deeply interested in connecting and collaborating to make our communities better, by enhancing equity, diversity and inclusion. I believe that our actions, no matter how small, can make great impact in our communities	
Bio	
I am a 24 year old international student from Ghana. From my undergraduate studies in Ghana, to my graduate studies here at the University of Alberta, I have had to interact, work and collaborate with people from diverse backgrounds on multiple researches and projects. This has enabled me to develop a deep sense of understanding of how our differences can be made into strengths that will produce results and push us further towards excellence. This has also honed my leadership skills through leading groups in research and presentation across my entire professional and academic life. I was also a member of a local volunteer group that did mass education on various sociological issues back in my hometown. I believe that all these, as well as my commitment to hard work(as evidenced by my grades), make me a great choice, and I am fully confident that I can transfer all my skills to the role to make a real impact	

12. Mohamed Sabek (Civil and Environmental Engineering)

Other governance bodies you currently serve on (whether GSA or UAlberta)	N/A
Statement of Interest	

I am enthusiastic about the opportunity to volunteer for this committee for several compelling reasons:

- 1. Passion for the Committee's Mission:** I am genuinely passionate about the mission and objectives of this committee. It's very important to have diverse members in the GSA to include all the people that the GSA represents and the decision-making that impacts the lives of the students.
- 2. Commitment to Service:** I have a strong commitment to community service and believe that volunteering on this committee is an excellent way for me to give back to our community and make a positive impact. This can be seen in my engagement as the co-founder of the Egyptians Sun Devils Club at Arizona State University in the USA. I have found the ESD club to serve all the students from all backgrounds at Arizona State University, especially the ones coming from minority or different racial communities who can find attending the university quite hard and need a lot of support, especially in the early days.
- 3. Personal Growth and Development:** Being part of this committee offers an opportunity for personal growth and development. I am excited about the chance to learn from others, develop new skills, and broaden my horizons.

Bio

Am an enthusiastic PhD student with expertise in Construction Management, Finance, and IT support. PMP, RMP certified, and MBA holder, offering a blend of technical, project management, and business skills. Passionate about innovative teamwork in any challenge, especially the ones related to enhancing people's lives in every way possible.

Coming from a volunteering background throughout my life as a student, I was always eager to connect with people and to offer them all the support that I could in order to help everyone to reach their goals and to enable people coming from different societies to engage with their new societies and realize their full potential.

Because of that, I have cofounded the Egyptian Sun Devils Club at Arizona State University which is the university from which I got my master's, in order to enable students from all over the world to overcome cultural differences and academic difficulties which they face when they arrived to a new society and thankfully I was able to do that for the last three years until now with the support of my friends.

13. Umar Shareef (Mechanical Engineering, PhD)

Other governance bodies you currently serve on (whether GSA or UAlberta)	N/A
Statement of Interest	
To be an important part of the GSA, and serve GSA and the community at large in a better way.	
Bio	
I have about a decade of experience in management at different roles. I think my previous experience can help me a lot to achieve the goals required by this position.	

14. Erin Tichenor (Rehabilitation Sciences)

<p>Other governance bodies you currently serve on (whether GSA or UAlberta)</p>	<p>Women’s and Children’s Health Research Institute (WCHRI) Trainee Advisory Committee</p>
<p>Statement of Interest</p>	
<p>with gratitude for GSA and the support you’ve advocated for on behalf of students. I am grateful for your advocacy and would not be receiving the mental health support I have needed here if it wasn’t for your work. As I will briefly discuss below, I am deeply committed to the principles of decolonization, equity (not equality), repairing historical harms, and being incredibly attentive to intersectionality within (and beyond) higher education. As a settler, I am passionate and try to be as vocal as possible about calling out intersectional injustices in the classroom or university setting, whether that is a failure to acknowledge Indigenous ways of knowing in a PD course, or a lack of racial and gender analysis in my own department. My current thesis work is on the shortcomings of Western rights movements, specifically Mad Studies and recent moves to affirm ‘borderline personality disorder,’ that are devoid of intersectional and transnational analyses. I am particularly interested in and committed to geo-political analyses of rights discourses in the West that ignore and rely upon the exploitation of people of the global majority (i.e. BIPOC people). I would be passionate about an opportunity to support GSA with your work towards building a more equitable U of A. However, I am a white, cisgender woman from America who has grown up socio-economically advantaged and experiences discrimination against my mental health, for example, to a much lesser extent due to my racial, gender, and class privileges. That is, I would like you to reserve this position for someone who may have a greater ability to speak about and advocate for EDI, than someone from my privileged social location. I would appreciate the opportunity to serve, and I understand that I may not be the best person for this job. Thank you for your consideration and for your attention to EDI.</p>	
<p>Bio</p>	
<p>I bring a variety of professional, academic, and community-based experiences that have built and been built by my ethical and political commitments to disrupting and dismantling settler colonialism, white supremacy, sanism, transphobia, classism, and more. During my 4 years of undergrad in sociology in Boston, I was involved in community activism, a women’s re-entry (after prison) program, and in research on race and imprisonment, solitary confinement, urban and rural inequality, and related issues. While working for a sex workers rights organization in Aotearoa New Zealand, I also conducted my own honors research on the intersectional impacts of decriminalizing sex work in the settler colonial nation of New Zealand. I argued for the inclusion of migrants into the legislation because migrants were being harmed by the ongoing criminalization of their livelihoods – and this was happening along racial lines. I then worked for three years as a case manager/key worker in a transitional housing shelter in Aotearoa New Zealand, where I worked with men and women experiencing homelessness, domestic violence, substance use, complex mental health experiences, criminalization, and related structural vulnerabilities. There, I worked alongside Indigenous Maori and Pacific Islander practitioners to practice in a culturally safer and trauma-informed way, given that the individuals’ circumstances we were working with were largely shaped by settler colonialism, neoliberalism, and a rampant inequality/housing crisis. I now conduct intersectional and collaborative research on the topics of community mental health, psychiatrization, disability, and health services more broadly. Some of this work includes collaborating with local social services, community organizations, and the City of Edmonton. During my last year at U of A, I have been a part of groups that have pushed for curriculum change and a greater attention to JEDIA principles (justice, equity, diversity/decolonization, inclusion, and accessibility) in the Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine. Overall, my education, experiences, and commitment to decentering white supremacy and its related axes of oppression set me up well to be useful to this committee. Given my social work experience, I am also skilled at conflict de-escalation, working across sectors and with interdisciplinary teams, and believe I could put these skills to use with the GSA.</p>	

15. Tianxu Wang (Mathematical and Statistical Sciences)

<p>Other governance bodies you currently serve on (whether GSA or UAlberta)</p>	<p>ILMEE math group</p>
<p>Statement of Interest</p>	
<p>I am enthusiastic about volunteering for this committee as it offers an opportunity to connect with people from diverse backgrounds. I am eager to contribute to improving students' experiences by advocating for equity for all and creating an environment where everyone feels proud and comfortable in their uniqueness.</p>	
<p>Bio</p>	
<p>I am currently a first-year Chinese PhD student in mathematics, which has cultivated my attentiveness and thoughtfulness in various matters. I possess an outgoing personality and enjoy building connections with new individuals. During my undergraduate years, I actively engaged in volunteer work related to environmental protection. Moreover, I served as the vice chair of the Environment Protection Student Institute at Northeast Normal University. Additionally, I volunteered as a math teacher for primary and high school students during the summer breaks of my undergraduate studies. My ability to connect with individuals of all backgrounds is one of my strengths, and I particularly enjoy collaborating on group projects and organizing events with others.</p>	

SPEAKER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
JOINT POSITION ON THE GSA BOARD (GSAB)/GSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE (GSA NoC) (TWO (2) POSITIONS FOR GSA COUNCILLORS): ONE (1) NOMINEE

Information regarding this joint position for a GSA Councillors was circulated via email to GSA Council various times over several months. One (1) nomination was received.

The GSAB is the senior administrative authority of the GSA. As set out in GSA Board Policy (Section F.POL.3.2), the responsibilities of the GSA Councillor positions on the GSAB are:

1. Regular attendance at GSAB meetings, with regrets and reasons submitted to the GSA President.
2. Providing a link between the elected GSA Officers and the floor of GSA Council.
3. Participating and speaking up at GSA Council when GSAB business is discussed, from the member's own unique views.

The GSA NoC is charged with selecting graduate student representatives to serve on councils, committees, and other bodies requiring such representation. The GSA NoC also leads an annual initiative in October during which graduate students interested in running for elected office are invited to attend a series of events and training sessions (Sections E.POL.8.2 and E.POL.8.7).

There will be a paper ballot vote held at the 18 September 2023 GSA Council meeting.

If you and your alternate are unable to attend the Monday 18 September meeting of GSA Council and would like to cast an electronic vote for this position, you must contact the GSA Elections Coordinator (gsanomco@ualberta.ca) BEFORE 3:00 PM on Monday 18 September 2023 in order to cast your vote in advance of the GSA Council meeting.

Nominees for this position are listed in alphabetical order by last name. 'None of the Candidates' will also be considered a nominee.

- 1. Arseniy Belosokhov (Biological Sciences)**

Jurisdiction:

Section F.POL.3.1.f

The composition of the GSAB includes *"up to three (3) members of GSA Council elected by GSA Council as non-voting members."*

Section E.POL.4

"Vacancies on the GSA NoC will be advertised by the ED or delegate and GSA Speaker. The ED or delegate and GSA Speaker will provide GSA Council with the names of nominees for the GSA NoC who meet the criteria set out in Section E.POL.5, below. These vacancies will be advertised at least twice in advance of the nomination deadline noted in the advertisement."

Section E.POL.5.1

The GSA NoC is composed of *"a total of five (5) graduate student members, including at least two (2) voting members of GSA Council (who may be alternates) elected by GSA Council, and three (3) additional graduate student members elected by GSA Council, as voting members."*

The name and biography received for the one (1) nominee is BELOW on page 7.14. The biography and resume is presented as received (i.e. not edited).

NOMINATIONS FOR GSA BOARD AND GSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE (GSAB/NoC)
(TWO (2) VACANCIES FOR GSA COUNCILLORS)
One (1) Nominee

1. Arseniy Belosokhov

Statement of Interest:
I'm seeking to make a tangible impact within the GSA community. Recognizing that GSAB holds a significant role as the senior administrative committee, I am enthusiastic about contributing to its proactive initiatives, so I am eager to apply for a seat on the board. Looking ahead, I aspire to become a VP and believe GSAB offers a practical way to better understand the role.
Bio:
I'm a first-year PhD student in the Faculty of Science, specializing in Biological Sciences. At my previous university, I held a position within a similar student-led administrative body. This experience allowed me to actively engage in various initiatives and collaborate directly with the university administration, yielding impactful results for the students we advocated for. This May, I assumed the role of GSA Councilor-at-Large, and I'm excited to contribute to GSA's endeavors at UofA.

President
Report to GSA Council for the 18th September 2023 Meeting

To: GSA Council
From: Bishoi Aziz
Date: 15 September 2023

Dear Council Colleagues,

It has been an impressive start to the fall semester with a cheerful hum brought by the return of students to the campus. I am excited to share with you what our team has been doing over the past month to support the graduate students at the University of Alberta.

Sexual Harassment in Experiential Learning

- A press conference held by Possibility Seeds regarding the sexual harassment experiences of students in experiential learnings specifically such as practicums and internships. I spoke about the difficulties students face due to the lack of protection for students and the power differential in certain situations. I highlighted that equity-seeking students such as Indigenous students, LGBTQ2S, racialized minorities and international students are further at risk.
- During the conference, I called for the need to revise the provincial laws addressing sexual harassment to account for students regardless of being in paid or unpaid experiential learning positions, as this group is often missed. I also advocated for the learning institutions to embark on research and conduct deeper investigations to further understand the magnitude of the problem. I believe that the lack of information is one of the root causes of why this matter doesn't receive enough attention.
- I also had the chance to raise the same points in the Alberta Students Association Leader's Orientation event we had with the Ministry of Advanced Education.

Gateway Dedicated Fee

- This month, I had the opportunity to meet with one of the team members from the Gateway to discuss the current funding situation of the newspaper and the possibility of proposing a referendum to collect fees from the graduate students. Since 2021, Gateway has lost its funding from the University of Alberta's undergraduate students in two separate referendums. They are currently operating on reserve funds and donations.
- I expressed to them that the Graduate Students Association (GSA) needs to increase our outreach and publicity, but also the financial difficulty graduate students face. For example, the high cost of the health and dental plan our members have to pay. I have asked them to prepare a proposal that shows how Gateway will be able to support us before we can discuss and decide on approving the proposal for a referendum. I also highlighted to them that approval authority for the referendum lies in the hands of the council and that the board can only advise the council on the matter.

Departmental Orientations Season

- Our office remains very busy at this time of the year with departmental orientations for the new graduate students. This included holding an orientation fair and going to departmental orientations.
- On the 31st of August, we held a large Orientation Information Fair on campus for all the new graduate students. We had booths from the different on and off-campus offices and stakeholders. It was an incredible chance for our new members to be aware of the different resources they have access to. It was also a great opportunity for the GSA elected officials to meet with the students and help address any concerns or needs they might have. The event was a great success as the attendance was close to the pre-pandemic numbers. I want to thank all our GSA staff and executives for organizing and participating in this event.

- I had the chance also to participate with the University President Bill Flanagan at the Orientation Week Pancake Breakfast event. It was an amazing opportunity for me to meet with all the new and returning students as they start fresh.

Please feel free to reach out to me at gsapresident@ualberta.ca if you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions.

Thank you.

Bishoi Aziz, President of the GSA 2023-2024

2023-2024 GSA President's Meetings Attended (Bishoi Aziz)

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 17th August 2023 to 7th September 2023 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board and management meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

17 August	Taking Action to Protect Students from Sexual Harassment in Experiential Learning Press Conference Discussion
22 August	Taking Action to Protect Students from Sexual Harassment in Experiential Learning: Press Conference
22 August	Advisory Working Group on Moderate Standard of Living and Bursary Applications
22 August	Conflict Resolution Training
28 August	Meeting with J Lemieux, University Secretary
29 August	Meeting with R Epp, Interim Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR)
29 August	Meeting with the GSA Executive Team and Campus Services Executive Team
29 August	Gateway Dedicated Fee Unit Discussion
29 August	Budget and Finance Committee (BFC) Meeting
30 August	Advanced Education Student Leaders' Orientation
31 August	Fine Arts and Drama Orientation
31 August	East Asian Studies Orientation
1 September	Fall Orientation Fair
1 September	Occupational Therapy Orientation
1 September	English and Film Studies Orientation
6 September	Pancake Breakfast: Orientation Week

**GSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee
Report to GSA Council for the 18 September 2023 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Bishoi Aziz
Date: 15 September 2023

Dear Council Colleagues,

The GSA EDIC recently met on 10 August 2023 where we discussed the ongoing work currently being undertaken by me on behalf of the committee. I discussed the creation of an EDIC Strategic Plan, I discussed a document we could use in regards to transferring the committee goals between members each year. I discussed the long-term plan for EDIC and a 3-year plan. I would like to have a roadmap for the plan and ensure the longevity of the committee's goals and a foundation for new members to work from.

Tiffany Kung, Vice President of Student Life discussed the creation of a monthly or bi-monthly reading group on various topics, it is planned to start later in the Fall or early Winter. Members of the committee expressed their support for the idea and highlighted the benefits of such an initiative. The reading group would aim to use multiple media sources – YouTube, TED talks, and short articles. The University of Alberta Centre for Teaching and Learning has offered two months of facilitation as well as others at the University. The committee hopes to add new members in the Fall and will meet again in the Fall to discuss the next steps of the initiatives mentioned above.

If you have questions about this group, or the work of the GSA EDIC more generally, please don't hesitate to reach out to me.

Sincerely,
Bishoi Aziz, President and Chair of the GSA EDIC

**2023-2024 Vice-President Academic
Report to GSA Council for 18 September 2023**

To: GSA Council
From: Rija Kamran
Date: 15 September 2023

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope you are doing well and are enjoying the final glimpses of summer. I have shared some highlights below from the work I have been involved in since my last council report.

August 28, 2023- Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Graduate Support Team (GPST)

I attended the first GPST meeting for the academic year. We worked through some minor course changes in Rehab Medicine, Pharmacy, MMI and some minor program changes in Rehab Medicine, Native Studies and Laboratory Medicine. Rehab Medicine is looking to introduce CASPer test, a situational judgement test to their admissions process. Members of the committee expressed concerns about the issue of equity and transparency in this proposed test and requested more details before it can be considered. Dr. M True presented the updates to time limits for completion and how they are affected by regular academic leaves.

August 29, 2023- Meeting with the GSA Executive Team and Campus Services Executive Team

Along with other elected officials, I met with the Campus Services Executive Team. They presented their priorities and vision for the upcoming terms. We talked about graduate student concerns around affordable housing and parking on campus. We also discussed some points from the GSA Strategic work plan and how the campus services can support some of the envisioned items.

August 29, 2023-Meeting with R Epp, Interim Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR)

Along with the Graduate Students Association (GSA) president, Bishoi Aziz, I attended meetings with FGSR Dean, Dr. Roger Epp. Dr. Epp provided updates on the Ph.D. guaranteed minimum funding project. The project committee is working on the next steps around the formulation of operating standards and implementation of a guaranteed funding project. We also had a detailed discussion about the study permit processing issues currently being faced by international graduate students and the recent announcement from the Minister of Housing, Infrastructure, and Communities about a possible reduction in the number of international students and how it will align with the university's plan to increase enrollment.

August 30, 2023- General Faculties Committee (GFC) Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) - River Valley Walk

Along with members of CLE, I went on a river valley walk. The meeting was guided by Dr Dwayne Donald. The meeting started with the members talking about their aspirations and vision for the CLE for the coming academic year. It was followed by teaching on the history and significance of various spaces in Treaty 6 territory. It was an insightful meeting, starting us at the CLE in a good way.

August 31, 2023- Fall Orientation Information Fair

Along with the Graduate Students Association (GSA) executive team and GSA staff, we hosted our first Fall event. We had several on and off-campus service providers in attendance. We had a great turnout. I had the opportunity to meet and interact with new graduate students from various faculties and direct them to resources for some of the issues they were facing.

Please feel free to reach out to me at gsaypaca@ualberta.ca if you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions. Thank you.

Rija Kamran, Vice-President Academic 2023-2024

2023-2024 GSA VP Academic's Meetings Attended (Rija)

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 16th August to 18th September 2023 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

16 August	Meet and Greet Candidate for Executive Director, Student Experience
22 August	Conflict Resolution Training
28 August	Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Graduate Support Team (GPST)
29 August	Meeting with the GSA Executive Team and Campus Services Executive Team
29 August	Meeting with R Epp, Interim Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR)
30 August	Rehab Medicine Orientation
30 August	General Faculties Committee (GFC) Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) - River Valley Walk
31 August	Fall Orientation
7 September	COSA- Council on Student Affairs
8 September	UofA Tuition and Fees Orientation Session with Student Leaders
8 September	Communication Science Disorder Orientation
11 September	GFC Committee Chair's Orientation
11 September	GFC executive Committee

**2023-2024 Vice-President External
Report to GSA Council for the 18th September 2023 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Hamid Hassani
Date: 15th September 2023

Dear Council Members,

I hope this report finds you in good health and high spirits. In my role as the Vice President External of the GSA, I am thrilled to provide you with updates on our recent activities and initiatives. I also wish you a wonderful year ahead and hope you find fulfillment in all your courses.

August 16 and 25: Dean of Students' Office, Executive Director selection

Due to the confidential nature of these meetings, I am unable to disclose extensive details to our members. However, in my capacity as a representative of graduate students on the committee, I have shared my insights and initiatives. I would like to inform you that the selection process has been concluded, and we will be announcing the chosen candidate in the near future.

August 17: AB Student Post-Secondary Council

The meeting has been cancelled as the coordinator intended to establish a regular gathering of The Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS), Alberta Students' Executive Council (ASEC), and Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) representatives for information sharing, strategic discussions, and event planning as necessary.

August 22: Conflict Resolution Training

We recently convened a crucial meeting among Graduate Student Association (GSA) executives, with the primary focus on identifying and addressing conflicts within our team. This training session provided us with an opportunity to collaborate closely with our fellow executives and gain valuable insights. While we understand that conflicts among team members may be unavoidable, we have learned that we can take proactive steps to minimize and manage them effectively. During this meeting, we conducted a comprehensive examination of the conflicts that have arisen within our team. By openly discussing these issues and delving into their root causes, we have taken a significant step toward finding constructive solutions. It's important to acknowledge that disagreements can be a natural part of any group dynamic, and what truly matters is how we approach and resolve these conflicts.

August 24: Alumni Council New Member Orientation

On August 24, 2023, the Alumni Council convened for its first in-person meeting. The agenda was structured to welcome new members, provide insights into the vital field of alumni relations, and ensure everyone's familiarity with the essential Alumni Council Handbook. The meeting, under the leadership of Ashton Rudanec, President of the Alumni Association, began with a warm welcome and introductions to foster a friendly atmosphere among both new and existing council members. During the second segment, Colleen Graham, Manager of Alumni Partnerships, shed light on the paramount importance of alumni relations. She underscored the pivotal role that alumni play not only within the university community but also in the broader community context. Members were encouraged to thoroughly review the handbook, particularly its historical and overview sections, followed by a lively trivia game to reinforce key facts. An interactive discussion followed, allowing members to share insights and experiences, promoting knowledge sharing and community building. As a parting note, members were encouraged to maintain active connections within the council and with alumni relations staff, emphasizing the collaborative spirit that drives the Alumni Council forward.

August 29 and September 7: Orientation presentations

I had the privilege of representing the Graduate Student Association (GSA) as I introduced the collective agreement and our services to three distinct departments. I began by engaging with the bright minds of MBA business students in my initial presentation. Following that, I conducted two more presentations: the first with the Physics

department, which is my home department, and the final one in the Surgery department. Throughout these meetings, I had the opportunity to connect with numerous new students, and I made every effort to inform them about the various opportunities available for active participation in university governance, particularly through the GSA.

August 30: Advanced Education Student Leaders' Orientation

This meeting stands out as one of the most significant gatherings I've attended this month. Its primary purpose was to foster connections among student leaders from various universities, colleges, institutes, and government officials in the field of advanced education. The overarching goal was to delve into the government's role in adult learning systems and engage with its priorities.

Building on our previous meeting with the minister in Calgary, we collaborated closely with prominent student leaders, including the Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS), Alberta Students' Executive Council (ASEC), and Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC), to align with the new ministerial mandate. In my capacity as Co-Chair of ab-GPAC, I emphasized that affordability was a top concern, resonating with both domestic and international graduate students. We eagerly anticipate working with Minister Sawhney to address these pressing needs across Alberta.

During the meeting, the minister delivered a comprehensive presentation on Advanced Education, covering a spectrum of student concerns, including the affordability crisis in education, housing, and food costs. She highlighted the urgent need to increase campus food support due to surveys and feedback indicating food insecurity among students. Additionally, she encouraged and advocated for more off-campus learning opportunities. The Minister acknowledged the challenges posed by a 40% population increase without a corresponding housing supply increase, underscoring the need for collaborative efforts with other ministries and, potentially, federal support.

Housing emerged as a critical concern at the provincial and federal levels. In her presentation, the Minister noted that graduate student fees in Alberta were below the national average tuition fees. When questioned about plans to cap international student enrollment to address housing shortages, she deferred to the federal government, expressing no preference for such decisions. Following the Minister's presentation, ASEC and CAUS presented their priorities and concerns on behalf of their student populations. I was privileged to present on behalf of ab-GPAC, representing more than 20,000 graduate students across Alberta, including those from the University of Alberta, Calgary, Athabasca, and Concordia University of Edmonton. These students, about one in three of whom are international, often have families to support.

I emphasized our organization's pillars, which focus on promoting the impact of graduate students, ensuring the attainability of graduate studies, supporting knowledge creation, and providing a foundation for the future. This includes non-academic support beyond graduation.

I shared our priorities for the year, which are as follows:

1. Affordability
2. International Student Supports
3. Professional Development & Entrepreneurship
4. The Role of AI in Post-Secondary Education
5. Alleviating Barriers for Indigenous Students

Subsequently, we received several informative presentations from various offices within the Ministry of Advanced Education, including an overview of their legacy and contribution, the role of student leaders, the anticipated meeting schedule for 2023-2024, and a summary of previous meetings. The presentations also covered Alberta 2030 and Alberta at Work.

I want to highlight two additional presentations that greatly contributed to our understanding of the meeting's topics. First, there was a presentation on the Alberta Tuition Framework, which indicated how tuition fee increases

are regulated in the province. In summary, the meeting proceeded exceptionally well, enabling valuable connections with fellow student leaders and the sharing of our priorities. It became evident that we share many common concerns among different graduate student associations and should collaborate closely to address them.

August 31: Fall Orientation Info Fair

We kicked off this academic year with one of our most extensive and inclusive orientations for all incoming students. We were thrilled to welcome a large number of graduate students to this event, held at the Student Union Building (SUB). This gathering, characterized by its informal setting, provided a platform for each executive member to introduce the GSA from various perspectives. Moreover, we had numerous information tables representing different facets of graduate students' academic life, including the Indigenous students' association, and the Black student's association, as well as health and wellness services, to name a few. We also dedicated a table to our health insurance service, recognizing its importance in addressing students' needs. As the Vice President-External, I personally took the time to listen to the concerns and challenges faced by incoming students, which predominantly revolved around rising housing costs, the climate in Edmonton, and general immigration issues faced by international students. This orientation meeting marked the beginning of an exciting new chapter at the university, and I am hopeful that together, we can collaborate effectively to address the various issues that students may encounter.

2023-2024 GSA VP External Meetings Attended (Hamid Hassani)

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 16 August and 7 September 2023 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

August 16 and 25	Dean of Students' Office, Executive Director selection
August 17	AB Student Post-Secondary Council
August 22	Conflict Resolution Training
August 24	Alumni Council New Member Orientation
August 29 and September 7	Orientation presentations

**2023-2024 Vice-President Student Life
Report to GSA Council for the 18 September 2023 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Tiffany Kung
Date: 15 September 2023

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope everyone has had a wonderful August! Please see the meetings I attended this month attached. As there is a large number of reports that will occur following the submission of this report, I will report on a few verbally at Council, but will also report on a few in my report to Council in October.

Advisory Working Group on the Moderate Standard of Living (August 22)

The GSA continues to advocate for the improvement of student bursaries to those in financial need alongside the University of Alberta Students' Union (UASU). Most of the contents in this meeting are confidential, but do not hesitate to contact me, Bishoi Aziz, or Haseeb Arshad with more questions or input.

Days of Action Committee Meeting (August 23)

I attended the Days of Action committee meeting where we discussed the current plans for World Suicide Prevention Day, and World Mental Health Day, and World Hello Day, which includes a collaboration between the Days of Action committee and the GSA to theme one of the GSA's coffee breaks with World Hello Day.

Meeting with Carrie Smith, Vice Provost Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) (August 25)

I met with Carrie Smith, and we discussed the University's upcoming EDI action plan work, which I will participate in. We also continued to discuss the EDI reading group idea that is being proposed by the GSA's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (EDIC). Carrie Smith offered her time alongside Tommy Mayberry and others from the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, and the Office of Safe Disclosure and Human Rights to host a professional development session for student facilitators on how to have hard conversations in ways that are supportive of the complexity and ways in which equity-related topics stand in tension with one another.

If you, or any other graduate student, are doing inclusive research that falls under the umbrella of EDI and would be interested and able to facilitate a session, please reach out to me at gsavpsi@ualberta.ca for more information about the reading group and expectations!

Introductions with the Campus Services Team (August 29)

The Graduate Student Association board met with the Campus Services leadership team to discuss overlapping priorities and areas for collaboration. These encompassed topics including parking, residence, HUB mall, and bike lockers.

Tabling at the University of Alberta International (UAI) InfoMart (August 29)

Haseeb Arshad (Vice President Student Services) and I attended the UAI Infomart briefly to interact with incoming international graduate students.

Meeting RE: Consent Awareness Week (August 29)

I met with Michael Griffiths from the UASU and Wen Chan from the University of Alberta Sexual Assault Centre (UASAC) to discuss programming and the social media campaign the three organizations plan to run around consent awareness week (Sept 18-22). Preliminary conversations about hosting a speaker to talk about consent in the Students' Union Building were had.

Meeting with J Allen, University of Alberta Protective Services (September 5)

I met with James Allen to discuss communication strategies for safety and security. We discussed postering at GSA events, a potential coffee break collaboration, and messaging in newsletters.

2023-2024 GSA VP Student Life's Meetings Attended (Tiffany Kung)

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 18 August to 18 September 2023 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

22 Aug	Advisory Working Group on the Moderate Standard of Living
23 Aug	Days of Action Committee Meeting
25 Aug	Meeting with Carrie Smith, Vice Provost Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
29 Aug	Introductions with the Campus Services Team
29 Aug	Tabling at the University of Alberta International InfoMart
29 Aug	Meeting RE: Consent Awareness Week
31 Aug	Fall Orientation Info Fair
5 Sept	Meeting with J Allen, University of Alberta Protective Services
5 Sept	Meeting with J Friesen, Professional Development Instructional Designer, Faculty of Graduate Studies
6 Sept	Meeting with S Dion, First Peoples' House and the Indigenous Graduate Students' Association
7 Sept	Graduate student sexual violence listening circle planning group
8 Sept	UofA Tuition and Fees Orientation Session with Student Leaders
8 Sept	Meeting with J Ames, Indigenous Graduate Students' Association President
11 Sept	Meeting with K Husing, Associate Vice President Campus Services
11 Sept	Meeting with F Glanfield, Office of Indigenous Programming

**2023-2024 Vice-President Student Services
Report to GSA Council for 18th September 2023**

To: GSA Council
From: Muhammad Haseeb Arshad
Date: 15 September 2023

Dear Council Members,

I hope this report finds you in the best of health. For my meetings from August 17th to September 8th, excluding the board meetings and GSA's departmental orientation, I will use the following space to summarize some of the important ones.

- **Working Group on Moderate Standard of Living and Bursary Applications (August 22):**
In the Working Group on Moderate Standard of Living (MSOL) and Bursary Applications meeting held on August 22, Chair Norma Rodenburg provided a comprehensive overview of the university's decision to increase the MSOL to an average of \$650, while maintaining the maximum at \$20,000. This adjustment aligns closely with the university's internal estimate of \$3,300 for single students paying rent or a mortgage, totaling \$3,140 under the new standard. There were also discussions around the complexity of application procedures and the need for improved advertisement, particularly for graduate students. I raised the question concerning the absence of a consistent stipend for graduate students during the summer and spring semesters, prompting inquiries about the university's plans to address this issue. Furthermore, I recently discovered that FGSR's information cards only promote GSA's emergency bursary, suggesting the need for further discussion on this matter in the upcoming meeting.
- **Conflict Resolution Training (August 22):**
During the Conflict Resolution Training session held on August 22, designed for all Directly Elected Officers (DEOs), the emphasis was on the importance of teamwork and effective conflict resolution. Various scenarios were presented, prompting discussions on the optimal course of action should conflicts arise within our teams. The session also provided valuable insights into relationship building and fostering compassion towards colleagues, whom we consider essential for ongoing collaboration. Despite its three-hour duration, the training received positive feedback from participants, with many, including myself, regarding it as one of the most beneficial DEO training sessions to date.
- **Collective Tea Times – Graduate Student's Association (GSA) Discussion (August 23):**
On August 23, I convened a meeting with Courtney Wagner and Tiffany Simpson to explore the potential collaboration between Graduate Student Associations (GSA) coffee breaks and the Collective Tea Times event. While we have yet to confirm a specific date, there is a hopeful intention to schedule this joint initiative for October. Additionally, our discussions revolved around programming for graduate students, with a focus on facilitating new connections on campus and identifying available resources to support this endeavor. Further updates will be provided as we finalize the event date and continue developing our plans.
- **Introductions: Graduate Student's Association (GSA) Executive and Campus Services Executive Team (August 29):**
The introductory meeting held on August 29 brought together the GSA Executive and the Campus Services Executive Team, with Katherine Husing leading the discussions. Katherine provided valuable insights into the current state of student housing, including the university's plans to enhance the cleanliness of HUB and Lister residences. She also addressed concerns regarding fluctuating parking rates across different areas of the university, emphasizing the importance of equitable pricing for all students. During the meeting, I raised concerns about parking meters, particularly their reliability during winter months, leading to erroneous ticket issuances. Katherine acknowledged this issue and shared that there is a straightforward process for ticket resolution via email. Furthermore, Katherine shared plans for introducing

a new eBook program for undergraduate students residing in university housing, involving a fixed fee with an opt-out option. This initiative aims to reduce the financial burden of purchasing textbooks while promoting environmental sustainability. Lastly, the discussion touched upon the university's upcoming transition from physical one-card access to an e-wallet-based system campus-wide, commencing with student residence buildings as part of a pilot project in 2024. This meeting served as an essential platform for understanding and collaborating on key campus service initiatives.

- **CFB AGM prep (September 1):**

During the CFB AGM prep meeting held on September 1, I had the opportunity to join Erin O'Neil, the Executive Director of the Campus Food Bank (CFB). Erin provided an update on the board director recruitment process and discussed the current challenges related to an increasing clientele as the fall semester begins. Despite the worrisome numbers, Erin expressed confidence in CFB's ability to meet the needs of all new clients effectively. Our discussion also centered around the language to be used in the upcoming advertisement for board director positions, which is expected to be released in the first week of October. Erin requested that I advocate for this opportunity among my peers. I encourage everyone to consider this position and evaluate whether they envision themselves as part of the CFB board, sharing a passion for volunteering within an organization dedicated to nourishing students on campus. This meeting served as a valuable platform for preparing for CFB's annual general meeting and its future endeavors."

- **Haseeb & Karen (September 1st):**

The meeting held on September 1st with Karen Perez Cruz, the Director of the Peer Support Program under the Students Union (SU), was highly anticipated, and it yielded promising insights. Our discussion revolved around the possibility of the Graduate Students Association (GSA) establishing its own peer support program. Karen shared the inspiring journey of the current peer support program, highlighting its growth and drive over time. Karen pointed out that while the current program operates under SU, graduate students could undoubtedly benefit from it as well, as it doesn't require the sharing of personal details when seeking support. We explored potential collaborations, including the prospect of hiring trained interns from their program to work within GSA's office space or DEOs participating in their training during the summer, though there might be limitations for international graduate students as interns. Karen expressed her willingness to assist GSA in kick-starting such an initiative, demonstrating a shared commitment to enhancing support services for graduate students. Future discussions with Karen will focus on how GSA can contribute to the existing peer support program while also exploring avenues to establish a dedicated sub-group within GSA's services. This meeting laid a solid foundation for potential collaborations that could significantly benefit the graduate student community."

- **UofA Tuition and Fees Orientation Session with Student Leaders (September 8th):**

In the UofA Tuition and Fees Orientation Session held on September 8th, chaired by Melissa Padfield, student leaders from both Students Union (SU) and Graduate Student's Union (GSA) received a comprehensive orientation regarding the university's utilization of tuition fees and other mandatory non-instructional fees to support student services and the overall operations of the institution. Melissa provided valuable insights into the current Alberta tuition fee framework and the approved Academic Price Index (API) for potential tuition fee adjustments, both for domestic and international students. Although this session was very informative, I feel that advocating for greater clarity in the breakdown of instructional and non-instructional fees is crucial to ensure alignment between the university's commitment to serving students effectively and students' confidence that their financial contributions are being allocated in accordance with their needs.

These were the highlights of the meetings that I have attended up until the submission of this report. I look forward to working with all the members of the GSA Council. Please feel free to reach out to me at vpse@ualberta.ca if you have any concerns or would like to discuss any matters with me.

Thank you,

Muhammad Haseeb Arshad,

Vice-President Student Services 2023-2024

2023-2024 GSA VP Student Services Meetings Attended (Haseeb Arshad)

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 18th August 2023 to 8 September 2023 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings and GSA Departmental Orientations). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

22 Aug	Working Group on Moderate Standard of Living and Bursary Applications
22 Aug	Conflict Resolution Training
23 Aug	DOA committee meeting
23 Aug	Collective Tea Times - GSA Discussion
29 Aug	Introductions: GSA Executive and Campus Services Executive Team
1 Sep	CFB AGM prep
1 Sep	Haseeb & Karen
8 Sep	UofA Tuition and Fees Orientation Session with Student Leaders

**2023-2024 Associate Vice-President Labour
Report to GSA Council for 18 September 2023**

To: GSA Council
From: Muneeb Masood Raja
Date: 15 September 2023

Dear Council Colleagues,

I have attended several meetings between 15 August 2023 and 15 September 2023 which are listed in the table below. The details of these meetings are stated in the paragraphs below.

Conflict Resolution Training (22 August):

I had the opportunity to attend a conflict resolution training along with other GSA executives organized by the Ombuds Office. It was an interactive and engaging training session with role-play scenario-based activities designed to help us understand and test our conflict resolution skills. The training not only enhanced our conflict resolution skills but also showed us how to promote a collaborative and harmonious environment within GSA. It equipped us with essential tools to address conflicts and disputes effectively, which, in turn, will contribute to a more cohesive and productive team.

Labour Training on Grievance Handling (24 August):

The grievance handling training was organized in collaboration with PSAC and attended by some of the LRC members. Keira Gunn was generous enough to share her extensive experience in addressing academic-related grievances, which proved invaluable. This training was particularly important as it served as a reminder of the processes, given the rarity of grievance cases at the University of Alberta. We left the training with the necessary expertise to effectively file any future grievances.

Meeting with Keira Gunn, Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) (25 August):

I had requested a meeting with our designated bargaining agent from the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) to discuss the inclusion of possible GRAF language within our collective agreement. We also explored our options to reclassify the GRAF appointments, aiming to establish an employment relationship between students and their supervisors. Additionally, we examined the approaches taken by other graduate student associations, such as the University of British Columbia and Simon Fraser University, for guidance. Moving forward, our next step is for the bargaining agent to seek legal advice, which will help us determine the most suitable course of action to proceed with.

Meeting with Keira Gunn, Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) (1 September):

At this meeting, we discussed our next course of action to enhance awareness and planned training sessions that could be organized in collaboration with the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC). We finalized our labour outreach session and two labour subsequent training sessions. The outreach session is scheduled for September 20th in the main quad at the University of Alberta, while the training sessions are set to take place on September 21st at 1-16 Triffo Hall, University of Alberta.

Graduate Student Association Departmental Orientations (30 August, 1 September, and 5 September):

I had the opportunity to deliver orientation presentations, along with various GSA staff members, to multiple departments across the North campus. We introduced incoming graduate students to the Graduate Student Association's (GSA) role and activities. These presentations covered a wide range of topics, including our advocacy efforts, the responsibilities of the GSA, its structure, the collective agreement, the services we provide, and those we have negotiated on their behalf. Our aim was to provide an overview of what the GSA has to offer and how it benefits graduate students during their academic journey.

Graduate Student Association (GSA) Fall Orientation Info Fair (31 August):

Graduate Student Association (GSA) hosted an orientation information fair for the recently admitted graduate students. The event featured a diverse range of both on-campus and off-campus service providers, each setting up a table to explain the services they offer. The event was attended by all six GSA executives who actively engaged with the attendees. We took the opportunity to introduce the students to the GSA and explain how the GSA could be a valuable resource during their journey as a graduate student. Conversations and interactions during the orientation fair facilitated a better understanding of the GSA's role in supporting graduate students and helped foster a sense of community and assistance among the newcomers.

Finally, I would really appreciate any feedback from the respected council members related to any labour related matters.

Thank you,
Muneeb Masood Raja, Associate Vice-President Labour 2023-2024.

2023-2024 GSA AVP Labour Meetings Attended (Muneeb Masood Raja)

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 15 August 2023 and 15 September 2023 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

15 Aug	Meet and Greet Candidate for Executive Director, Student Experience – Session 1
16 Aug	Meet and Greet Candidate for Executive Director, Student Experience – Session 2
18 Aug	Meeting with a student (award related issue)
22 Aug	Conflict Resolution Training
24 Aug	Labour Training on Grievance Handling
25 Aug	Meeting with Keira Gunn and John from PSAC (GRAF conversation)
28 Aug	Meeting with the board and ED
29 Aug	BFC - GSA Audit review meeting
30 Aug	GSA Orientation – Political Science Department
31 Aug	GSA Fall Orientation Info Fair
01 Sep	GSA Orientation – Mathematics and Statistical Sciences Department
01 Sep	Meeting with K Gunn, Public Service Alliance Canada (PSAC)
05 Sep	GSA Orientation – Faculty of Native Studies
06 Sep	Meeting with a student
08 Sep	GSA Orientation – Pediatrics
08 Sep	GSA Orientation – Internetworking
12 Sep	GSA Labour Management

**GSA Nominating Committee
Report to GSA Council for the 18 September 2023 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Violet Sun
Date: 15 September 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 email.

Sincerely,
Violet Sun, 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 qiuyu@ualberta.ca or GSA Elections Coordinator Monica Brzak at gsanomco@ualberta.ca.

GSA Standing Committees

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

Information regarding the position for two (2) GSA Councillors has been circulated via email to GSA Council many times. **No nominations were received; these vacancies will be advertised again.**

2) **GSA Board and GSA Nominating Committee (GSAB/NoC) (Two (2) Joint GSA Councillor Positions)**

Information regarding the position for two (2) GSA Councillors has been circulated via email to GSA Council many times. **One (1) nomination was received; there will be a paper ballot vote (see Item 7c– Nominee for the GSA Board and GSA Nominating Committee)**

3) **GSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (GSA EDIC) (Four (4) Member Positions)**

Information regarding the position for four (4) GSA members was circulated via the GSA Newsletters of 25 August, and 1 and 8 September 2023 with a nomination deadline of 13 September 2023. **Fifteens (15) nominations were received; there will be a paper ballot vote (see Item 7b– Nominees for the GSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee)**

GSA Officers

1) **GSA Deputy Returning Officer (One (1) Position for a GSA Member)**

Information regarding this position for one (1) GSA member was circulated via the GSA newsletters of 25 August, and 1 and 8 September 2023 with a nomination deadline of 13 September 2023. **Two (2) nominations were received; there will be a paper ballot vote (see Item 7 – Nominees for the GSA Deputy Returning Officer)**

External Committees

1) **Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Committee (Ten (10) Graduate Student Positions)**

Information regarding the ten (10) vacancies (five (5) Councillors and five (5) Alternates) on the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Committee was circulated via the GSA Newsletter graduate students on 11 and 18 August 2023 with a nomination deadline of 23 August 2023. **Four (4) nominations were received for the five (5) Councilor positions, no nominations were received for the five (5) alternate positions: Jacob Byers, Keith Osmar C. Ferrer, Zeyana Ramji, and Riley Stuemmer were elected.**

**GSA Executive Director
Report to GSA Council for the 18 September 2023 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Lewie Moodley
Date: 15 September 2023

Dear GSA Council Members,

The office has had a busy start to the fall term, with many departmental orientations being delivered alongside the annual Fall Orientation Information Fair. This event saw attendance at nearly pre-pandemic levels, making it a resounding success. We are excited to welcome students back for our monthly Coffee Breaks starting back up this month. We have hired a new Associate Director and are in the final stages of hiring our new Grants Administration Coordinator. We eagerly anticipate having a full complement of staff in the near future..

As the GSA's fiscal year ended on March 31, 2023, in early July of the same year, auditors visited the GSA in person to conduct the annual financial audit. We are now awaiting the findings from this annual audit. The audit for the first term and the expenditure financial report for the new fiscal year, is expected to be completed in the coming weeks. Following their review by the GSA Budget and Finance Committee and the GSA Board, both these items will be presented to the GSA Council in the near future. Subsequently, the GSA's audited financial statements will proceed to the University Board of Governors, in accordance with the requirements of the Post-Secondary Learning Act.

My weekly reports to the GSA Board are attached and, as always, I am happy to answer any questions.

Lewie Moodley, GSA Executive Director

Management Report to the GSA Board, 16 August 2023

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 9 August 2023:

Strategic

- Ongoing Seeking a legal opinion on Workplace Harassment and Violence Policy drafts, as required for Occupational Health and Safety Legislation. Draft version with edits has been discussed and has moved onto the steps.
- 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, outreach and strategic planning with PSAC).
- We are eagerly awaiting the results of our audit which will be presented to the board, BFC and council in September.

Operations

- Strategic Operations Coordinator, it has been advertised on Indeed, UofA switchboard and LinkedIn. Shortlist of candidates being formed. An interview has been scheduled for Wednesday August 16 2023.
- GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Nominating Committee have vacancies on the First Alberta Campus Radio Association (advertised via newsletter), and Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Council (advertised in newsletter).
- Facebook = 2003 followers (up 2 in the last 7 days); Facebook posts reached "6" users since 1 Aug. Twitter = 1,335 followers (up 1 in the last 7 days); our tweets earned 126 "impressions" over the past week. Instagram = 1094 followers (up 3 in the last 7 days); Instagram posts reached "11" users over the last week.
- Processing grants – new funding period opened 1 April for Academic Travel Grants (ATGs), Child Care Grants (CCGs) – next period starts 1 July. Planning for orientation is happening this week - catering confirmed and vendors mostly confirmed for Info Fair; assigning/confirming departmental presentations; eClass went live on Friday, we have had some enrollments and a few completions.-Planners have been delivered this week and now will be packaged and distributed to departments through campus mail.

Management Report to the GSA Board, 23 August 2023

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 9 August 2023:

Strategic

- Completed and reviewed. Ongoing Seeking a legal opinion on Workplace Harassment and Violence Policy drafts, as required for Occupational Health and Safety Legislation. Draft version with edits has been discussed and has moved onto the steps.
- 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, outreach and strategic planning with PSAC).
- We are eagerly awaiting the results of our audit which will be presented to the board, BFC and council in September. Results due within the next 7 days.

Operations

- Strategic Operations Coordinator - Brandon (Brandy) Ellamil has started in a temporary position until December 2023.
- Erika Heiberg has resigned, her final day is Friday August 25 2023. We are currently searching for our new Associate Director.
- GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Nominating Committee have vacancies on the First Alberta Campus Radio Association (advertised via newsletter), and Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Council (advertised in newsletter).
- Facebook = 2006 followers (up 3 in the last 7 days); Facebook posts reached "371" users since 7 Aug. Twitter = 1,335 followers (up 0 in the last 7 days); our tweets earned "160" impressions over the past week. Instagram = 1094 followers (up 0 in the last 7 days); Instagram posts reached "490" users over the last week.
- Processing grants – new funding period opened 1 April for Academic Travel Grants (ATGs), Child Care Grants (CCGs) – next period starts 1 July. Planning for orientation is happening this week - catering and vendors confirmed for Info Fair; assigning/confirming departmental presentations. Orientations have been booked and emails have been sent to DEO's.

Management Report to the GSA Board, 6 September 2023

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 23 August 2023:

Strategic

- 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, outreach and strategic planning with PSAC).

Operations

- We have commenced interviews for the Associate Director position, this is going well and close to a decision.
- The search is underway for a Grants Administration Coordinator, this will be the replacement for Fiona Robertson's role. I hope to commence interviews in the coming days.
- Facebook = 2006 followers (up 10 since 23 August); Facebook posts reached "314" users since 7 Aug. Twitter = 1,341 followers (up 6 since 23 August); our tweets earned "160" impressions over the past week. Instagram = 1144 followers (up 50 since 23 August); Instagram posts reached "995" users over the last week.
- Processing grants – due to personnel changes we have a current pause on Academic Travel Grants and Childcare Grants. Emergency bursaries will remain unaffected.
- Orientations are underway and are going successfully, we have completed a number of them at this stage.

Management Report to the GSA Board, 13 September 2023

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 6 September 2023:

Strategic

- 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, outreach and strategic planning with PSAC).

Operations

- We have commenced interviews for the Associate Director position, we have made a formal offer to a candidate and they have accepted.
- The search is underway for a Grants Administration Coordinator, this will be the replacement for Fiona Robertson's role. We have had some strong applications and hope to hire someone within the upcoming week.
- Facebook = 2006 followers (up 10 since 23 August); Facebook posts reached "314" users since 7 Aug. Twitter = 1,341 followers (up 6 since 23 August); our tweets earned "160" impressions over the past week. Instagram = 1144 followers (up 50 since 23 August); Instagram posts reached "995" users over the last week.

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- Processing grants – due to personnel changes we have a current pause on Academic Travel Grants and Childcare Grants. Emergency bursaries will remain unaffected.
- Orientations are underway and are going successfully, we have completed a number of them at this stage.