

GSA Council Meeting - List of Reports Circulated
Monday, 14 December 2020
Cancelled

| | Attached Numbered Pages |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. Minutes from the 16 November 2020 GSA Council Meeting <i>Attachments:</i> | |
| i. Minutes from the 16 November 2020 GSA Council Meeting | 1.0 - 1.6 |
| 2. President (Marc Waddignham, President) | |
| i. President's Report | 2.0 - 2.1 |
| ii. GSA Board | 2.3 |
| iii. GSA Budget and Finance Committee | 2.4 |
| iv. GSA Governance Committee (no meetings this reporting period) | |
| 3. Vice-President Academic (Sachiketha Reddy, Vice-President Academic) | |
| i. Vice-President Academic's Report | 3.0 - 3.1 |
| 4. Vice-President External (Anas Fassih, Vice-President External) | |
| i. Vice-President External's Report | 4.0 - 4.1 |
| ii. GSA Awards Selection Committee (no meetings this reporting period) | |
| 5. Vice-President Labour (Umesh Nimmathi, Vice-President Labour) | |
| i. Vice-President Labour's Report | 5.0 - 5.1 |
| ii. GSA Labour Relations Committee | 5.2 |
| 6. Vice-President Student Services (Sridhar Parasharamatham, Vice-President Student Services) | |
| i. Vice-President Student Services' Report | 6.0 |
| 7. Senator (Marla Palakkamanil, Senator) | |
| i. Senator's Report (no written report at this time) | |
| 8. Speaker (Pranidhi Baddam, Speaker) | |
| i. Speaker's Report (no written report at this time) | |
| 9. Chief Returning Officer (Michael Huang, Chief Returning Officer) | |
| i. Chief Returning Officer's Report (no written report at this time) | |
| 10. GSA Nominating Committee (Kenzie Gordon, GSA Nominating Committee Chair) | |
| i. GSA Nominating Committee Report | 10.0 - 10.1 |
| 11. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (Jennifer Bertrand, GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Vice-Chair) | |
| i. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Report | 11.0 |
| 12. GSA Management (Courtney Thomas, Executive Director) | |
| i. Executive Director's Report | 12.0 - 12.3 |

GSA Council Meeting MINUTES
Monday, 16 November 2020 at 6:00 pm
Held online via Zoom

IN ATTENDANCE:

| | | | |
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| Marc Waddingham (President) | Muhammad Zubair (Councillor-at-Large) | Yina Liu (Elementary Education) | Erika Poitras (Pharmacology) |
| Sachiketha Reddy (VP Academic) | Zhiying Wang (AFNS) | Samantha Blais (History, Classics, & Religious Studies) | Hamdah Al Nebaihi (Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences) |
| Anas Fassih (VP External) | Kyla Cangiano (Anthropology) | Jessica Kennedy (Human Ecology) | Spencer Hayden (Philosophy) |
| Umesh Nimmathi (VP Labour) | Allan Yarahmady (Biochemistry) | M Idrees Afzal (Internetworking) | Zoe Frank (Physical Therapy) |
| Sridhar Parasharamatham (VP Student Services) | Jessica Grenke (Biological Science) | Janet Zhou (Laboratory Medicine & Pathology) | Pramodh Senarath Yapa (Physics) |
| Pranidhi Baddam (Speaker) | Kevin Solar (Biomedical Engineering) | Tim Nessim (Law) | Robert Reklow (Physiology) |
| Priyanka Maripuri (Deputy Speaker) | Maggie Cascadden (Business PhD) | Jenn Laskosky; Kim Jones (Library & Information Studies) | Maura Roberts (Political Science) |
| Michael Huang (Chief Returning Officer) | Kazuki Ueda (Cell Biology) | David Gordon (Mechanical Engineering) | Precious Amusan (Psychiatry) |
| Sophie Shi (Deputy Returning Officer) | Omnath Ekambaram (Chemical & Materials Engineering) | Jennifer McDevitt; Erin O'Neil (Media and Technology Studies) | Connor Lambert (Psychology) |
| Marla Palakkamanil (Senator) | Arsh Hazrah (Chemistry) | Adrienne Watson (Medical Genetics) | McKenzie Tilstra (Public Health) |
| Neslihan Akpınar (Councillor-at-Large) | Kalvin Eng (Computing Science) | Quinten Kieser (Medical Microbiology & Immunology) | Kathryn Lambert (Rehabilitation Science) |
| Dylan Ashley (Councillor-at-Large) | Harsimrat Kaur (Dentistry) | Treesa Friesen (MLCS) | Beckett Stark (Renewable Resources) |
| Paramita Chaudhuri Basu (Councillor-at-Large) | Collette Slevinsky (Drama) | Leah Hrycun (Native Studies) | Michael Huang (REES) |
| Nadia Daniel (Councillor-at-Large) | Avni Patel (Earth & Atmospheric Sciences) | Charbel Baaklini; Noam Steinberg (Neuroscience) | Robert Piazza (Secondary Education) |
| Tejasai Kommanpalli (Councillor-at-Large) | Jasen Aussant (Economics) | Laura Reifferscheid (Nursing) | Manzah Yankey (Sociology) |
| Zeenat Ladak (Councillor-at-Large) | Carrie Karsgaard (Educational Policy Studies) | Shayla Mosley (Oncology) | Lindy Schaffrick (Surgery) |
| Yashita Singh (Councillor-at-Large) | Lauren Trafford (Educational Psychology) | Matthew Benson (Ophthalmology) | |
| Md Solimul Chowdhury (Councillor-at-Large) | Nida-e-Falak (Electrical & Computer Engineering) | Shubham Soni (Paediatrics) | |

Guests: Tom Gee (GSA Auditor, RSM Canada); Leon Pfeiffer (GSA Auditor, RSM Canada); Christina Saed (Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Science; GSA Appeals and Complaints Board nominee).

Speaker Pranidhi Baddam in the Chair.

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

Approval of Agenda

1. Approval of the 16 November 2020 Consolidated Agenda

Members had before them the 16 November 2020 Consolidated Agenda, which had been previously distributed on 13 November 2020. R Piazza **MOVED**; L Trafford **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

2. Minutes from the 19 October 2020 GSA Council Meeting

Members had before them the 19 October 2020 GSA Council meeting minutes, which had been previously distributed on 6 November 2020. C Slevinsky **MOVED**; A Patel **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED**. J McDevitt Abstained.

Changes in GSA Council Membership

3. Changes in GSA Council Membership

- i. **Introduction of New GSA Council Members:** it was the first meeting for K Lambert (Rehabilitation Science), K Jones (Library and Information Studies), and N-e-Falak (Electrical & Computer Engineering).
- ii. **Farewell to Departing GSA Council Members:** None.

GSA Council Member Announcements

4. GSA Council Member Announcements

M Waddingham, President, invited members to attend upcoming town halls and panels being hosted across campus regarding the University of Alberta Tomorrow Initiative:

- Reclaiming the University – [University Restructuring and Students: Consequences and Risks – 19 November 3-4:30PM](#)
- Reclaiming the University – [University Restructuring and Students: Getting Heard, Pushing Back – 20 November 3-4:30PM](#)
- [Dissecting U of A for Tomorrow: Student Perspectives on Academic Restructuring – 23 November 12-1PM](#)

Councillor A Watson (Medical Genetics) invited members to attend the Medical Genetics Research Day on Wednesday, 18 November. This was a virtual event and all were welcome. Members were invited to email A Watson for more details (aw1@ualberta.ca)

Councillor P Basu (Councillor-at-Large) invited members to [Enhancing Career Launches: The Power of Experiential Learning](#) on Wednesday, 18 November - a panel discussion where panelists from the University of Alberta, BioTalent Canada and Mitacs would discuss work-integrated learning opportunities and wage subsidy programs available to students.

Councillor E O'Neil (Media and Technology Studies) invited members to the [Faculty of Arts Restructuring – Graduate Students Open Forum](#) on 19 November at 2:00PM

Action Item

5. 2019-2020 GSA Audited Financial Statements

M Waddingham (President) presented the item and introduced the guests, T Gee (GSA Auditor; MBA, FCA, RSM Canada) and L Pfeiffer (CA, RSM Canada).

T Gee introduced L Pfeiffer as the RSM partner consulting on the audit, and began by noting that, in past years, audits were conducted on-site at the GSA office but with the challenges this year presented, the audit was conducted virtually. He also reminded members that GSA management and GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC) had already reviewed the attached document very closely and then highlighted a number of pertinent points, including but not limited to:

- The Statement of Financial Position outlined that in 2019, assets totaled approximately \$1.58 million, and liabilities totaled approximately \$587,000, leaving approximately \$1 million for the Financial Stabilization Fund. In 2020, with assets totaling approximately \$1.78 million and liabilities totaling approximately \$665,000, the Financial Stabilization Fund had grown to approximately \$1.1 million, and this was the amount (equal to approximately one year's operating expenses) that the GSA had been striving for several years to grow the fund to
and
- The notes associated with the audit addressed the uncertainty of the GSA's future financial situation given the impact of the global pandemic.

T Gee noted that in contrast to the state of the organization about 10 years ago, today the GSA continued to be in an excellent financial position and as the GSA Auditor, he had no concerns about the financial situation of the organization.

Prepared by F Robertson and M Toghrai for GSA Council 16 November 2020

/Volumes/GoogleDrive/My Drive/GSA Council/Meetings/2020 - 2021/December 2020/GSA Council 14 December 2020 Item 1 - Minutes GSA Council 16 November 2020.docx

MOTION: That GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the 2019-2020 GSA audited financial statements. J Kennedy **MOVED**; L Hrycun **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

6. 2020-2021 GSA Fall Term Budget and Expenditure Report

M Waddingham (President) presented the item and referenced the attached cover letter which provided more detail. He went on to note that a drop in enrolment was anticipated in Fall 2020 and a significant drop was of potential concern for the GSA. In anticipation, the last budget update was drafted conservatively with an expectation of a 9% decrease in enrolment, while the actual enrolment decrease was 1%. In addition, the GSA initially suffered some losses from investments, as well as ongoing losses from suspended commercial activities. While the Winter 2021 enrolment figures would provide more certainty, at this stage there were no major concerns given that enrolment decreases were not as severe as anticipated.

In the ensuing discussion, members raised a number of points, including but not limited to whether the decrease in enrolment was a result of a decrease in international student enrolment (it appeared that was the major factor).

At the request of members, the Speaker allowed a brief discussion regarding the feasibility of a GSA strike fund to support Academically-Employed Graduate Students (AEGSs) during a hypothetical future strike. In the ensuing discussion, M Waddingham noted that U Nimmathi, as the Vice-President Labour, could address questions pertaining to graduate student labour rights and conditions. Members raised a number of questions, including but not limited to what conditions were required before AEGSs could strike and which body was authorized to make the decision to create a strike fund. In response, U Nimmathi noted that there were currently a number of unknowns concerning how Bill 32 impacted the collection and use of union dues but the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) was currently researching student association strike funds, and the GSA would be supplementing this with its own research. This research was expected to be completed by March 2021, at which point the GSA could determine the next steps it wished to take. It was also noted that AEGSs made up approximately 3,000 members of the entire graduate student body, which totaled approximately 8,000, that union dues could only be collected from AEGSs with their explicit consent, and that such a fund would have to be managed separately from the GSA operating budget. Members also discussed whether the GSA could utilize a portion of its operating budget to begin such a fund, in advance of asking AEGSs to vote on the collection of a union due and it was noted that this would be assessed.

MOTION: That GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the GSA 2020-2021 Fall Term Budget and Expenditure Report. P Chaudhury Basu **MOVED**; R Piazza **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

7. 2021 Graduate Student Assistance Program Referendum Question

M Huang (Chief Returning Officer) presented the item and noted that the GSA would hold two referenda in 2021. The first, on the Graduate Student Assistance Program (GSAP) would require graduate students to indicate if they wish to continue the program given an increase in cost associated with an increase in inflation since the inception of the program, and an uptick in the usage of the program.

MOTION: That GSA Council **APPROVE** the holding of a referendum on the Graduate Student Assistance Program, to run concurrently with the 2021 GSA General Election and using the proposed question as attached. J Kennedy **MOVED**; P Chaudhury Basu **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

8. 2021 U-Pass Referendum Question

M Huang (Chief Returning Officer) presented the item and noted that, in the second of two referenda slated for 2021, graduate students would be asked to vote on the continuation of the U-Pass program, offered by Edmonton Transit Service (ETS).

Members raised a number of questions, including, among others:

- What would happen if the referendum did not pass (in the short term, the U-Pass program would no longer be offered to University of Alberta graduate students as of Fall 2021. While negotiations with ETS could continue, there was little leverage given that there were other Edmonton student associations who were currently paying \$180 per student and would likely pass their respective referenda – which was what the cost for U of A students would be once the subsidy provided by University administration was removed, as was the University's intention);
- Whether the Ride Transit program, which currently cost \$34/month for qualifying low-income graduate students, was expected to undergo any changes (unknown at this point, that was a City of Edmonton decision, but graduate program eligibility had been extended until August 2021 and would then end when the U-Pass program took effect again in September 2021); and
- Whether graduate students could campaign in support of or in opposition to the U-Pass referenda (graduate students could register "yes" or "no" campaigns for either of the GSA Referenda to be held in 2021).

MOTION: That GSA Council **APPROVE** the holding of a referendum on the U-Pass, to run concurrently with the 2021 GSA General Election and using the proposed question as attached. J McDevitt **MOVED**; S Hayden **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

9. Recommended Addition to GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section F: GSA Standing Committees

M Waddingham (President) presented the item.

MOTION BEFORE GSA COUNCIL: That GSA Council **APPROVE** recommended addition to GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section F: GSA Standing Committee, as shown in the attached track changes document and effective immediately.

M Waddingham (President) presented the item and provided background on the creation of the GSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (GSA EDIC), noting that he had received feedback on the formation of this committee, particularly from the Indigenous Graduate Students' Association (IGSA) and the Black Graduate Students' Association (BGSA).

He also noted that, as with all GSA Standing Committees, this body would be empowered to revisit its own policies so it could evolve over time and could make recommendations to GSA Council and GSA Board. Members discussed the danger of token improvements and it was noted that bodies such as the GSA EDIC could be critical in ensuring the organization would be as successful as possible.

The floor was then opened for questions, which included, but were not limited to, why a committee for diversity was discriminating in its membership (M Waddingham explained that the intent was to ensure a broad range of representation and a diversity of voices, especially from those not currently heard within the GSA) and whether, once formed, this committee could recommend training for GSA Council members as to the necessity of this type of representation (M Waddingham agreed that this type of training would be very valuable and the committee could certainly be involved in that, especially with training for GSA executives).

MOTION: That GSA Council **APPROVE** recommended addition to GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section F: GSA Standing Committee, as shown in the attached track changes document and effective immediately. J McDevitt **MOVED**; L Trafford **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

Elections

10. GSA Council Elections

Nadia Daniel (GSA Nominating Committee Member) presented the items.

Standing Committees

- a. GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (1 vacancy)
Christina Saed (Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Science)

N Daniel asked the nominee the following: "please tell us why you'd like to serve on the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board." The nominee was present and given the opportunity to respond. GSA Council members then posed questions and the nominee was given the opportunity to respond.

Reports

11. President

i. President's Report:

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 13 November 2020. The report stood as submitted. In addition, M Waddingham referred back to follow-up questions related to Item 9, including how the GSA EDIC would be empowered to impact the organization (as with all GSA Standing Committees, the GSA EDIC would have the power to make recommendations to GSA Council and it would be the role of GSA Council to assess and act on these).

M Waddingham then noted that the University of Alberta for Tomorrow was nearing its final stages and would go to review at General Faculties Council (GFC) on 23 November and expressed his opinion that this was the beginning of a journey, not the end of a process. He also noted, as he had the previous month that he was pleased to work with members to facilitate smaller

round tables with student groups who wished to discuss these issues; these meetings were very informative, and the feedback was incredibly helpful in representing a variety of voices.

He next noted that the GSA received input from external contacts looking for graduate students to fulfill internship opportunities and that such requests would flow through the Vice-President Academic's portfolio. He noted the GSA would continue to monitor such opportunities through the University of Alberta Innovation Network, of which the GSA was now an official member. Members were encouraged to reach out if they represented a group with interests in these opportunities and graduate students interested in internship opportunities were encouraged to engage through the Graduate Student Internship Program offered by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR).

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

Members discussed the Alberta 2030 Roundtable, as mentioned in M Waddingham's report.

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

ii. GSA Board

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 13 November 2020. The report stood as submitted.

iii. GSA Budget and Finance Committee

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 13 November 2020. The report stood as submitted.

iv. GSA Governance Committee

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 13 November 2020. The report stood as submitted.

12. Vice-President Academic

i. Vice-President Academic's Report:

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 13 November 2020. The report stood as submitted. In addition, S Reddy provided an outline of meetings attended, including GFC Council on Student Affairs (COSA), GFC Student Conduct Policy Committee (SCPC), and the GFC Executive Committee (EXEC). FGSR was now granting Essential Travel letters provided certain conditions were met. M Waddingham added that the U of A had received the federal exception to allow international students to travel here; FGSR would work with students on a case-by-case basis to ensure they met the requirements.

13. Vice-President External

i. Vice-President External's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 13 November 2020. The report stood as submitted. In addition, A Fassih provided an outline of meetings attended, including Advocacy Week hosted by ab-GPAC (during which many issues were discussed, including professional development and funding, partnership with Mitacs, internet availability for rural students, and increasing mental health funding), the Edmonton Student Alliance (ESA), meeting with Katherine Husing (Associate VP (Ancillary Services)) to discuss residence issues, and the conclusion of the hiring search for the Vice-President (External Relations).

GSA Council members asked if there was support available for paternal caretakers, or if support could be awarded regardless of gender. A Fassih explained that the data under discussion demonstrated particular challenges for female graduate students so the discussion was in relation to that. More funding would be available for caretakers, regardless of gender.

ii. GSA Awards Selection Committee

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 13 November 2020. The report stood as submitted.

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

No written report at this time.

14. Vice-President Labour

i. Vice-President Labour's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 13 November 2020. The report stood as submitted. In addition, U Nimmathi highlighted the upcoming Discover Governance sessions, for those interested in student advocacy or leadership, and the Labour 101 session, for those interested in learning more about the Collective Agreement.

ii. GSA Labour Relations Committee

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 13 November 2020. The report stood as submitted.

15. Vice-President Student Services

i. Vice-President Student Services' Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 13 November 2020. The report stood as submitted. In addition, S Parasharamatham highlighted the Dean of Students Advisory Committee meeting, involvement in the Academic Restructuring process, and continued efforts at streamlining their services, efforts which have been ongoing for the past couple of years.

16. Senator

i. Senator's Report

No written report at this time.

17. Speaker

i. Speaker's Report

No written report at this time.

18. Chief Returning Officer

i. Chief Returning Officer's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 13 November 2020. The report stood as submitted. In addition, M Huang stated that the report was a review of meetings held with GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (ERC) and GSA Board, before bringing referendum questions forward to GSA Council.

M Huang also provided GSA Council with information regarding previous voter turnout for GSA General Elections (8% in 2020, previous years saw a range from 9.6% - 13%). Simple statistics showed that the GSA got a better turnout when there were multiple candidates. As such, M Huang encouraged everyone to consider running. With two important referendum questions, it would be important that we have a good turnout.

19. GSA Nominating Committee

i. GSA Nominating Committee Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 13 November 2020. The report stood as submitted. In addition, N Daniel stated that the current vacancies might seem like large time commitments but at most the committees meet every few months. Members were encouraged to consider committing as much as they could. It was important for the functioning of the GSA to have these positions filled so these committees could continue to bring business forward to GSA Council. Vacancies would be posted in the next newsletter.

20. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee

ii. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 13 November 2020. The report stood as submitted.

21. GSA Management

i. Executive Director's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 13 November 2020. The report stood as submitted. In addition, C Thomas reminded GSA Council members of the upcoming Discover Governance session. Details would be available in the GSA newsletter; this session was for those interested in getting more involved. The numerous vacancies on GSA Standing Committees were also noted.

Additionally, C Thomas noted that the GSA Recognition Awards would be open for nominations on 1 December 2020, with a deadline of 15 January 2021. All student awards have a monetary component and recognized work in an array of areas.

Question Period

22. Written Questions: No written questions were submitted.

23. Oral Questions

No oral questions were raised and, in closing, D Ashley expressed his thanks to the GSA for their work on behalf of graduate students, as this would be his final meeting as a Councillor-at-Large. D Ashley received thanks from several GSA Council members.

Additionally, the Speaker informed GSA Council members that as there were no pressing issues for December Council, that meeting would be cancelled. GSA Council would re-convene in January.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

GSA President
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 14 December 2020 Meeting

To: GSA Council
 From: Marc Waddingham
 Date: 11 December 2020

To my colleagues in council,

My primary update to share with you all ahead of the holiday season pertains to the University of Alberta for Tomorrow (UAT) initiative, which by the time of this report's release will have concluded its first major phase. After rounds of amendment drafting, debate, and various votes, the Board of Governors ultimately voted to approve an amended version of the General Faculties Council's (GFC) carried motion and recommendation on UAT with respect to the leadership structure (and adopted the college model recommended by GFC without any amendments). Alongside my colleagues in the Students' Union, I voted against the amended motion concerning the leadership structure.

As I expressed at the meeting, I have reservations over the shared service hub model for the new colleges and concerns that a decentralized leadership model might make it difficult to advance initiatives aimed at improving the student experience, particularly student-supervisory accountability and the creation of minimum funding packages, amongst others. There was clear consensus [at GFC about the leadership model](#), to the degree I do not believe my concerns constitutes reason enough to vote against the wishes of GFC on academic matters. I am also concerned about the precedent set when the Board rejects or amends recommendations brought to it by GFC and its implications for the University's system of collegial governance. I encourage you all to review the final motion summary for full details on the high-level structures that will become part of the University, once made available on the Board of Governors web pages, and to reach out to me with your questions or concerns; feel free to send me an email or save your questions for the January GSA Council meeting.

I wish our councilors, my executive and management teams, and our members at large a restful and safe holiday season, at the very least. This calendar year has provided us adversity for a lifetime, but hope is on the horizon with a vaccine on the way, and we need to continue to keep our spirits high and eyes forward. We still have opportunities to seize and projects to finish, and I look forward to the final term of our tenures.

Kind regards,
 Marc Waddingham, President 2020-2021

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 16 November 2020 and 14 December 2020 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

| | |
|----------------|--|
| 17 November | University Associations Meeting |
| 17 November | Dean of Students Review Committee |
| 18 November | Academic Restructuring Consultation Townhall |
| 19 November | 2020 UAlberta Innovation Network Monthly Meeting |
| 19 November | Meeting re Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees (MNIFs) |
| 19-20 November | Reclaiming the University Panels |
| 20 November | Academic Restructuring Working Group (ARWG) |
| 20 November | Board Learning, Research and Student Experience Committee (BLRSEC) |
| 23 November | Meeting with C Swindlehurst, Interim Vice-President (University Relations) |
| 23 November | GSA Town Hall on Academic Restructuring |
| 23 November | Students' Union Town Hall on Academic Restructuring |
| 23 November | General Faculties Council (GFC) |
| 24 November | Board Human Resources and Compensation Committee (BHRCC) |
| 24 November | Meeting with B Milne, Vice-Provost and Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) |
| 24 November | Board Finance and Property Committee (BFPC) |

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| 25 November | Board Governance Committee (BGC) |
| 25 November | General Faculties Council Academic Planning Committee (GFC APC) |
| 26 November | Tuition Budget Advisory Committee (TBAC) |
| 26 November | Monthly Meeting with A Costopoulos, Dean of Students |
| 26 November | Political Science Graduate Students' Association (PSGSA) Town Hall on Academic Restructuring |
| 27 November | 2020 Canadian Association for Graduate Studies (CAGS) Virtual Symposia |
| 27 November | Joint Student/University Oversight Committee on Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees (MNIFs) |
| 27 November | Alberta Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Board Meeting |
| 30 November | GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC) |
| 1 December | Meeting with U of A Student Collective |
| 3 December | Meeting with B Flanagan, President |
| 3 December | Meeting with the International Students' Association (ISA) |
| 4 December | Academic Restructuring Working Group (ARWG) |
| 7 December | Special General Faculties Council (GFC) |
| 8 December | Meeting with B Milne, Vice-Provost and Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Dean |
| 10 December | Board of Governors (BoG) Virtual Engagement |
| 11 December | Board of Governors (BoG) |
| 11 December | Meeting with C Swindlehurst, Interim Vice-President (University Relations) |
| 14 December | Meeting re Dentistry/Pharmacy Building Project |

GSA Board
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 14 December 2020 Meeting

To: GSA Council
 From: Marc Waddingham, President
 Date: 11 December 2020

The GSA Board (GSAB) reports regularly to GSA Council by listing its agenda items, Motions/agreements, and main items of discussion (meeting reports are also offered at each meeting). Motions of Agenda approval and approval of the Minutes are not included unless there were amendments made. Closed session items are not minuted. GSA Council members are always able to ask questions about items that were discussed in closed session. Open session Minutes are available upon request. The President, Vice-Presidents, and the administrative team will be happy to answer any questions or provide more information at the GSA Council meeting. Also see the weekly Management Reports to the GSAB in Item 12 (Executive Director's Report to GSA Council).

18 November 2020 GSA Board Meeting:

Main Agenda Items:

GSA Council Debrief; Letter to the GSA Board from the International Students' Association Department of Graduate Affairs; and Meeting Reports.

Motions and Agreements:

None to report.

2 December 2020 GSA Board Meeting:

Main Agenda Items:

COVID-19 Update; Housing Survey and Data Collection; and Meeting Reports.

Motions and Agreements:

None to report.

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

Members discussed the **Board Governance Committee (BGC)** and the **Joint Student/University Oversight Committee on Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees (MNIFs)**.

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

9 December 2020 GSA Board Meeting:

Main Agenda Items:

COVID-19 Update; Service on the Search Committee for the Vice-President (Research and Innovation); and Meeting Reports.

Motions and Agreements:

None to report.

**GSA Budget and Finance Committee
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 14 December 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Marc Waddingham
Date: 11 December 2020

Dear Council Colleagues,

The GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC) met on 30 November 2020 to discuss the 2021-2022 GSA operating budget and associated three-year budget/business plan. At this meeting, members engaged in a high level discussion of the anticipated features of the budget and agreed to run multiple budget scenarios for further consideration in January (the committee will next meet on 25 January 2021 and will make a recommendation concerning the 2021-2022 operating budget at this time; the budget will then come before GSA Council for its February meeting). I am happy to report that we are in an excellent financial position (even allowing for the current economic strictures occasioned by the pandemic) and are moving closer to a truly balanced budget over the next few years while still increasing the services we are able to provide to graduate students.

Additionally, GSA BFC members agreed at this meeting to make a recommendation to GSA Council in January that it establish a restricted fund to support the work of the GSA as a labour union (including potential strike actions). As we are currently anticipating a surplus at the end of the fiscal year on 31 March 2021, it is proposed that, should GSA Council vote to establish this fund in January, a second motion will come forward after that to transfer some of these funds from the GSA operating budget to this restricted fund. It is hoped that the fund will be grown thereafter through the collection of a union due from academically-employed graduate students, established following a vote on the matter by members of the bargaining unit (which will likely occur in March or April, although this matter needs to be further discussed by the GSA Labour Relations Committee).

I am happy to answer any questions either via email or when GSA Council next meets in January.

Sincerely,
Marc Waddingham, President and Chair of the GSA BFC

**Vice-President Academic
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 14 December 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Sachiketha Reddy Paspula
Date: 11 December 2020

Dear Council Colleagues,

A lot has happened in the past month while I've been working diligently in my role as your VP Academic and here are a few highlights to give you a snapshot of what I've been up to:

- I attended the General Faculties Council Program Committee (GFC PC) meeting, at which several course and minor program changes were approved in an omnibus motion. This work is done in accordance with the GFC PC's terms of reference, which state that "'routine and/or editorial' includes proposals which do not involve or affect other faculties or units and do not form part of a proposal for a new program. Editorial or routine changes include all changes to the wording of faculty or program specific admissions or academic standing regulations."
- I chaired a couple of GSA General Faculties Council (GSA GFC) Caucus meetings (the discussion format for myself as the GSA's statutory member of GFC, and the 14 other elected graduate students on GFC to discuss agenda topics, issues of concern, etc), where members discussed the different academic restructuring scenarios, the Innovation Bridge, international students paying for services they couldn't access, and the U-Pass (members discussed U-Pass opt-outs and it was clarified that all full-time students must pay for U-Pass except for specific exemptions outlined on the U-Pass website). These meetings were in advance of the pivotal GFC meeting on 7 December 2020, at which a restructuring model was recommended to the Board of Governors by GFC, with a leadership model that was amended after extensive debate at the meeting. I am happy that the GSA GFC Caucus had time to discuss all of the various models under consideration, as well as the important concerns raised during the restructuring process.
- I have been to a Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Council meeting. Dean Milne presented on services provided by FGSR, including remote supervision, graduate coordinator workshops, Individual Development Plans (IDP), a Virtual FGSR Counter, the FGSR website and search tools, programs and funding, FGSR podcast, Graduate Student Internship Program (GSIP), and the Graduate Teaching and Learning Program (GTLP). FGSR is sending each graduating student a short celebratory video that includes messages from the President, myself, and the Dean of their teaching faculty. This included 229 doctoral degree recipients, 827 master's degree recipients, and 22 recipients of graduate certificates as a part of Fall Convocation.
- The University has made decisions regarding mandatory non-instructional fees (MNIFs) for the Winter 2021 term. The fees that are impacted are as follows:
 - Student Academic Support Fee: remaining at 100%
 - Health and Wellness Fee: remaining at 100%
 - Athletics and Recreation Fee: returning to 100% (it was only charged at 70% in Fall 2020; the GSA advocated strongly that it should remain the same for the winter term)
 - PAW (Physical Activity and Wellness) Fee: Not assessed
 - U-PASS Fee: Not assessed and unavailable for Winter Term 2021. The student associations are continuing to work with the transit authorities on future options in advance of the program being reinstated for either spring/summer 2021 or September 2021

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- I presented the GSA report to the FGSR council, and mentioned a few things like hosting online engagement events for graduate students, as well as “brunch and learn” information sessions, and the online social event we hosted at the end of November.
- I attended a 2020 Canadian Association for Graduate Studies (CAGS) Virtual Symposia. The speaker was an instructor who discussed the problems created for students who do not have access to research labs and how she was trying to resolve this.

If you have any concerns about this report/concerns regarding any academic related issue feel free to reach me at gsavpaca@ualberta.ca. I will be more than happy to answer your questions.

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

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 16 November 2020 and 14 December 2020 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

| | |
|-------------|---|
| 19 November | General Faculties Council Programs Committee (GFC PC) |
| 23 November | GSA General Faculties Council (GFC) Caucus |
| 23 November | GSA Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Council Caucus |
| 23 November | General Faculties Council (GFC) |
| 25 November | Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Council |
| 25 November | 2020 Canadian Association for Graduate Studies (CAGS) Virtual Symposia |
| 26 November | Tuition Budget Advisory Committee (TBAC) |
| 27 November | University Research Policy Committee (URPC) |
| 27 November | Joint Student/University Oversight Committee on Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees (MNIFs) |
| 27 November | GSA Virtual Game Chill-Out |
| 30 November | Special General Faculties Council Executive Committee (GFC EXEC) |
| 2 December | Meeting with K Husing, Associate Vice-President (Ancillary Services) |
| 2 December | General Faculties Council Committee on the Learning Environment (GFC CLE) |
| 7 December | Special General Faculties Council (GFC) |
| 8 December | Meeting with B Milne, Vice-Provost and Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Dean |
| 10 December | General Faculties Council Programs Committee (GFC PC) |
| 11 December | Meeting with C Swindlehurst, Interim Vice-President (University Relations) |

Vice-President External
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 14 December 2020 Meeting

To: GSA Council
 From: Anas Fassih
 Date: 11 December 2020

Colleagues,

I hope you are doing well. I attended a couple of meetings last month. Here are the main takeaways:

- On 18 November, I attended the Alberta Chamber of Commerce Forum hosted by D. Schweitzer, Minister of Jobs, Economy, and Innovation. The Minister talked about opportunities that Alberta has in diversifying its economy away from oil and gas. Digital infrastructure, film industry, research and innovation, and talent attraction were highlighted by the Minister as the bulk of post-pandemic economic recovery in the province.
- On 20 November, I had a meeting with the Advocacy and Outreach Committee of the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) where we discussed a report covering ab-GPAC Advocacy Week and identified areas for improvement going forward.
- On 24 November and 8 December, I attended the Executive Committee meeting of ab-GPAC. We discussed how to renew the ab-GPAC website and whether to renew the contract with the current webmaster or opt for an alternative way of building a website for free. Most of the executive members seemed in favour of renewing the current contract. In addition, we reviewed the ab-GPAC Alberta 2030 submission and provided feedback before putting together the final draft. Permanent residency for international students, commercialization of research, funding for graduate studies, and making Alberta an international brand are central themes of the submission, undergirded by rigorous research about the concerns of graduate students in the province. ab-GPAC will submit the draft by the third week of December.
- On 24 November, I delivered a presentation to the University of Calgary GSA Council on behalf of ab-GPAC.
- On 27 November, I attended an ab-GPAC Board meeting. The main item for discussion was the Housing Survey Proposal that the UAlberta GSA put forward in early Fall. Given that most students are out of the province because of the pandemic, some ab-GPAC members suggested that we run the survey after the pandemic when students are back in the province for the sake of sample representativeness.
- On 28 November, I attended the Alumni Council Retreat. The meeting was in the form of a couple of presentations and breakout rooms to discuss topics on how to improve Alumni Relations and fundraising.
- On 30 November, I attended the Edmonton Students' Alliance (ESA) meeting. The main item of discussion was the UAlberta GSA Housing Survey Proposal. Members of ESA showed interest in the housing data but since there was no quorum, we agreed to put a motion forward at the next meeting, set to take place on 18 January 2021.
- On 30 November, I had a meeting with the International Students' Association (ISA) at the University of Alberta to discuss ways to maintain ISA sustainability and to ensure that GSA advocacy for international students is not duplicated or lumped in with what the ISA is doing. I also made it clear that members of ISA who are graduate students are our members first and they are always welcome to raise any concerns, issues, or challenges they face with us. Our goal is to maintain consistent messaging in line with the GSA Board Strategic Work Plan.
- On 1 December, I had a meeting with the UAlberta Student Collective to discuss how we can cooperate to help minimize the impact of restructuring and the governmental budget cuts on graduate students.
- On 2 December, I had a meeting with Katherine Husing, Associate Vice-President (Ancillary Services), for an update on graduate students currently living in the University Residences. I also enquired about the

Isolation Program for newcomers and requested that Ancillary Services ameliorate the situation through providing better nutrition and ensuring the safety of our members.

- On 2 December, I had a meeting with Public Interest Alberta (PIA) regarding their post-secondary advocacy campaign. We talked about campaign messaging and its non-partisan nature, and that the interests of graduate students have to feature in the campaign messaging.

Feel free to reach out via email (gsa.vpexternal@ualberta.ca) or ask in the GSA Council meeting should you have any questions.

Thank you!

Anas Fassih, Vice-President External 2020-2021

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 16 November 2020 and 14 December 2020 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 18 November | Meeting with D Schweitzer, Minister of Jobs, Economy and Innovation |
| 19 November | Residence Advisory Committee (RAC) |
| 20 November | Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Advocacy and Outreach Committee |
| 23 November | GSA Town Hall on Academic Restructuring |
| 24 November | GSA Brunch and Learn |
| 24 November | Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Executive Committee |
| 24 November | Student Transitions Committee |
| 24 November | UCalgary Graduate Council Meeting |
| 26 November | 2020 Canadian Association for Graduate Studies (CAGS) Virtual Symposia |
| 26 November | Joint Residence Oversight Committee (JROC) |
| 27 November | Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Board Meeting |
| 27 November | GSA Virtual Game Chill-Out |
| 28 November | Alumni Council Retreat |
| 30 November | Edmonton Students' Alliance (ESA) |
| 30 November | International Students' Association (ISA) Council |
| 1 December | Meeting with U of A Student Collective |
| 2 December | Meeting with K Husing, Associate Vice-President (Ancillary Services) |
| 2 December | Public Interest Alberta (PIA) Post-Secondary Campaign Meeting |
| 3 December | Meeting re Isolation Package |
| 3 December | Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Scoping Group Committee |
| 3 December | Meeting with the International Students' Association (ISA) |
| 8 December | Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Executive Committee |
| 10 December | Infrastructure and Operations Planning Committee |
| 11 December | Meeting with C Swindlehurst, Interim Vice-President (University Relations) |

**Vice-President Labour
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 14 December 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Umesh Nimmathi
Date: 11 December 2020

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope that everyone is staying safe. I have attended several meetings and here are some of the highlights of the meetings:

- I met with the GSA Labour Relations Committee (GSA LRC) on 9 December to get some guidance and thoughts from the committee on some of our bargaining priorities in Collective Agreement negotiations, as the GSA Negotiating Team works to finalize negotiations. The negotiations are wrapping up, and we will meet with the University in January for what we believe will be final discussions and conclusions. Also, the GSA is working on a new initiative to create and develop a labour fund to support the union. This fund can be used to support Academically-Employed Graduate Students (AEGSs) for labour related activities (striking, etc.) and also help us to have some leverage in future collective bargaining. We have shared a briefing note on this with GSA LRC members for feedback and the final briefing note will be later shared with all AEGSs and work on the establishment of this fund (including the potential collection of a union due (which must be approved in a vote of AEGSs) will proceed into the new year.
- I attended a GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC) meeting on 30 November where we discussed using operating funds to begin a labour fund, and a motion will be submitted to GSA Council in January 2021. Later, the fund will potentially be grown by collecting a union due from AEGSs (if AEGSs vote in favour of this). The GSA BFC also discussed the 2021-2022 GSA operating budget and will meet again in January.
- I attended a Joint Worksite Health and Safety Committee (JWSHSC) meeting where the committee covered several incidents that occurred on campus (minor fire incidents), and COVID-19 exposures —18 of which could not be followed up on since the individuals did not sign-in to come to campus properly. It was also noted that Risk Management Services (RMS) has been dismantled due to the SET and some of their services have been incorporated into other working bodies, such as the newly formed Human Resources and Health, Safety, and Environment unit (HRHSE). There will be a new e-learning course regarding COVID-19 for students coming to campus in January 2021, which covers new safety measures. We also discussed changes to the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, in which volunteers are no longer considered workers. However, the U of A has a “duty of care” policy and will maintain the same quality of care for volunteers and anyone who comes onto campus, despite the changes to legislation.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you Happy Holidays and a Happy New Year in advance. Finally, if any graduate student comes to you regarding Collective Agreement questions or concerns, or harassment, safety or security issues, please email me at gsa.vplabour@ualberta.ca.

Best wishes,
Umesh Nimmathi, Vice-President Labour 2020-2021

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Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 16 November 2020 and 14 December 2020 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 17 November | Risk Symposium Session |
| 20 November | GSA Labour 101 (20 Nov) |
| 23 November | GSA Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Council Caucus |
| 24 November | GSA Brunch and Learn |
| 24 November | GSA Collective Agreement Negotiations |
| 25 November | Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Council |
| 26 November | Monthly Meeting with A Costopoulos, Dean of Students |
| 26 November | Safety and Security Committee |
| 27 November | Meeting with a Graduate Student |
| 27 November | GSA Virtual Game Chill-Out |
| 30 November | GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC) |
| 1 December | Meeting with the International Students' Association (ISA) |
| 2 December | Joint Workplace Health and Safety Committee (JWHSC) |
| 9 December | GSA Labour Relations Committee (GSA LRC) |
| 11 December | Meeting with C Swindlehurst, Interim Vice-President (University Relations) |

**GSA Labour Relations Committee
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 14 December 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Umesh Nimmathi
Date: 11 December 2020

Dear GSA Council Colleagues,

The GSA Labour Relations Committee (GSA LRC) met on 9 December 2020. Members discussed the current state of collective bargaining and communications to Academically-Employed Graduate Students (AEGSs) regarding the proposed development of a GSA labour fund to support the GSA's work as a union, which will be grown through the collection of a union due (which must be approved by AEGSs via a vote). The GSA LRC will meet again in the new year.

I am happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,
Umesh Nimmathi, Vice-President Labour and Chair of the GSA LRC

Vice-President Student Services
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 14 December 2020 Meeting

To: GSA Council
 From: Sridhar Parasharamatham
 Date: 11 December 2020

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope all of you are staying safe and healthy. Below I provide highlights on some of the important meetings I attended.

Firstly, I attended an Infrastructure and Operations Planning Team meeting every week. There have been discussions around what facility AHS could use for temporary hospital services (Saville Centre or Butterdome) and the team is pressing AHS to make the decision by the third week of December. Cleaning supplies and personal protective equipment (PPE) are in constant stock. There has been a reduction in occupancy on campus since fall reading week, as well as a reduction in the usage of amenities (computer labs, libraries, food outlets, etc.). Currently there are 90 students on the on-campus isolation plan and 100 more students are expected.

Secondly, I participated in the Suicide Prevention Framework Policy Review Committee along with Kevin Friese, Assistant Dean. The Policy under review was that related to Helping Individuals at Risk (HIAR) which helps the campus community in terms of suicide prevention and postvention. We also discussed various aspects of the policy, such as how it fosters notification and support for relevant students, student leaders, and student groups on campus. It was my first policy review participation, and I appreciated the opportunity to learn about this process.

Thirdly, I attended some final meetings of the U-Pass negotiations. The U-Pass agreement in principle for the next four years has been prepared and signed by the student associations (including the GSA) and has been submitted to ETS. Also, there has been some discussion around the development of a limited transition support program for the first year.

Also, I attended several other meetings for areas such as Days of Action (DOA) Committee, Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees (MNIF's), Research Data Management (RDM) and also the GSA Virtual Game Chill Out, many of which are already covered by other members of the executive team. I wish you all happy holidays and Happy New Year. See you all in January.

Feel free to reach me out for any comments/concerns regarding this report or any other specific issue you want to discuss regarding services to students at gsavpsse@ualberta.ca. Regards,
 Sridhar Parasharamatham, Vice-President Student Services 2020-2021

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 16 November 2020 and 14 December 2020 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 19 November | U-Pass Committee Meeting |
| 20 November | Suicide Prevention Framework (SPF) Policy Review |
| 20 November | December 6 Day of Remembrance Planning Meeting |
| 24 November | Helping Individuals At Risk (HIAR) Policy Review |
| 24 November | 2020 Canadian Association for Graduate Studies (CAGS) Virtual Symposia |
| 25 November | Days of Action Committee |
| 25 November | Dean of Students' Advisory Committee (DAC) |
| 26 November | Infrastructure and Operations Fall Planning Team |
| 26 November | Meeting with Studentcare |
| 27 November | Joint Student/University Oversight Committee on Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees (MNIFs) |
| 27 November | GSA Virtual Game Chill-Out |
| 1 December | Campus Food Bank Annual General Meeting |
| 3 December | Research Data Management (RDM) |
| 3 December | Infrastructure and Operations Planning Team |
| 8 December | Public Health Response Team (PHRT) Action Team #4 |
| 10 December | Infrastructure and Operations Planning Committee |
| 10 December | Leadership Network Meeting |
| 11 December | Meeting with C Swindlehurst, Interim Vice-President (University Relations) |

**GSA Chief Returning Officer (CRO)
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 14 December 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Michael Huang
Date: 11 December 2020

Dear GSA Council Colleagues,

I met with the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC) on 27 November 2020. As reported by Jennifer in the GSA ERC report, the committee is discussing an array of matters related to the 2021 General Election and the 2021 Referenda on the Graduate Student Assistance Program (GSAP) and the U-Pass program. The nomination forms for the 2021 General Election and campaign registration forms for the 2021 GSA Referenda were approved by me on the recommendation of the GSA ERC following this meeting (I also worked closely with the GSA office staff on their design, as well as the development of instruction sheets for filling out the forms).

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me: gsacroff@ualberta.ca.

Sincerely,
Michael Huang, GSA Chief Returning Officer

**GSA Nominating Committee
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 14 December 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Kenzie Gordon
Date: 11 December 2020

Dear Council Colleagues,

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

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

Sincerely,

Kenzie Gordon, 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 Council members (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 – with the GSA Board meeting weekly), 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, GSA NoC Chair Kenzie Gordon strongly encourages 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 GSA NoC Chair Kenzie Gordon at mlgordon@ualberta.ca or GSA Elections Coordinator Monica Brzak at gsanomco@ualberta.ca.

GSA Standing Committees

1) GSA Appeals and Complaints Committee (GSA ACB) (One (1) GSA Councillor Position)

Information regarding the position for one (1) GSA Councillor will be circulated by email to GSA Council on 11 and 18 December 2020 and 8 January 2021 with a nomination deadline of 12 January 2021.

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

Information regarding the position for one (1) GSA Councillor will be circulated via email to GSA Council on 11 and 18 December 2020 and 8 January 2021 with a nomination deadline of 13 January 2021.

3) GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC) (One (1) GSA Member Position)

Information regarding the position for one (1) GSA Member will be circulated via the GSA Newsletter on 11 and 18 December 2020 and 8 January 2021 with a nomination deadline of 13 January 2021.

4) GSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (GSA EDIC) (Seven (7) and Up to Nine (9) GSA Member Positions)

Information regarding the positions for seven (7) and Up to Nine (9) GSA Members will be circulated via the GSA Newsletter on 11 and 18 December 2020 and 8 January 2021 with a nomination deadline of 13 January 2021.

5) GSA Governance Committee (GSA GC) (Three (3) GSA Councillor Positions)

Information regarding the position for three (3) GSA Councillors will be circulated via email to GSA Council on 11 and 18 December 2020 and 8 January 2021 with a nomination deadline of 13 January 2021.

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

Information regarding the position for one (1) GSA Councillor will be circulated via email to GSA Council on 11 and 18 December 2020 and 8 January 2021 with a nomination deadline of 13 January 2021.

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

Information regarding the position for one (1) GSA Councillor will be circulated via email to GSA Council on 11 and 18 December 2020 and 8 January 2021 with a nomination deadline of 13 January 2021.

External

8) Student Library Advisory Committee (SLAC) (One (1) GSA Councillor Position)

Information regarding the position for one (1) GSA Councillor will be circulated via email to GSA Council on 11 and 18 December 2020 and 8 January 2021 with a nomination deadline of 13 January 2021.

9) Graduate Student Support Team (GSPT) (One (1) GSA Councillor Position)

Information regarding the position for one (1) GSA Councillor will be circulated via email to GSA Council on 11 and 18 December 2020 and 8 January 2021 with a nomination deadline of 13 January 2021.

**GSA Elections and Referenda Committee
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 14 December 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Jennifer Bertrand
Date: 11 December 2020

Dear GSA Council Colleagues,

The GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC) met on 27 November 2020 to continue planning the 2021 GSA General Election and 2021 GSA Referenda.

At this meeting, members reviewed and recommended to the Chief Returning Officer the 2021 GSA General Election Directly-Elected Officer and Councillor-at-Large Nomination Forms; as well as the 2021 GSA Referenda Campaign Registration forms. The GSA ERC also discussed various issues related to the 2021 GSA General Election Forum and the layout of the ballot.

The GSA ERC will next meet on 8 January 2021 to continue the process of planning the 2021 GSA General Election and associated GSAP and U-Pass referenda.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Bertrand, Chair of the GSA ERC

Executive Director
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 14 December 2020 Meeting

To: GSA Council
From: Courtney Thomas
Date: 11 December 2020

Dear GSA Council Members,

The office, following a meeting of the GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC), is beginning to prepare a range of budget scenarios for 2021-2022. Following further review by the GSA BFC, these will be used to inform the proposed GSA 2021-2022 operating budget that will come before GSA Council in February. Fortunately, and in spite of the various economic setbacks facing the province, we remain in a good financial position. It will, however, be prudent for the GSA to continue to proceed with caution in the current fiscal year as we continue to grapple with the ripple effects associated with COVID-19 prevention measures. Working with the Vice-President Labour and the GSA Labour Relations Committee, we are also exploring the legalities and associated process surrounding utilizing some of the GSA's projected operating surplus to begin a labour fund. Additional information related to this will come before GSA Council in January.

We are also working with the Chief Returning Officer, Deputy Returning Officer, and members of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee to prepare for the 2021 GSA General Election and associated referenda which will happen in the new year. In advance of the general election nomination period opening, the office will be hosting additional Discover Governance sessions in January for those interested in running for elected office.

Finally, the office is accepting applications for the GSA Recognition Awards, training members of the GSA Awards Selection Committee concerning the adjudication of said applications, and preparing online orientation materials for the start of the winter term.

As always, the detailed weekly reports from the management team to the GSA Board are attached for your review and I hope everyone has a restful holiday break.

Best,
Courtney Thomas, Executive Director

Management Report to the GSA Board, 18 November 2020

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 4 November 2020:

Strategic

- Preparing for an upcoming meeting of the GSA Budget and Finance Committee on 30 November to begin the budget planning process.
- Preparing for a meeting of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee on 27 November (drafting nomination forms, etc and meeting with the Chief Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer to review, etc).
- Preparing for a second upcoming Discover Governance event, the next online social event, and the town hall on academic restructuring.
- Developing a liability waiver for registered GSA Graduate Student Groups at the request of Student Group Services.
- Analyzing changes to the *Labour Relations Code* and the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* enacted by Bill 32, and how they will impact the GSA's work as a labour union for academically-employed graduate students – awaiting a legal opinion and checking on the status of said request.
- Work associated with the Collective Agreement, including supporting negotiations processes and researching best practices with respect to strike fund establishment, maintenance, and utilization (an internal GSA process to run alongside that begun by ab-GPAC has been launched), and assessing strategies to build engagement through a steward network (a proposal has been put forward to the GSA Labour Relations Committee for discussion over the coming months).

Operations

- Providing support for the GSA Council meeting.
- Supporting a meeting of the GSA Awards Selection Committee and preparing to open applications for GSA Recognition Awards.
- Preparing materials to run on SUTV and organizing the design and distribution of GSA holiday cards.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Nominating Committee: vacancy on the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (to be advertised directly to GSA Council in December), the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (to be advertised via the newsletter and directly to GSA Council in December), the GSA Governance Committee (to be advertised directly to GSA Council in December), the GSA Board (to be advertised directly to GSA Council in December), and replenishment of the Student Library Advisory Committee.
- Facebook = 1,573 likes (up 2 from 4 November) and 1,681 followers (up 2 from 4 November); Facebook posts reached 33 users last week and our “post engagement” count was 6. Twitter = 1,108 followers (up 10 from 4 November); our tweets earned 581 “impressions” over the past week. Instagram = 545 followers (up 3 from 4 November); Instagram posts reached 9 users last week.
- GSA Academic Travel Grants = new funding period started 1 October (not accepting applications for travel outside the province; online costs accepted); GSA Child Care Grants = new funding period started 1 October; GSA Emergency Bursaries = no funding periods for GSA EBs; GSA Graduate Student Group Grants = new funding period started 1 October. Next funding periods opens 1 January 2021. All funding is being closely monitored so we can direct it to where the most need is and funds not projected to be spent are being transferred to the University to dispense in the form of COVID-related supplementary bursaries for graduate students.

Management Report to the GSA Board, 2 December 2020

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 18 November 2020:

Strategic

- Supporting a meeting of the GSA Budget and Finance Committee on 30 November to begin the budget planning process and working to draft budget scenarios.
- Developing a liability waiver for registered GSA Graduate Student Groups at the request of Student Group Services.
- Analyzing changes to the *Labour Relations Code* and the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* enacted by Bill 32, and how they will impact the GSA's work as a labour union for academically-employed graduate students – awaiting a legal opinion (likely to arrive before the holiday break and to possibly be followed by a lot of intensive work if elements of the GSA's operations need to be restructured).
- Work associated with the Collective Agreement, including the development of a restricted fund to support the GSA's activities as a labour union, including strike actions (the fund is proposed to be started with an initial contribution from the GSA's operating budget, followed by a vote to academic-employed graduate students concerning the payment of a union due (a percentage of the salary component of stipends)) and assessing strategies to build engagement through a steward network (conversations with the GSA Labour Relations Committee are ongoing).

Operations

- Making preparations for the January meeting of GSA Council and preparing meeting reports for the cancelled 14 December meeting.
- Opening of the application period for GSA Recognition Awards and associated training of GSA Awards Selection Committee members.
- Organizing the design and distribution of GSA holiday cards.
- Updating orientation material for the start of the winter term.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Nominating Committee: vacancy on the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (to be advertised directly to GSA Council in December), the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (to be advertised via the newsletter and directly to GSA Council in December), the GSA Governance Committee (to be advertised directly to GSA Council in December), and the GSA Board (to be advertised directly to GSA Council in December).
- Facebook = 1,579 likes (up 6 from 18 November) and 1,694 followers (up 13 from 18 November); Facebook posts reached 260 users last week and our "post engagement" count was 7. Twitter = 1,117 followers (up 9 from 18 November); our tweets earned 1,800 "impressions" over the past week. Instagram = 552 followers (up 7 from 18 November); Instagram posts reached 202 users last week.
- GSA Academic Travel Grants = new funding period started 1 October (not accepting applications for travel outside the province; online costs accepted); GSA Child Care Grants = new funding period started 1 October; GSA Emergency Bursaries = no funding periods for GSA EBs; GSA Graduate Student Group Grants = new funding period started 1 October. Next funding periods opens 1 January 2021. All funding is being closely monitored so we can direct it to where the most need is and funds not projected to be spent are being transferred to the University to dispense in the form of COVID-related supplementary bursaries for graduate students.

Management Report to the GSA Board, 9 December 2020

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 2 December 2020:

Strategic

- Preparing various items for GSA Board and GSA Council set to feature on agendas after the holiday break.
- Developing a liability waiver for registered GSA Graduate Student Groups at the request of Student Group Services.
- Analyzing changes to the *Labour Relations Code* and the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* enacted by Bill 32, and how they will impact the GSA's work as a labour union for academically-employed graduate students – awaiting a legal opinion (likely to arrive before the holiday break and to possibly be followed by a lot of intensive work if elements of the GSA's operations need to be restructured).
- Work associated with the Collective Agreement, including the development of a restricted fund to support the GSA's activities as a labour union, including strike actions (the fund is proposed to be started with an initial contribution from the GSA's operating budget, followed by a vote to academic-employed graduate students concerning the payment of a union due (a percentage of the salary component of stipends)) and assessing strategies to build engagement through a steward network (conversations with the GSA Labour Relations Committee (GSA LRC) are ongoing). Met recently with the GSA's labour lawyer to discuss matters related to the union fund and are planning follow up actions. Also preparing for a meeting of the GSA Labour Relations Committee.

Operations

- Making preparations for the January meeting of GSA Council and preparing meeting reports for the cancelled 14 December meeting.
- Opening of the application period for GSA Recognition Awards and associated training of GSA Awards Selection Committee members.
- Organizing the design and distribution of GSA holiday cards.
- Updating orientation material for the start of the winter term.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Nominating Committee: vacancies on the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (to be advertised directly to GSA Council), the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (to be advertised via the newsletter and directly to GSA Council), the GSA Governance Committee (to be advertised directly to GSA Council), the GSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (to be advertised the newsletter), the GSA Board (to be advertised directly to GSA Council), the Student Library Advisory Committee (to be advertised directly to GSA Council), and the Graduate Program Support Team (to be advertised directly to GSA Council).
- Facebook = 1,583 likes (up 4 from 2 December) and 1,697 followers (up 3 from 2 December); Facebook posts reached 238 users last week and our "post engagement" count was 8. Twitter = 1,118 followers (up 1 from 2 December); our tweets earned 690 "impressions" over the past week. Instagram = 555 followers (up 3 from 2 December); Instagram posts reached 11 users last week.
- GSA Academic Travel Grants = new funding period started 1 October (not accepting applications for travel outside the province; online costs accepted); GSA Child Care Grants = new funding period started 1 October; GSA Emergency Bursaries = no funding periods for GSA EBs; GSA Graduate Student Group Grants = new funding period started 1 October. Next funding periods opens 1 January 2021. All funding is being closely monitored so we can direct it to where the most need is and funds not projected to be spent are being transferred to the University to dispense in the form of COVID-related supplementary bursaries for graduate students (a transfer of an additional \$200,000 is currently under discussion).

