

GSA Council Meeting - List of Reports Circulated
Monday, 9 December 2019
Cancelled

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1. Minutes from the 18 November 2019 GSA Council Meeting <i>Attachments:</i> i. Minutes from the 18 November 2019 GSA Council Meeting	1.0 - 1.4
2. President (Fahed Elian, President) i. President's Report ii. GSA Board iii. GSA Budget and Finance Committee iv. GSA Governance Committee (no meetings this reporting period)	2.0 - 2.3 2.4 2.5
3. Vice-President Academic (Dylan Ashley, Vice-President Academic) i. Vice-President Academic's Report	3.0 - 3.1
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5. Vice-President Labour (Shanawaz Mohammad, Vice-President Labour) i. Vice-President Labour's Report ii. GSA Labour Relations Committee (no meetings this reporting period)	5.0 - 5.1
6. Vice-President Student Services (Chantal Labonté, Vice-President Student Services) i. Vice-President Student Services' Report	6.0 - 6.2
7. Senator (Alesha Reed, 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 (Amritha Prasad, Chief Returning Officer) i. Chief Returning Officer's Report (no written report at this time)	
10. GSA Nominating Committee (Radim Barta, 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, 18 November 2019 at 6:00 pm
2-100 University Hall, Van Vliet Complex

IN ATTENDANCE:

Fahed Elian (President)	Zhiying Wang (Ag, Food & Nutritional Science)	Md Monir Hossain (Electrical & Computer Engineering)	Shayla Mosley; Braden Chow (Oncology)
Dylan Ashley (VP Academic)	Kyla Cangiano (Anthropology)	Yina Liu (Elementary Education)	Matthew Benson (Ophthalmology)
Marc Waddingham (VP External)	Allan Yarahmady (Biochemistry)	Iaroslav Kovalchuk (History & Classics)	Shubham Soni (Paediatrics)
Shanawaz Mohammad (VP Labour)	Jessica Grenke (Biological Science)	Jonathan Lai (Human Ecology)	Nicholas Ruel (Pharmacology)
Chantal Labonté (VP Student Services)	Ashmita De (Biomedical Engineering)	Deanna Starr (Indigenous Graduate Students' Association)	Hamdah Al Nebaihi (Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences)
Pranidhi Baddam (Speaker)	Damandeep Singh (Business MBA)	Abbie Schenk; Elaine Yip (Kinesiology, Sport, & Recreation)	Julian Chow (Philosophy)
Priyanka Maripuri (Deputy Speaker)	Aakanksha Bhargava (Chemical & Materials Engineering)	Nishaka William (Laboratory Medicine & Pathology)	Kim Dice (Physical Therapy)
Amritha Prasad (Chief Returning Officer)	Alvaro Omaña (Chemistry)	Julia Guy (Library & Information Studies)	Pramodh Senarath (Physics)
Alesha Reed (Senator)	Emily Bate (Communication Sciences & Disorders)	Scott Perry (Linguistics)	Elise Sammons (Political Science)
Harleen Kaur Dhaliwal (Councillor-at-Large)	Kalvin Eng (Computing Science)	Neha Sharma (Mathematical & Statistical Sciences)	Lane Liddle, Connor Lambert (Psychology)
Md Minhajul Islam (Councillor-at-Large)	Julie Piche (Dentistry)	David Gordon (Mechanical Engineering)	Misha Miazga-Rodriguez (Public Health)
Claudia Holody (Councillor-at-Large)	Schyler Palm (Digital Humanities)	Nicole Noel (Medical Genetics)	Jared Fath (Renewable Resources)
Osama Mohsen (Councillor-at-Large)	Xavia Publius (Drama)	Kevin Joannou (Medical Microbiology & Immunology)	Yunxuan Chen (Resources Economics & Environmental Sociology)
Armin Norouzi Yengeje (Councillor-at-Large)	Qi Chen (Earth and Atmospheric Sciences)	Amber Peters (Modern Languages & Cultural Studies)	Robert Piazza (Secondary Education)
Kanishk Patel (Councillor-at-Large)	Alexandra San Diego (East Asian Studies)	Charbel Baaklini (Neuroscience)	Prof-Collins Ifeonu (Sociology)
Konstantin Tebenev (Councillor-at-Large)	Jasen Aussant (Economics)	Cybele Angel (Nursing)	
Sasha van der Klein (Councillor-at-Large)	Areej Alshammiry (Ed Policy Studies)	Valene Cheah (Occupational Therapy)	

Guests: Kevin Friese (Assistant Dean of Students, Health and Wellness); Janice Causgrove Dunn (Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Associate Dean (Graduate Student Wellness, Policy & Governance)).

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 18 November 2019 Consolidated Agenda**

Members had before them the 18 November 2019 Consolidated Agenda, which had been previously distributed on 15 November 2019. D Ashley **MOVED**; M Miazga-Rodriguez **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

2. Minutes from the 28 October 2019 GSA Council meeting

Members had before them the 28 October 2019 GSA Council Minutes, which had been previously distributed on 8 November 2019. M Miazga-Rodriguez **MOVED**; L Liddle **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

Changes in GSA Council Membership

3. Changes in GSA Council Membership

i. Introduction of New GSA Council Members

New GSA Council members introduced themselves: M Monir (Electrical & Computer Engineering); P Ifeonu (Sociology); C Angel (Nursing); S Perry (Linguistics); D Gordon (Mechanical Engineering); Z Wang (Agriculture, Food & Nutritional Science).

ii. Farewell to Departing GSA Council Members

This was the last meeting for M Miazga-Rodriguez (Public Health) and S van der Klein (Councillor-at-Large).

GSA Council Member Announcements

4. GSA Council Member Announcements

M Waddingham (Vice-President External) noted that the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) had developed a survey to help ab-GPAC review their communication strategies to ensure that graduate students stay informed about ab-GPAC's work. He encouraged members to fill it out via the link included in the GSA newsletter.

Presentations

5. University of Alberta National College Health Assessment (NCHA) Data

Chantal Labonté (Vice-President Student Services) presented the item and introduced the guests, Kevin Friese (Assistant Dean of Students, Health and Wellness), and Janice Causgrove Dunn (Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Associate Dean (Graduate Student Wellness, Policy & Governance)).

K Friese started by providing some background information on the NCHA survey including that the goal was to collect data on students' health habits, behaviours, and perceptions. K Friese noted that the most recent survey had been completed in February 2019. He reported that, overall, graduate students described their general health as excellent and that a little over 50% reported their mental health as flourishing. J Causgrove Dunn noted that an important number of graduate students reported feeling overwhelmed and tired; it was also noted that these indicators had gone up from previous surveys (2013 and 2016). J Causgrove Dunn highlighted which mental health services were accessed by graduate students (most common responses were counselors, therapists, or psychologists; and university-provided health and counselling services). J Causgrove Dunn reported on events or factors that were difficult for graduate students to handle in the last twelve months (academics being the highest), on stress levels (50% reported that they feel more stress than average), and on factors affecting graduate students' academic performance (with stress being the highest and anxiety a close second). J Causgrove Dunn indicated that the survey enquired about graduate students' desire to learn more about health and wellness related topics and she noted that the data showed a significant interest of these topics from graduate students. J Causgrove Dunn also presented some results that came out of a series of focus groups hosted by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) last winter. She noted that, from these, FGSR learned that graduate students experienced many stressors, the most common ones being poor student-supervisor relationships, finances, workload pressures, and isolation/loneliness. She also noted that there was a feeling that their experience was more complicated than that of undergraduate students. She also discussed FGSR's role in graduate student mental health and their programming specifically addressing that issue, including the development of resources to improve student-supervisor relationships, PhD onboarding events, and Fido Fridays. K Friese spoke to the role of the Dean of Students office in mental health and wellness, including developing policy, prevention efforts, and service provision.

Matters raised in discussion included, but were not limited to, statistics on physical health wellness, Indigenous graduate student participation rates in the survey (it was noted that the percentage of respondents from 2019 survey was not high enough to be representative), various pockets of funding received by the Dean of Students office to provide mental health services to students (K Friese noted that the Office of the Dean of Students was funded through the Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees (MNIFs) and also through a \$1 million grant from the Ministry of Advanced Education to provide additional mental health supports and he added that this grant has been renewed until March 2020 but beyond that funding was uncertain), how the University's health data compared with other institutions in Alberta and in Canada (it was noted that, in

general, the U of A was on par with other institutions in Alberta and Canada), systemic challenges with mental wellness and how to address them (it was noted that the sustainability of mental health resources was an important and ongoing conversation and that more value should be placed on prevention rather than response, including long-term change to the culture of pressure within academia), differences between international graduate students and domestic graduate students (it was noted that initial analysis showed no difference in the 2019 survey), lack of supervisory oversight (J Causgrove Dunn noted that the FGSR was aware that U of A did not have a supervisory college contrary to many other Universities in Canada and that FGSR was looking into this), ways that graduate students were engaged in developing and informing mental health and wellness programming (it was noted that graduate students were included in Community Social Work team and served on many committees related to mental health), and inclusivity of the services offered by the Office of the Dean of Students (it was noted that the services provided were tailored as much as possible and K Friese added that the University had a partnership with 211 AB to provide 24/7 resource for everyone with access to translation services in over 150 languages).

Action Items

6. GSA 2019-2020 Fall Term Budget and Expenditure Report

Fahed Elian (President) presented the item.

MOTION BEFORE GSA COUNCIL: That GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the GSA 2019-2020 Fall Term Budget and Expenditure Report.

F Elian noted that the GSA 2019-2020 Fall Term Budget and Expenditure Report had been previously received for information by the GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC) and the GSA Board. It was also noted that the GSA was on track overall and projecting a positive balance at the end of the fiscal year. Matters raised in discussion included (among others) the decrease in the GSA membership fee revenue (owing to a decrease in the amount of the fee approved last February) and the possible effect of decreases in revenues aside from the GSA membership fee (it was noted these would not be overly detrimental).

MOTION: That GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the GSA 2019-2020 Fall Term Budget and Expenditure Report. F Elian **MOVED**; J Fath **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously

7. Recommended Changes to GSA Policy, Section K: Budget Principles and Procedures

Fahed Elian (President) presented the item.

MOTION BEFORE GSA COUNCIL: That GSA Council, on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Budget and Finance Committee and the GSA Board, **APPROVE** the recommended changes to GSA Policy, Section K: Budget Principles and Procedures, as shown in the attached double column document and effective upon approval by GSA Council.

F Elian noted that the recommended changes were to align GSA Policy with current practice with regards to unspent funds, reallocations, and variances between budget lines. There were no questions.

MOTION: That GSA Council, on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Budget and Finance Committee and the GSA Board, **APPROVE** the recommended changes to GSA Policy, Section K: Budget Principles and Procedures, as shown in the attached double column document and effective upon approval by GSA Council. M Waddingham **MOVED**; S Mohammad **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously. I Kovalchuk abstained.

Elections

8. GSA Council Elections

Damandeep Singh (GSA Nominating Committee Member) presented the item.

Standing Committees

- a. Nominees for GSA Awards Selection Committee (2 vacancies):
Kristen Hawson (Drama)
Uchechukwu Peter Umezurike (English and Film Studies)
- b. Nominees for GSA Nominating Committee (1 vacancy):
Shahed Taghian Dehaghani (Mechanical Engineering)

Reports

9. President

i. President's Report:

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 15 November 2019. The report stood as submitted. In addition, F Elian highlighted a number of topics outlined in his report, including his upcoming presentation at the Board Human Resources and Compensation Committee (BRHCC) on supervisory relationships and his attendance at the Canadian Association for Graduate Studies (CAGS) Conference. In closing, he also noted that he, as well as representatives from the Non-Academic Staff Association (NASA) and Association of Academic Staff University of Alberta (AASUA) attended the Students' Union (SU) "Students Not Silent" protest against the cuts in the provincial funding for post-secondary institutions earlier that day.

ii. GSA Board Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 15 November 2019. The report stood as submitted.

iii. GSA Budget and Finance Committee Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 15 November 2019. The report stood as submitted.

iv. GSA Governance Committee Report

No written report at this time

10. Vice-President Academic

i. Vice-President Academic's Report:

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 15 November 2019. The report stood as submitted. In addition, D Ashley highlighted a number of topics outlined in his report, including his attendance at the Canadian Association for Graduate Studies (CAGS) Conference. He noted that he participated in a panel on mental health and that other institutions faced similar situations as the U of A.

11. Vice-President External

i. Vice-President External's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 15 November 2019. The report stood as submitted. In addition, M Waddingham noted that he attended a graduate residence town hall.

ii. GSA Awards Selection Committee Report

No written report at this time.

iii. Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Report

No written report at this time.

12. Vice-President Labour

i. Vice-President Labour's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 15 November 2019. The report stood as submitted.

ii. GSA Labour Relations Committee Report

No written report at this time.

13. Vice-President Student Services

i. Vice-President Student Services' Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 15 November 2019. The report stood as submitted. In addition, C Labonté noted that the process of identifying a provider for the GSA Health and Dental Plan was ongoing and that GSA Council would be updated when a provider had been selected by the GSA Board.

14. Senator

i. Senator's Report

No written report at this time.

15. Speaker**i. Speaker's Report**

No written report at this time.

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

No written report at this time.

17. GSA Nominating Committee**i. GSA Nominating Committee Report**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 15 November 2019. The report stood as submitted. In addition, D Singh highlighted that there are still a number of vacancies on key GSA Standing Committees, and strongly encouraged members to consider putting their names forward.

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

No written report at this time.

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 15 November 2019. The report stood as submitted.

Question Period**20. Written Questions**

One written question was submitted by Collette Slevinsky, Drama Councillor:

"It has come to the attention of the Drama Graduate Students Society that many of our members have not yet received their funding through various scholarships and GRAs. We have entered discussions with the department around this issue and - in the interests of inter-departmental solidarity - are wondering if graduate students in other departments are experiencing similar delays and lack of clarity around graduate funding."

F Elian noted that the Drama department had shared their concerns with the GSA and that he had followed up on this issue with FGSR. Members raised a number of points including, among others, that students in the department of History and Classics were experiencing similar issues, as well as that the new award portal did not send out email notifications about receiving awards and that some graduate students were missing deadlines due to this. F Elian and D Ashley indicated that they would communicate these concerns to FGSR.

21. Oral Questions

There were no questions.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:43 pm.

GSA President
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 9 December 2019 Meeting

To: GSA Council
 From: Fahed Elian
 Date: 6 December 2019

Dear Council Colleagues,

Let me start my report by respectfully acknowledging that we are on Treaty 6 territory, the traditional lands of First Nations and Métis people.

Before I share highlights on my advocacy work from this last month, I want to wish you all happy holidays. I hope you will take time off and spend quality time with loved ones.

Student-Supervisor Relationships

- In the last month, I have been very engaged on this topic and things are progressing beyond my expectations. As Dylan also noted, I can report that Student-Supervisor relationships were a topic of discussion at last month's Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Council, General Faculties Council (GFC), and Board of Governors Standing Committees.
- As I mentioned in my last report, Dr. Brooke Milne, Vice-Provost and Dean of FGSR is very interested in improving student-supervisor relationships. In particular, she has worked to develop a student-supervisor guidelines form for thesis-based programs as well as a progress report form. These forms went through FGSR Council and GFC for early consultations, and at both these meetings, there was a very productive discussion. I can confidently say that the majority of GFC and FGSR Council members were in favour of seeing these forms implemented. Dr. Brooke Milne will attend the January GSA Council meeting to present these forms and consult with GSA Council members. The goal would be to have these forms approved and implemented by Fall 2020.
- Along with my team, I presented on student-supervisor relationships to the Board Human Resources and Compensation Committee (BHRCC). My presentation included possible outcomes of poor relationships, and solutions to address these relationships. The solutions that we suggested for action were clear policies and procedures (such as the ones that University of Calgary has developed in 2015), better training for supervisors (Supervisory College which would review the role of supervisors, establish clear expectations and professional behavior standards, and outline conflict resolution techniques), and finally accountability mechanisms (for example considering supervisory roles in Faculty Evaluation Committee (FEC)).
- Finally, student-supervisor relationships were a discussion item on the Board Learning, Research, and Student Experience Committee (BLRSEC) agenda. Dr. Steven Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic), Ray Muzyka, Chair of BHRCC, and Dr. Brooke Milne also attended this meeting to further discuss this issue. Dr. Brooke Milne and I presented concerns around student-supervisor relationships and what needed to be done moving forward to ensure these relationships were as collegial, productive, and positive as possible. We also had a discussion about the role of Department Chairs and how they could be empowered to implement certain changes in their departments. I shared that the University could consider offering training on a number of topics including mental health and wellness, active listening, equity, diversity, and inclusion, and indigenous cultural competency.

GSA Budget and Finance Committee

- In this meeting, members had a high level discussion of the features of the GSA budget for 2020-2021. I am excited to share with you that several initiatives to improve graduate students' experience on campus were recommended for incorporation in the upcoming budget. The GSA 2020-2021 budget will be presented to GSA Council for approval at its February meeting. Stay tuned.

University Budget, Graduate Student Tuition Fees and Financial Aid

- In the last month, I have been heavily engaged in several meetings and discussions to advocate for keeping graduate students' tuition fees low and increasing financial aid and support. This matter was discussed at the

Board Finance and Property Committee and at my meetings with President Dave Turpin, Dr. Steven Dew, Gitta Kulczycki, Vice-President (Finance and Administration), and Akanksha Bhatnagar, Students' Union (SU) President.

- In these meetings, I advocated on our members' behalf and made sure that the burden of absorbing the 2019-2020 provincial funding cut to our University would not be unduly imposed on students and that a collegial approach amongst stakeholders could be practiced. In response to the provincial funding cut, a one-time institutional budget cut will be implemented, including the cancellation of infrastructure maintenance projects, incremental tuition fees, application of budget contingency, and investment transfer. Moreover, a one-time cut on faculties budget and central admin will be applied.
- I have to mention that, so far, tuition increases discussed were only applicable to undergraduate students' tuition fees and not graduate students'. I will be discussing this issue further next week during my meeting with Dr. Steven Dew, as well as at the Tuition and Budget Advisory Committee. However, University Administration made it clear that before considering any upcoming tuition fees increases, student financial aid must be in place.
- Finally, President Dave Turpin, Akanksha Bhatnagar, and I co-hosted the President's Holiday Reception to celebrate the life-changing opportunity that University of Alberta education provides to students. This reception's goal was to fundraise for financial aid. The reception featured student speakers (undergraduate, graduate, and international) who received scholarships and/or bursaries from the University. It was a well-attended event from community leaders, prominent gift donors, students, and University Administration.

Charter of Student Rights

- Dylan and I met with Akanksha Bhatnagar to discuss the Charter of Student Rights. At this meeting, we reviewed and discussed a draft of the Charter of Student Rights developed by the SU. The GSA will also prepare a section on Graduate Students' Rights for inclusion in this draft. Last week, the Charter of Student Rights draft went through early consultations to University governance committees and these consultations will continue in the new year. It is anticipated that the Charter of Student Rights will be approved before the end of this academic year. More updates on this matter will follow in my next report to GSA Council.

Indigenous Graduate Students' Association

- I followed up with Andrew Sharman, Vice-President (Facilities and Operations), on the importance of providing a space on campus to the Indigenous Graduate Students' Association (IGSA). Andrew Sharman is committed to act on this matter. I have a meeting with Teddy Carter, IGSA President, Dr. Florence Glanfield, Vice-Provost (Indigenous Programming and Research), and representatives from FGSR to discuss this further. Then, Teddy Carter and I will meet with Andrew Sharman in the new year to communicate the needs of the IGSA for the requested space.

Meeting with Wade King, Director of the Office of Safe Disclosure and Human Rights and Philip Stack, Associate Vice-President, Risk Management Services

- As reported by Shanawaz, he, Chantal, and I met with Wade King and Philip Stack to discuss a health and safety training for supervisors. We discussed what tools needed to be developed and what accountability mechanisms needed to be implemented. To discuss this further and develop an action plan, a meeting between FGSR, Wade King, Philip Stack, and the GSA will be scheduled in the new year.

Meeting with Demetrios Nicolaidis, Minister of Advanced Education

- Marc and I met with Minister Demetrios Nicolaidis to discuss the proposal for the Provincial Nomination Program for Advanced Degree Recipients and the Provincial Student Advisory Council. In this meeting, we encouraged the Minister to listen to students' concerns and voices and to act upon them. We also again shared our concerns regarding the funding cuts to post-secondary education and the importance of moving forward to include students in provincial budget consultation. We also acquired information on the government's vision for the Performance Based Funding model. The Minister had little to share on the latter.

Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Advocacy Week

- As also reported by Marc, Advocacy week is a new initiative that the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) has implemented this year to advocate on behalf of graduate students with Ministers and Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLA). The main goal of this initiative is to ensure that decision-making individuals are aware of graduate students' priorities, such as the Provincial Nomination Program for Advanced Degree Recipients, professional development, and scholarships. As ab-GPAC directors and representatives of the U of A GSA, Marc and I led the development of the proposal for the Provincial Nomination Program for Advanced Degree Recipients. In the last week, ab-GPAC representatives had meetings with Jason Copping, Minister of Labour and Immigration, Lori Sigurdson, MLA, and Janis Irwin, MLA.
- Minister Jason Copping considered the proposal on Provincial Nomination Program for Advanced Degree Recipients and discussed the rationale behind our requested red tape reductions for the Alberta Immigrant Nominee Program (AINP) in order to make it more efficient and inclusive. His team is currently evaluating the AINP and our requested changes will be further discussed and might be considered for implementation. A follow up meeting will be scheduled with Minister Jason Copping in the new year. It is anticipated that the AINP changes will be announced in Fall 2020.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any concerns, ideas, suggestions, or just to grab a coffee and chat.

Warmly,
Fahed, President

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 18 November 2019 and 9 December 2019. The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

19 November	Meeting with A Bhatnagar, Students' Union (SU) President
19 November	GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC)
20 November	Fall Convocation
20 November	Reception for Honorary Degree Recipients
21 November	Pre-meeting with B Milne, Vice-Provost and Dean of Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR)
21 November	Meeting with D Nicolaidis, Minister of Advanced Education
22 November	Meeting with G Kulczycki, Vice-President (Finance and Administration)
25 November	Meeting with B Milne, Vice-Provost and Dean of Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR)
25 November	General Faculties Council (GFC)
26 November	Presentation to the Board Human Resources and Compensation Committee (BHRCC)
26 November	Board Finance and Property Committee (BFPC)
27 November	Board Governance Committee (BGC)
27-28 November	Field Law Post-Secondary Summit
29 November	Board Learning, Research and Student Experience Committee (BLRSEC)
29 November	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Governance Committee
2 December	Board of Governors (BoG)-General Faculties Council (GFC)-Senate Summit Advisory Group
2 December	Meeting with A Sharman, Vice-President (Facilities and Operations)
2 December	Meeting with Post-Doctoral Fellows Association (PDFA)
2 December	Meeting with N Lambrecht, International Student Specialist
2 December	President's Holiday Reception
3 December	Meeting with D Turpin, President
3 December	Meeting with W King, Director of the Office of Safe Disclosure and Human Rights and P Stack, Associate Vice-President, Risk Management Services

3 December	Association Presidents' Meeting
4 December	Government Relations Training for Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC)
4 December	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Board Meeting
5 December	Meeting with J Copping, Minister of Labour and Immigration
5 December	Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Open House
5 December	Meeting with L Sigurdson, Member of the Legislative Assembly (Edmonton-Roverview)
6 December	Meeting with J Irwin, Member of the Legislative Assembly (Edmonton-Highlands-Norwood)
9 December	Advisory Search Committee for the President Meeting
9 December	Meeting with T Carter, Indigenous Graduate Students' Association (IGSA) President
9 December	Meeting with S Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic)

GSA Board
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 9 December 2019 Meeting

To: GSA Council
 From: Courtney Thomas, Executive Director; and Julie Tanguay, Associate Director
 Date: 6 December 2019

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 X (Executive Director's Report to GSA Council) on pages 12.1 – 12.3.

20 November 2019 GSA Board Meeting:

Main Agenda Items:

Presentation to the Board Human Resources and Compensation Committee; and meeting reports.

Motions and Agreements: None at this time.

27 November 2019 GSA Board Meeting:

Main Agenda Items:

Revised GSA Promotional Videos Prepared by Habit; and meeting reports.

Motions and Agreements: None at this time.

4 December 2019 GSA Board Meeting:

Main Agenda Items:

GSA Health and Dental Plan Provider; Health Science Inquiry: Request for an External Grant; Report of the GSA Survey on Supervisory Experiences; and meeting reports.

Motions and Agreements:

That the GSA Board **APPROVE**, on the recommendation of the Vice-President Student Services, Chantal Labonté, the selection of Studentcare to act as the provider of the GSA Health and Dental Plan for a term to be determined upon the negotiation of an agreement with Studentcare. FE

MOVED. CL Seconded. **CARRIED.**

That the GSA Board **APPROVE** an external grant of \$225 for the Senate Initiative Health Science Inquiry, as requested in the attached letter from Calvin Chan (U of A graduate student and Health Science Inquiry Editor-in-Chief). FE **MOVED.** DA Seconded. **CARRIED.**

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

Members discussed the **Board Finance and Property Committee (BFPC) Meeting** and the **Board Governance Committee (BGC) Meeting.**

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

**GSA Budget and Finance Committee
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 9 December 2019 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Fahed Elian
Date: 6 December 2019

Dear Council Colleagues,

On 19 November, the GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC) met to discuss the 2020-2021 GSA operating budget and engaged in a high level discussion of the anticipated features of the budget.

The GSA BFC meeting will meet again in January to review the proposed budget in advance of its presentation for approval at the February meeting of GSA Council. I am happy to report that we are in an excellent financial position and, indeed, moving closer to a truly a balanced budget over the next few years while still increasing the services we are able to provide to graduate students.

I am happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,
Fahed Elian, President and Chair of the GSA BFC

**GSA Vice-President Academic
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 9 December 2019 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Dylan Ashley
Date: 6 December 2019

Hi fellow graduate students,

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:

- An initial meeting checklist and yearly supervisor evaluation form developed by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) have gone to a few different committees I serve on, including the General Faculties Council (GFC). The Law Faculty will be piloting the forms in the spring semester and hopefully the forms will be used across campus by next September. At GFC, Brooke Milne, Vice-Provost and Dean of FGSR, also noted that FGSR is looking into a change to the supervision system whereby supervision privileges can be granted and revoked by FGSR. Fahed and I have many conversations with B Milne since her arrival at the U of A regarding the importance of ensuring better student-supervisor relationship oversight, so I am ecstatic that we are making progress here.
- The University funding cut announced by the provincial government and how the University plans to respond to it has been discussed at several meetings I attended. While the exact details are not out yet, the University has made it quite clear that faculties will see a reduction in their budget and that there will be a tuition increase. It is not yet clear what this increase in tuition looks like, but the University has made it clear that any increase to tuition will be accompanied by increases in needs-based support. I have also heard from FGSR that they do not expect any significant decrease in student supports provided through them. While much is still uncertain, rest assured that we are doing our best to minimize the impact on graduate students.
- Fahed and I met with Akanksha Bhatnagar, the SU President, regarding developing a Charter of Student Rights, a project that the SU has been working on for some time. A draft version of the Charter is currently going through an early consultation cycle and we are collaborating with them to ensure that the document will also highlight rights pertaining to graduate students. We expect that the Charter be approved before May 2020.
- I've had several students with academic concerns reach out to me over emails or schedule a meeting with me. I want to encourage anyone with academic concerns to do the same.
- I had the privilege of working alongside Chantal to interview and debate who should be our next GSA Health and Dental Plan provider and Chantal will provide further details on this.

As always if you have any questions or concerns feel free to email me at gsa.vpacademic@ualberta.ca.

Sincerely,

Dylan Ashley, VP Academic

3.1

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 18 November 2019 and 9 December 2019. The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

19 November	Meeting with A Bhatnagar, Students' Union (SU) President
20 November	Interview for the GSA Health and Dental Plan Provider
20 November	Reception for Honorary Degree Recipients
21 November	GSA General Faculties Council (GFC) Caucus Meeting
22 November	Interview for the GSA Health and Dental Plan Provider
25 November	Meeting with B Milne, Vice-Provost and Dean of Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR)
25 November	Meeting with J Agarwal, Students' Union (SU) Vice-President Academic
25 November	General Faculties Council (GFC) Meeting
26 November	Presentation to the Board Human Resources and Compensation Committee (BHRCC)
27 November	Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Policy Review Committee (FGSR PRC)
28 November	General Faculties Council Student Conduct Policy Committee (GFC SCPC)
28 November	Dean of Students Retreat
28 November	Council on Student Affairs (COSA)
29 November	University Research Policy Committee (URPC)
29 November	GSA Coffee Break
29 November	Phone Meeting with a Graduate Student
5 December	Meeting with a Graduate Student
5 December	Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Open House
9 December	General Faculties Council Executive Committee (GFC Exec) Meeting

**GSA Vice-President External
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 9 December 2019 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Marc Waddingham
Date: 6 December 2019

To GSA Council,

I am wishing you all a happy and safe holiday season, with a brief update on recent activities before we recess for the winter break. Updates of note are:

Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council:

The Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) hosted its first Advocacy Days event, which included government relations training combined with a number of meetings with relevant ministers and members of the official opposition, at which we unveiled our policy priorities for the current year. We are also glad to report that we have added three new policy white papers to our inventory, expanding the number of issues ab-GPAC directors are prepared to address with unified messaging across our member institutions. In specific, the new policies are recommendations to improve permanent residency pathways for international graduate-degree holders, improve professional development opportunities, and restructure the provincial graduate student-aid program.

Alumni Council Retreat

I attended the Alumni Council Retreat, which was a productive day discussing how Alumni Council and Alumni Association can engage with campus to better support students. We all participated in an activity titled a “student’s journey”, a roadmap exercise to better focus discussion and proposed efforts. There was also a student panel, including yours truly, touching on student perspectives around graduation, securing employment, and how Alumni can assist in the transition out of academia.

Board Reputation and Public Affairs Committee

As this was the first Board Reputation and Public Affairs Committee (BRPAC) meeting with the new members of the Board of Governors (BoG), we went over the Advancement and University Relations portfolios and how they relate to the University’s reputation and operations. In brief, the Office of Advancement is concerned with securing philanthropic contributions, while University Relations contends with all matter of external university communications, branding, and media. We also voted upon and passed the Statement on Free Expression of the University of Alberta, which will now be presented for approval to the full BoG.

These are some of the highlights from the last month, but I will gladly field any inquiries related to any of my activities.

With kind regards,

Marc Waddingham, VP External

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 18 November 2019 and 9 December 2019. The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

19 November	Student Homelessness Support Working Group Meeting
19 November	Meeting with M P Barry, Board Reputation and Public Affairs Committee (BRPAC) Chair
19 November	Meeting with C Bell, Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Executive Director
19 November	Alumni Relations Careers Committee Meeting
20 November	Pre-Meet with the Michener Park Residence Association
20 November	Reception for Honorary Degree Recipients
21 November	Meeting with D Nicolaides, Minister of Advanced Education
21 November	Strathcona County Transit Stakeholder Meeting
22 November	Community Engagement Advisory Committee Meeting
22 November	Meeting with C Bell, Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Executive Director and M Lopes, Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Chair
25 November	Michener Park Transition Advisory Committee (MPTAC)
26 November	Presentation to the Board Human Resources and Compensation Committee (BHRCC)
26 November	Meeting with C Bell, Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Executive Director and M Lopes, Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Chair
27 November	General Faculties Council Academic Planning Committee (GFC APC) Meeting
28 November	Meeting with K Huisig, Associate Vice-President (Ancillary Services)
28 November	Dean of Students Retreat
28 November	Residence Advisory Committee (RAC)
29 November	Board Reputation and Public Affairs Committee (BRPAC)
29 November	GSA Coffee Break
29 November	GSA Early Call Coffee Wrap-Up
30 November	Alumni Council Retreat
2 December	President's Holiday Reception
3 December	GSA Awards Selection Committee (GSA ASC)
3 December	Meeting with C Bell, Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Executive Director
4 December	Government Relations Training for Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC)
4 December	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Board Meeting
5 December	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Meeting with D Nicolaides, Minister of Advanced Education
5 December	Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Open House
5 December	Public Interest Alberta (PIA) Holiday Open House
6 December	Meeting with M Schmidt, Member of the Legislative Assembly (Edmonton-Gold Bar)
6 December	Meeting with D Eggen, Member of the Legislative Assembly (Edmonton North West)
9 December	Post-Secondary Education (PSE) Task Force
9 December	Michener Park Transition Advisory Committee (MPTAC)

**GSA Awards Selection Committee
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 9 December 2019 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Marc Waddingham
Date: 6 December 2019

Dear Council Colleagues,

The GSA Awards Selection Committee (GSA ASC) met on 3 December for a training session in preparation of the adjudication of the GSA Recognition Awards. The GSA Recognition Awards honour graduate students who have distinguished themselves in research, teaching, academic achievement, leadership, and service to the University and to the wider community. The GSA also recognizes University faculty and staff members for their outstanding contribution to graduate education, and acknowledges those who support and champion graduate students at the University.

The nominations for the GSA Recognition Awards opened on 2 December 2019 and will close at 4 PM on 15 January 2019. GSA ASC members will be adjudicating the nominations into early February, after which they will meet to determine the final recipients in each category. The recipients will be reported to GSA Council in February.

At the 3 December meeting, members also discussed the possibility of developing some new GSA Recognition Awards. Further information about these will be brought forward to GSA Council at a later date.

Best,
Marc Waddingham, Vice-President External and Chair of the GSA ASC

**GSA Vice-President Labour
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 9 December 2019 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Shanawaz Mohammad
Date: 6 December 2019

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope everyone is doing well and I would like to summarize the list of meetings I have attended in the past few weeks.

Joint Workplace Health and Safety Committee (JWHSC)

As mentioned in my past reports, the JWHSC oversees the workplace violence and hazard assessment. At our last meeting, I presented a proposal for mandatory health and safety training (in order to be in compliance with provincial legislation, the University will need to develop elements of this training for all employment supervisors and the GSA wants to ensure that the training addresses issues specific to graduate students). I received a positive response from the committee members and, moving forward, Philip Stack, Co-Chair of this committee and Associate Vice-President Risk Management, noted that he will work with us on the implementation of this training.

Meeting with Victoria Ruetalo, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Associate Dean

I am currently working with Victoria Ruetalo to look at available resources to develop the mandatory health and safety training mentioned above, and associated accountability mechanisms.

Meeting with Wayne Patterson, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President (Human Resources), and Michelle Strong, Faculty Relations Director

I will meet shortly with Wayne Patterson and Michelle Strong to discuss the proposal for the mandatory health and safety training. I will also aim to discuss other matters encountered by academically-employed graduate students in the course of their employment.

I will continue to work closely with the Provost's Office to resolve issues related to the Graduate Student Assistantship Collective Agreement (CA) brought to me by academically-employed graduate students.

As always, I kindly request that GSA Council members ensure that graduate students who are under the CA are aware of this agreement and communicate that I am happy to provide information sessions on the CA to their department. Moreover, if any graduate student comes to you regarding any CA, harassment, or safety and security issues, please have them email me and I will be very happy to meet with them.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the regarding the CA, please reach me at gsa.vplabour@ualberta.ca.

Best Regards,
Shanawaz Mohammad, VP Labour

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Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 18 November 2019 and 9 December 2019. The meetings were accurate at the time of printing. Please note that I am on academic leave from 27 November 2019 to 11 December 2019.

19 November	Meeting with V Ruetalo, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Associate Dean
19 November	Fall Convocation
19 November	GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC)
20 November	Joint Workplace Health and Safety Committee (JWHSC)
26 November	Presentation to the Board Human Resources and Compensation Committee (BHRCC)
3 December	Meeting with W King, Director of the Office of Safe Disclosure and Human Rights and P Stack, Associate Vice-President, Risk Management Services
9 December	Meeting with W Patterson, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President (Human Resources), and M Strong, Faculty Relations Director

**GSA Vice-President Student Services
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 9 December 2019 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Chantal Labonté
Date: 6 December 2019

Dear Council Colleagues,

I would like to begin by congratulating you all on reaching the end of yet another fall term. If you are completing coursework this term, I wish you all the best as you complete final papers, projects, or exams. I hope you all have a safe, relaxing, and rejuvenating holiday break surrounded by your friends and family. I look forward to connecting with each of you in the new year. I am pleased to provide you with highlight and updates on some of the areas and initiatives I focused on over the past month.

Campus Food Bank

Over the 2018-2019 academic year, graduate students made up 63.69% of the users of the Campus Food Bank, and the demands for the campus food bank services are increasing as more and more students begin to experience food insecurity. During the holiday season, many departments across campus collect donations for the food bank. Please consider supporting these campaigns through a donation or through raising awareness of the importance of the Campus Food Bank for graduate students and the larger campus community. Outside of the holiday season, please consider participating in future fundraising efforts as you are able. At the end of November, I participated in The Fast and the Studious campaign by fasting for 24 hours and collecting donation. Future volunteering and fundraising opportunities will be shared via the GSA newsletter.

Mental Health

Along with the other DEOs, I attended a retreat with the Dean of Students leadership. As part of the retreat, we had a discussion on the sustainability of mental health resources and their funding. At the end of November, the Alberta government announced funding for new mental health initiative for post-secondary students. This announcement did not represent a commitment of new funding from the government to the University of Alberta. As a previously reported, the University of Alberta did receive their mental health grant for 2019-2020. Future provincial funding for mental health resources remains uncertain at this time. The Dean of Students shared that his office is committed to maintain current service levels.

At the leadership retreat, we also discussed graduate students' psychological health and safety. Graduate students' psychological health and safety is maintained when we work and learn within environments that are free of bullying, harassment, discrimination, violence and abuse. In order to proactively create psychologically safe environments, I expressed to the Dean of Students leadership team that collaboration across various University units (e.g., FGSR, Risk Management, Environmental Health and Safety, Human Resources) is required. Moving forward (as reported by Shanawaz), I will be working closely with him on advocacy for the inclusion of graduate student-specific elements in the mandatory health and safety training that the University will be developing for employment supervisors. (with an eye to this training being used by both employment supervisors and academic supervisors) , and Fahed to advocate for robust changes that will improve the working and learning environment for graduate students. These are long-term structural changes that overtime will prevent challenges contributing to poor mental health.

Outside of the leadership retreat, I have attended the Edmonton Regional Post-Secondary Student Mental Health Committee. This committee includes members from post-secondary institutions across Edmonton, Alberta Health Services, community service providers, Edmonton Catholic Schools and Edmonton Public Schools. The work of the committee will focus on three priorities for mental health and wellbeing pathways: 1) supporting transition into post-secondary, 2) supporting transition at graduations for post-secondary students, and 3) supporting transition from campus services to community services. I will be involved in the work to remove barriers and support transition from campus services to community services. One identified barrier is the need to complete an intake and share personal information at each new service contacted. The group will be working to discuss how to better share referral information to streamline the process from a campus service to a community service.

GSA Health and Dental Plan

As I reported previously and as Dylan notes in his report, our agreement with Studentcare to act as the provider of the GSA Health and Dental Plan expires on 31 August 2020 and we underwent a Request for Proposals (RFP) process to ensure the best possible service and value was included in the Plan. Alongside the President, the Vice-President Academic, the Executive Director, and the Associate Director I reviewed the submitted proposals. Then, in the last weeks of November, we interviewed potential providers. Following this process, we agreed that continuing our relationship with Studentcare would ensure that graduate students are provided with the best possible combination of cost and service under the GSA Health and Dental Plan and the GSA Board then approved our recommendation.

E-Scooters on Campus

The E-Scooters on Campus Working Group is planning to launch a survey in January. Please keep an eye on the GSA newsletter and other email communication so that you are able to share your views on how e-scooters should be used on campus.

I welcome any questions or concerns regarding this report. Please do not hesitate to share your suggestions and comment regarding any student service-related issue you or anyone from your department may be experiencing.

Happy holidays,

Chantal Labonté, VP Student Services

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 18 November 2019 and 9 December 2019. The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

19 November	E-Scooters on Campus Meeting
20 November	Fall Convocation
20 November	Meeting with K Friese, Assistant Dean of Students, Health and Wellness
20 November	Interview for the GSA Health and Dental Plan Provider
20 November	Reception for Honorary Degree Recipients
21 November	U-Pass Administrative Committee
21 November	Edmonton Regional Post-Secondary Student Mental Health Committee

22 November	Meeting with Graduate Students in the Drama Department
22 November	Interview for the GSA Health and Dental Plan Provider
22 November	Meeting with G Kulczycki, Vice-President (Finance and Administration)
22 November	Meeting with J Larsen, Students' Union (SU) Vice-President Student Life
23 November	Fast and Studious Campus Food Bank Fundraising Event
25 November	Professional Development: Meeting with Mentor
25 November	Meeting with K Friese, Assistant Dean of Students, Health and Wellness, and L Wales, MyViva
26 November	Meeting with K Friese, Assistant Dean of Students, Health and Wellness, and J Causgrove Dunn, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Associate Dean
26 November	Presentation to the Board Human Resources and Compensation Committee (BHRCC)
27 November	Meeting re Graduate Student Assistance Program (GSAP)
27 November	Days of Action Committee Meeting
27 November	Dean's Advisory Council (DAC)
28 November	Student Caregiver Networking Event
28 November	Dean of Students Retreat
28 November	Campus Food Bank Annual General Meeting
29 November	GSA Coffee Break
29 November	GSA Early Call Coffee Wrap-Up
2 December	Meeting with a Graduate Student
2 December	3-Minute Thesis (3MT) Meeting
2 December	Meeting with V Welz, ASSET Volunteer Coordinator
2 December	PAW Centre Strategic Operating Committee (PAWSOC)
2 December	Festival of the Nine Carols for Advent and Christmas
3 December	Meeting with W King, Director of the Office of Safe Disclosure and Human Rights and P Stack, Associate Vice-President, Risk Management Services
3 December	Students Who Parent Policy Meeting
3 December	E-Scooters on Campus Meeting
5 December	Leadership Network Meeting
5 December	Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Open House
6 December	Student Caregiver Website Meeting
6 December	National day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women Event

**GSA Nominating Committee
Report to GSA Council for the 9 December 2019 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Radim Barta
Date: 6 December 2019

Dear GSA Council Colleagues,

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

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

Sincerely,

Radim Barta, Chair of the GSA NoC

Memorandum to GSA Councillors

As GSA Council members have been informed on several occasions this term, there are a number of vacancies on GSA Standing Committees for GSA Councillors (Departmental Councillors and Councillors-at-Large). These positions play a pivotal role in the GSA's ongoing efforts to keep its processes transparent and itself accountable, since GSA Councillors on these committees help maintain clear and consistent connection between GSA Council and GSA Standing Committees. Long-term vacancies, such as the ones currently existing on the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC), the GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC), and the GSA Governance Committee (GSA GC), adversely impact these efforts.

It is important to note that the time commitment for each of these committees varies greatly. While the GSA ERC meets regularly throughout the year (with a busy period during October and March), the GSA BFC meets only 3-4 times a year. Meanwhile, the GSA GC usually meets electronically on an as needed basis to conduct its work. Furthermore, with no set membership terms, members can serve on these committees as briefly as they must or as long as they wish.

New members are provided with as much training as they require in addition to the ongoing support provided by GSA management and staff to the GSA Standing Committees and their members. These commitments are also a great opportunity to add to your CV/resume.

On behalf of the GSA NoC, GSA NoC Chair Radim Barta strongly encourages GSA Councillors to consider the next round of vacancies, which will be circulated to GSA Council via email on 20 December 2019. Questions can be directed to GSA NoC Chair Radim Barta at radim@ualberta.ca or GSA NoC Coordinator Mahsa Toghrai at gsanomco@ualberta.ca.

Current Vacancies

1) GSA Governance Committee (GSA GC) (Two (2) GSA Councillor Positions)

Information regarding the position for two (2) GSA Councillors will be circulated via email to GSA Council on 20 December 2019 in advance of the 20 January 2019 meeting of GSA Council.

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 20 December 2019 in advance of the 20 January 2019 meeting of GSA Council.

3) GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC) (One (1) GSA Councillor Position)

Information regarding the position for one (1) GSA Councillor will be circulated via email to GSA Council on 20 December 2019 in advance of the 20 January 2019 meeting of GSA Council.

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

Information regarding the positions for two (2) GSA Councillors will be circulated via email to GSA Council on 20 December 2019 in advance of the 20 January 2019 meeting of GSA Council.

5) GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (GSA ACB) (Four (4) GSA Member Positions)

Information regarding the position for four (4) GSA members will be circulated via GSA newsletter on 20 December 2019 in advance of the 20 January 2019 meeting of GSA Council.

**GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC)
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 9 December 2019 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Jennifer Bertrand
Date: 6 December 2019

Dear Council Colleagues,

The GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC) met on 5 December to start planning the 2020 GSA General Election. At this meeting, the GSA ERC reviewed the 2020 GSA General Election timeline and the nomination forms, and recommended both to the Chief Returning Officer.

At their next meeting in January, the GSA ERC will continue its work planning the 2020 GSA General Election, and will discuss “Get Out the Vote” strategies, the All-Candidates Meeting, and the GSA General Election forum.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Bertrand, Vice-Chair of the GSA ERC

**GSA Executive Director
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 9 December 2019 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Courtney Thomas
Date: 6 December 2019

Dear GSA Council Members,

As I reported last month, the GSA Nominating Committee recently concluded up its annual Early Call for Talent and Training with a wrap up coffee break event on 29 November. Anyone who has been unable to attend any of this year's Early Call events but who is interested in getting involved is encouraged to contact gsanomco@ualberta.ca.

As noted in the GSA Budget and Finance Committee report, that committee met in late November to begin high-level discussions about the 2020-2021 GSA operating budget. Members provided some great feedback and analysis with respect to the GSA's budget, as well as guidance on ways to develop it for the coming year. The committee will meet again in January, in advance of a recommended budget coming forward for GSA Council's consideration in February.

As always, the detailed weekly reports from the management team to the GSA Board are attached for your review.

We will be happy to answer any questions.

Best,
Courtney Thomas, Executive Director

Management Report to the GSA Board, 20 November 2019

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 13 November 2019:

Strategic

- Human resources work (over 100 resumes received in association with the vacant staff position).
- Planning the next Board Strategic Work Plan update to GSA Council.
- Preparing for interviews/presentations in relation to the GSA Health and Dental request for proposals process.
- Development of the GSA 2020-2021 operating budget and a discussion of proposed budget elements by the GSA Budget and Finance Committee.
- GSA Council meeting and associated action.
- Brainstorming ideas about new formats for GSA fall orientation as we outgrow space in CCIS.
- Supporting the 2019 Early Call program (updating training materials, hosting various information sessions, etc).
- Work associated with the Collective Agreement, including supporting negotiations processes (discussion of next steps concerning the next round of collective bargaining and education concerning the terms of the new Collective Agreement following the recent ratification vote, etc), assessing the benefits of utilizing a professional negotiator for upcoming collective bargaining processes, and contacting a consultant concerning best practices with respect to strike fund establishment, maintenance, growth, and utilization.

Grants and Office Operations

- Planning for winter orientation and upcoming GSA coffee breaks.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Nominating Committee (vacancies on the GSA Governance Committee (2 GSA Councillors), GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (1 GSA Councillor), GSA Budget and Finance Committee (1 GSA Councillor), GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (2 GSA Councillors), and the GSA Labour Relations Committee (4 academically-employed graduate students).
- Facebook = 1401 likes (up 2 from 13 November) and 1,482 followers (up 3 from 13 November); Facebook posts reached 1,610 users last week and our “post engagement” count was 295. Twitter = 988 followers (up 1 from 13 November); our tweets earned 1,400 “impressions” over the past week.
- GSA Academic Travel Grants = new funding period started 1 October; 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. New granting periods open 1 January 2020.

Management Report to the GSA Board, 27 November 2019

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 20 November 2019:

Strategic

- Human resources work (interviewing candidates for the vacant office staff position).
- Assisting with drafting the GSA presentation to the Board Human Resources and Compensation Committee.
- Planning the next Board Strategic Work Plan update to GSA Council.
- Interviews in relation to the GSA Health and Dental request for proposals process.
- Development of the GSA 2020-2021 operating budget.
- Brainstorming ideas about new formats for GSA fall and winter orientation as we outgrow our current space.
- Reviewing meeting materials associated with various governance bodies.
- Work associated with the Collective Agreement, including supporting negotiations processes (discussion of next steps concerning the next round of collective bargaining and education concerning the terms of the new Collective Agreement following the recent ratification vote, etc), assessing the benefits of utilizing a professional negotiator for upcoming collective bargaining processes, and contacting a consultant concerning best practices with respect to strike fund establishment, maintenance, growth, and utilization.

Grants and Office Operations

- Planning for winter orientation and upcoming GSA coffee breaks.
- Planning to host GSA Recognition Awards 101 and GSA Funding 101 sessions in December.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Nominating Committee (vacancies on the GSA Governance Committee (2 GSA Councillors), the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (1 GSA Councillor), the GSA Budget and Finance Committee (1 GSA Councillor), and the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (2 GSA Councillors).
- Facebook = 1404 likes (up 3 from 20 November) and 1,485 followers (up 3 from 20 November); Facebook posts reached 967 users last week and our “post engagement” count was 225. Twitter = 994 followers (up 6 from 20 November); our tweets earned 3,422 “impressions” over the past week.
- GSA Academic Travel Grants = new funding period started 1 October; 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. New granting periods open 1 January 2020.

Management Report to the GSA Board, 4 December 2019

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 27 November 2019:

Strategic

- Human resources work (interviewing candidates for the vacant office staff position).
- Drafting the next Board Strategic Work Plan update to GSA Council.
- Reviewing various recommended editorial changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy and preparing associated materials for the GSA Governance Committee and drafting recommended changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy on officer portfolios.
- Preparing for a meeting of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee to begin the planning process for the 2020 GSA General Election.
- Drafting GSA reports to various external bodies.
- Reviewing meeting materials associated with various governance bodies.
- Work associated with the Collective Agreement, including supporting negotiations processes (discussion of next steps concerning the next round of collective bargaining and education concerning the terms of the new Collective Agreement following the recent ratification vote, etc), assessing the benefits of utilizing a professional negotiator for upcoming collective bargaining processes, and contacting a consultant concerning best practices with respect to strike fund establishment, maintenance, growth, and utilization.

Grants and Office Operations

- Planning for winter orientation and upcoming GSA coffee breaks (brainstorming ideas about new formats for GSA fall and winter orientation as we outgrow our current space).
- Preparing GSA Council meeting minutes.
- Planning to host GSA Recognition Awards 101 and GSA Funding 101 sessions in December.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Nominating Committee (vacancies on the GSA Governance Committee (2 GSA Councillors), the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (1 GSA Councillor), the GSA Budget and Finance Committee (1 GSA Councillor), and the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (2 GSA Councillors and 4 GSA members).
- Facebook = 1405 likes (up 1 from 27 November) and 1,486 followers (up 1 from 27 November); Facebook posts reached 601 users last week and our “post engagement” count was 119. Twitter = 995 followers (up 1 from 27 November); our tweets earned 1,700 “impressions” over the past week.
- GSA Academic Travel Grants = new funding period started 1 October; 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. New granting periods open 1 January 2020.