

**GSA Council Meeting AGENDA**  
Monday, 15 March 2021 at 6:00 pm  
Held online via Zoom

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

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

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

**Speaker Pranidhi Baddam in the Chair**

**OPEN SESSION**

**Attached  
Numbered Pages**

1. Approval of the 15 March 2021 Agenda (*suggested time: 1 min*)
2. Approval of the Minutes from the 22 February 2021 GSA Council Meeting (*suggested time: 1 min*)  
*Attachment:*
  - i. Minutes from the 22 February 2021 GSA Council Meeting
3. Changes in GSA Council Membership (*suggested time: 1 min*)
  - i. Introduction of New GSA Council Members (*If you are new to GSA Council, please let us know it is your first meeting*)
  - ii. Farewell to Departing GSA Council Members (*If this is your last GSA Council meeting, or if your last GSA Council meeting is approaching, please let us know*)

**2.0 - 2.4**

**GSA Council Member Announcements**

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

**Action Items**

5. GSA Health and Dental Plan Fee for 2021-2022 (*suggested time: 20 min*)  
**Sridhar Parasharamatham (Vice-President Student Services) will present the item and introduce the guest.**

**Guest:** Robyn Paches (Program Manager, Studentcare)

*Attachments:*

- i. Outline of Issue
- ii. Projected Premiums for 2021-2022 as of February 2021

**5.0  
5.1 - 5.4**

6. 2021 GSA General Election Results: To Receive for Information For the Purposes of Transferring Banking Signing Authority (*suggested time: 5 min*)  
**Michael Huang (Chief Returning Officer) will present the item.**

*Attachment:*

- i. Outline of Issue

**6.0**

Prepared by E Heiberg for GSA Council 15 March 2021

/Volumes/GoogleDrive/My Drive/GSA Council/Meetings/2020 - 2021/March 2021/Second Mailing/GSA Council 15 March 2021 Item 1 - Agenda (Second Mailing).docx

## Discussion Items

7. Academic Restructuring Update  
**Marc Waddingham (President) will present the item.**

## Reports (suggested time: 15 min)

8. President (**Marc Waddingham, President**)
- i. President's Report **8.0 - 8.1**
  - ii. GSA Board Report **8.2**
  - iii. GSA Budget and Finance Committee Report **8.3**
  - iv. GSA Governance Committee Report (**no written report at this time**)
9. Vice-President Academic (**Sachiketha Reddy, Vice-President Academic**)
- i. Vice-President Academic's Report **9.0**
10. Vice-President External (**Anas Fassih, Vice-President External**)
- i. Vice-President External's Report **10.0 - 10.1**
  - ii. GSA Awards Selection Committee Report (**no written report at this time**)
11. Vice-President Labour (**Umesh Nimmathi, Vice-President Labour**)
- i. Vice-President Labour's Report **11.0**
  - ii. GSA Labour Relations Committee Report (**no written report at this time**)
12. Vice-President Student Services (**Sridhar Parasharamatham, Vice-President Student Services**)
- i. Vice-President Student Services' Report **12.0**
13. Senator (**Marla Palakkamanil, Senator**)
- i. Senator's Report (**no written report at this time**)
14. Speaker (**Pranidhi Baddam, Speaker**)
- i. Speaker's Report (**no written report at this time**)
15. Chief Returning Officer (**Michael Huang, Chief Returning Officer**)
- i. Chief Returning Officer's Report **15.0**
16. GSA Nominating Committee (**Nadia Daniel, GSA Nominating Committee Member**)
- i. GSA Nominating Committee Report **16.0 - 16.1**
17. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (**Jennifer Bertrand, GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Chair**)
- i. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Report **17.0**
18. GSA Management (**Courtney Thomas, Executive Director**)
- i. Executive Director's Report **18.0 - 18.3**

## Question Period

19. Written Questions (**none received**)
20. Oral Questions

## Adjournment

**GSA Council Meeting Minutes**  
Monday, 22 February 2021 at 6:00 pm  
Held online via Zoom

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Marc Waddingham (President)	Ashmita De (Biomedical Engineering)	Janet Zhou (Laboratory Medicine & Pathology)	Erika Poitras (Pharmacology)
Sachiketha Reddy (VP Academic)	Georgio Cheruvelil (Business MBA)	Tim Nessim (Law)	Hamdah Al Nebaihi (Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences)
Anas Fassih (VP External)	Maggie Cascadden (Business PhD)	Jenn Laskosky; Kim Jones (Library & Information Studies)	Spencer Hayden (Philosophy)
Umesh Nimmathi (VP Labour)	Kazuki Ueda (Cell Biology)	Matt Kelley (Linguistics)	Logan Cooke (Physics)
Sridhar Parasharamatham (VP Student Services)	Omnath Ekambaram (Chemical & Materials Engineering)	Nishant Agrawal (Mathematical & Statistical Sciences)	Robert Reklow (Physiology)
Pranidhi Baddam (Speaker)	Fernando Hernandez Garcia (Computing Science)	Jennifer McDevitt (Media and Technology Studies)	Maura Roberts (Political Science)
Priyanka Maripuri (Deputy Speaker)	Harsimrat Kaur (Dentistry)	Adrienne Watson (Medical Genetics)	Connor Lambert (Psychology)
Michael Huang (Chief Returning Officer)	Collette Slevinsky (Drama)	Quinten Kieser (Medical Microbiology & Immunology)	Naima Riaz (Public Health)
Sophie Shi (Deputy Returning Officer)	Avni Patel (Earth & Atmospheric Sciences)	Danielle Munsterman (Medicine)	Kathryn Lambert (Rehabilitation Science)
Marla Palakkamanil (Senator)	Banazeer Yaqoob (Educational Policy Studies)	Treesa Friesen (MLCS)	Michael Huang (REES)
Neslihan Akpinar (Councillor-at-Large)	Lauren Trafford (Educational Psychology)	Leah Hrycun (Native Studies)	Robert Piazza (Secondary Education)
Paramita Chaudhuri Basu (Councillor-at-Large)	Nida-e-Falak (Electrical & Computer Engineering)	Charbel Baaklini (Neuroscience)	Manzah Yankey (Sociology)
Nadia Daniel (Councillor-at-Large)	Yina Liu (Elementary Education)	Mary Olukotun (Nursing)	Lindy Schaffrick (Surgery)
Tejasai Kommanpalli (Councillor-at-Large)	Samantha Blais (History, Classics, & Religious Studies)	Neha Jaswal (Occupational Therapy)	
Zhiying Wang (AFNS)	Jessica Kennedy (Human Ecology)	Shayla Mosley (Oncology)	
Jessica Grenke (Biological Science)	M Idrees Afzal (Internetworking)	Shubham Soni (Paediatrics)	

Speaker P Baddam in the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm. Speaker acknowledged that the GSA and the University of Alberta reside on Treaty 6 territory and the homeland of the Métis. This territory is a traditional gathering place for diverse Indigenous peoples including the Cree, Blackfoot, Métis, Nakota Sioux, Iroquois, Dene, Ojibway, Saukteaux, Anishinaabe, Inuit, and many others whose histories, languages, and cultures continue to influence our vibrant community. In acknowledging this traditional territory and its significance for the Indigenous peoples who lived and continue to live upon it, we recognize its longer history that reaches beyond colonization and the establishment of European colonies and recognize the GSA's ongoing collective responsibility in working with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) peoples and what that means for the work of the GSA as it aims to practice the principles of being Good Relations with FNMI peoples, Nations, communities, and lands.

**Approval of Agenda****1. Approval of the 22 February 2021 Consolidated Agenda**

Members had before them the 22 February 2021 Consolidated Agenda, which had been previously distributed on 19 February 2021. J Kennedy **MOVED**; R Piazza **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes****2. Minutes from the 18 January 2021 GSA Council Meeting**

Members had before them the 18 January 2021 GSA Council meeting minutes, which had been previously distributed on 11 February 2021. C Slevinsky **MOVED**; S Blais **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

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

i. Introduction of New GSA Council Members: None

ii. Farewell to Departing GSA Council Members: None

**GSA Council Member Announcements**

4. GSA Council Member Announcements: None

**Action Items****5. Operating and Capital Budget (2021-2022) and Restricted and Other Funding Budget (2021-2022) AND Annual Operating and Capital Three-Year Budget/Business Plan (2021-2022) and Restricted and Other Funding Three-Year Budget/Business Plan (2021-2022)**

M Waddingham (President) presented the item and noted that members of the financial team were present to help answer questions. The documents members had before them outlined a budget that took into consideration the impacts of the global pandemic on the GSA's investments and graduate student enrolment numbers. The GSA was forecasting a 0% increase in enrolment numbers, and had also suspended a projected decrease to fees collected from students (projected in the three-year forecast associated with the 2020-2021 budget). Also worthy of note and factored into the budget was a potential fee increase for membership in the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council, increased funding for the Campus Food Bank, and funds for a pilot childcare project with the Students' Union, as well as funds that were expected to be underutilized in light of remote operations. Before opening the floor for questions, M Waddingham expressed his thanks to members of the financial team and to the members of the GSA Budget and Finance Committee.

**MOTION 1:** That GSA Council **APPROVE**, having also been unanimously recommended by the GSA Budget and Finance Committee and the GSA Board, the Annual Operating and Capital Budget (2021-2022) (found on pages 5.5 to 5.13 in the attached material in the "2021-2022 Budget for Approval" column bordered in red on each page) and the Restricted and Other Funding Budget (2021-2024) (found on page 5.25 to 5.26 in the attached material in the "2021-2022 Budget for Approval" column bordered in red). S Hayden **MOVED**; L Hrycun **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

**MOTION 2:** That GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION**, having been reviewed and advised upon by the GSA Budget and Finance Committee and recommended to GSA Council by the GSA Board, the Annual Operating and Capital Three-Year Budget/Business Plan (2021-2024) and the Restricted and Other Funding Three-Year Budget/Business Plan (2021-2024) (pages 5.5 to 5.13 and 5.25 to 5.26 in the attached material). S Hayden **MOVED**; L Hrycun **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

**6. GSA 2020-2021 Winter Term Budget and Expenditure Report**

M Waddingham (President) presented the item. He noted the column outlined in red on page 6.2 highlighted the lost revenue from commercial and investment ventures, as well as collected fees, all resulting from the global pandemic. The budget continued to be in good shape as it was generated conservatively. Overall, the GSA remained in a good situation at this point in the year.

**MOTION:** That the GSA Board **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the GSA 2020-2021 Winter Term Budget and Expenditure Report. J Kennedy **MOVED**; L Trafford **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

### Discussion Items

#### **7. Academic Restructuring Update**

M Waddingham (President) presented the item. He summarized recent events within the University governance structure which were a result of or impacted by the decision of the Board of Governors (BoG) to disregard the recommendation of the General Faculties Council (GFC) at their meeting in December 2020. As a result, GFC went into a committee of the whole to generate a report on steps to take to move forward. These included discussions on welcoming student voices as well as building a closer relationship with BoG, among others. Details could be found on the University Governance website.

M Waddingham also noted that graduate students would likely begin to see a shift in the type of services offered, as staff were moved or positions were eliminated or no longer filled when vacated due to resignations or retirements. He encouraged members to make note of any changes and any adverse effects on the graduate student experience, and to pass these along to the GSA for continued advocacy efforts. He also noted that approximately 1,200 layoffs were expected and this process was currently ongoing.

### Elections

#### **8. GSA Council Elections**

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

### Standing Committees

- a. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC) (1 vacancy for a GSA Member)  
Gangyi Li (Mechanical Engineering)

As the nominee was not present; no oral statement was made.

### Reports

#### **9. President**

##### **i. President's Report:**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 19 February 2021. The report stood as submitted. In addition, M Waddingham highlighted a couple of items. The first concerned AB 2030 and advocacy with the provincial government. M Waddingham and A Fassih attended a Student Leaders orientation meeting, an ongoing check-in meeting with Ministry of Advanced Education. The conversation focused on AB 2030 and the government's thoughts on tuition and various proposed scenarios, addressing tuition deregulation, a variation of tuition deregulation, keeping tuition regulated, were presented. M Waddingham noted that he and A Fassih had meetings upcoming with the Minister of Advanced Education and another Student Leaders meeting after the release of the provincial budget. He also noted that the GSA was close to finalizing the Students' Union/GSA joint childcare access pilot with Kids and Company, a childcare provider in the city. Generally, it was intended to provide access to flexible and affordable childcare options across the City of Edmonton for graduate students and would hopefully be completed by the next GSA Council meeting. He also encouraged members to get involved with conversations regarding tuition and to participate in the upcoming Board of Governors meeting on 12 March. He also added that ongoing meetings with the other graduate student societies from the U15 schools were occurring and the group was planning to write a letter to petition the federal government concerning the new isolation requirements for international students and to allow them to be exempt from that program in favour of taking part in their institutions' current isolation programs.

##### **ii. GSA Board**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 19 February 2021. The report stood as submitted.

##### **iii. GSA Budget and Finance Committee**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 19 February 2021. The report stood as submitted.

##### **iv. GSA Governance Committee**

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 19 February 2021. The report stood as submitted. In addition, S Reddy stated that he had attended General Faculties Council (GFC) meetings, in which the prime topic of discussion was about the remote learning environment, and he also had a discussion with the International Students' Association (ISA) regarding participation grades and mandatory attendance at lectures. The ISA had also prepared an anonymous form for students to provide the course names for those that were not providing recorded lectures. The GSA supported this by circulating the form in the GSA newsletter. He also noted that he was offered a seat on the Remote Learning Taskforce Team to discuss how to accommodate students in the upcoming days as the remote learning environment continued. He noted that the Dean of Students was working closely with this and monitoring the courses that were not providing recorded lectures. He also noted that he and M Waddingham had met with Dr. B Milne, Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) to discuss the FGSR Covid Bursary, in which students received \$1,500 and he noted that funding was available for the first 420 applicants that were eligible. He also noted that he attended a meeting with the Graduate Program Support Team and FGSR Council Caucus, in which they discussed the new isolation requirements outlined by the federal government. Members discussed at length the eligibility criteria for the FGSR Covid Bursary and it was recommended that students check the FGSR website for more information. Members also discussed the eligibility of students for the Canada Revenue Agency's (CRA) working from home tax credits. Members were encouraged to check the CRA website and University of Alberta webpage regarding this topic.

## **11. Vice-President External**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 19 February 2021. The report stood as submitted. In addition, A Fassih stated that he had attended multiple Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Board and Advocacy and Outreach Committee meetings and that these had focused on transition and the development of a more comprehensive onboarding program, as well as expanding the membership of the organization. Concerning meetings with the Ministry of Advanced Education, there were many questions around tuition deregulation and this remained an issue of concern. At the monthly meeting with K Huising (Associate Vice-President, Ancillary Services), they discussed the isolation in residence program and A Fassih suggested shortening the isolation stay period from 14 days to 11 days to lower the overall rate and K Huising subsequently confirmed that this will occur. A Fassih also attended a U15 GSA meeting and discussed some key advocacy initiatives, including immigration issues (how to advocate for teaching hours to be counted for permanent residency applications, etc). A Fassih noted in closing that the applications for GSA Recognition Awards had been adjudicated and that work associated with a University survey of equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives was ongoing and the GSA was a part of said discussions.

### **ii. GSA Awards Selection Committee**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 19 February 2021. The report stood as submitted.

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

No written report at this time.

## **12. Vice-President Labour**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 19 February 2021. The report stood as submitted. In addition, U Nimmathi stated that town halls, in advance of a collective agreement ratification vote, as well as a vote concerning the potential collection of a union due, were forthcoming and those with questions should also contact him.

### **ii. GSA Labour Relations Committee**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 19 February 2021. The report stood as submitted.

## **13. Vice-President Student Services**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 19 February 2021. The report stood as submitted. In addition, S Parasharamatham encouraged all members to vote in the Graduate Student Assistance Program and U-Pass referenda when the ballot was circulated by the Chief Returning Officer.

## **14. Senator**

**i. Senator's Report**

No written report at this time.

**15. Speaker**

**i. Speaker's Report**

No written report at this time.

**16. Chief Returning Officer**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 19 February 2021. The report stood as submitted. In addition, M Huang encouraged members to vote in the GSA General Election and associated referenda and to watch their inboxes for the link to the ballot.

**17. GSA Nominating Committee**

**i. GSA Nominating Committee Report**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 19 February 2021. The report stood as submitted. In addition, N Daniel encouraged members to consider putting their names forward for the outstanding vacancies on the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Governance Committee.

**18. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 19 February 2021. The report stood as submitted.

**19. GSA Management**

**i. Executive Director's Report**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 19 February 2021. The report stood as submitted. In addition, C Thomas encouraged members to review the CRA website to work out how to claim any working from home expenses that Academically-Employed Graduate Students might be eligible for. Information was available at <https://www.ualberta.ca/faculty-and-staff/pay-tax-information/tax-information/t2200.html> and on the CRA's website.

**Question Period**

**20. Written Questions:** None submitted

**21. Oral Questions**

N Daniel (Councillor-at-Large) enquired as to when a prospective union due vote would come and, given the importance of such a vote, how information would be shared (town halls would be held and advertised directly to members of the bargaining unit as this was, pursuant to the *Labour Relations Code*, a bargaining unit decision and not a GSA Council matter). M Huang (Resource Economics and Environmental Sociology) inquired with respect to communications strategies for the ratification vote and the union due vote and E Heiberg referred said queries to the members of the GSA Labour Relations Committee (GSA LRC), who had formed a working group to address communication strategies.

L Trafford (Educational Psychology) asked how the composition of GSA Council would be adjusted to reflect the academic restructuring initiative and the potential ensuing merger of departments (it was noted that there was no intention to lessen representation and some amendments to wording in GSA Bylaw and Policy might need to be considered but the GSA was fully self-governing, so GSA Council, separate from directives from University administration, could determine and codify its own composition, which, ideally, would always be functionally broad).

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 pm.

### Outline of Issue

#### GSA Health and Dental Plan Fee for 2021-2022

##### **Suggested Motion for GSA Council:**

That GSA Council **APPROVE**, on the recommendation of the GSA Board, that the GSA Health and Dental Plan Fee be set at \$500.36/annum, effective 1 September 2021, with collection from graduate students to begin 1 September 2021.

**Note:** Based on projections provided by Studentcare, as attached (and taking into consideration that premiums are locked in for a two-year period as a result of the GSA's ongoing agreement renegotiation with Studentcare), setting the GSA Health and Dental Plan (the "Plan") fee for 2021-2022 at \$500.36/per Plan member would still enable the GSA to direct funds into the GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund (GSA HDPRF), which currently sits at a very healthy level and can be used to mitigate future cost increases/explore coverage increases.

##### **Background:**

While the key driver for cost increases to the Plan is usage, as a result of the GSA's ongoing agreement renegotiation with Studentcare premiums are locked in for a two-year period, meaning there are no projected cost increases for the coming year. Please note, however, that, as coverage has been expanded over the past few years (occupational therapy services added in 2018, dental, vision, and counselling coverage increased in 2020, and travel coverage enhancements also made in 2020), the cost of the Plan may increase in future years as usage increases.

Should GSA Council approve the proposed fee, the fee paid by graduate students for the Plan would be \$500.36/year for 2021-2022 (remaining the same as the 2018-2019, 2019-2020, and 2020-2021 fee). Additional information can be found in the attached document provided by Studentcare. Additionally, Robyn Paches (Program Manager, Studentcare) will be in attendance at the meeting to provide information on the Plan and answer questions.

##### **Jurisdiction:**

###### GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section M.POL.6.1:

*"The amount of the Plan fee includes both Plan premiums and administrative overhead. The Plan fee may include an amount for the replenishment of the Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund."*

###### GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section M.POL.9.1:

*"The GSA Board (GSAB) is mandated to oversee the implementation, administration, and performance of the GSA Health and Dental Plan, reporting regularly to GSA Council regarding the Plan, and to make recommendations to GSA Council concerning the coverage and fees associated with the Plan."*

###### GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section M.POL.10.1:

*"GSA Council, on the recommendation of the GSAB, approves the annual Plan fee. Any increase in the Plan fee exceeding 15% of the previous year's Plan fee must also be put to a referendum."*

###### GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section M.POL.10.2:

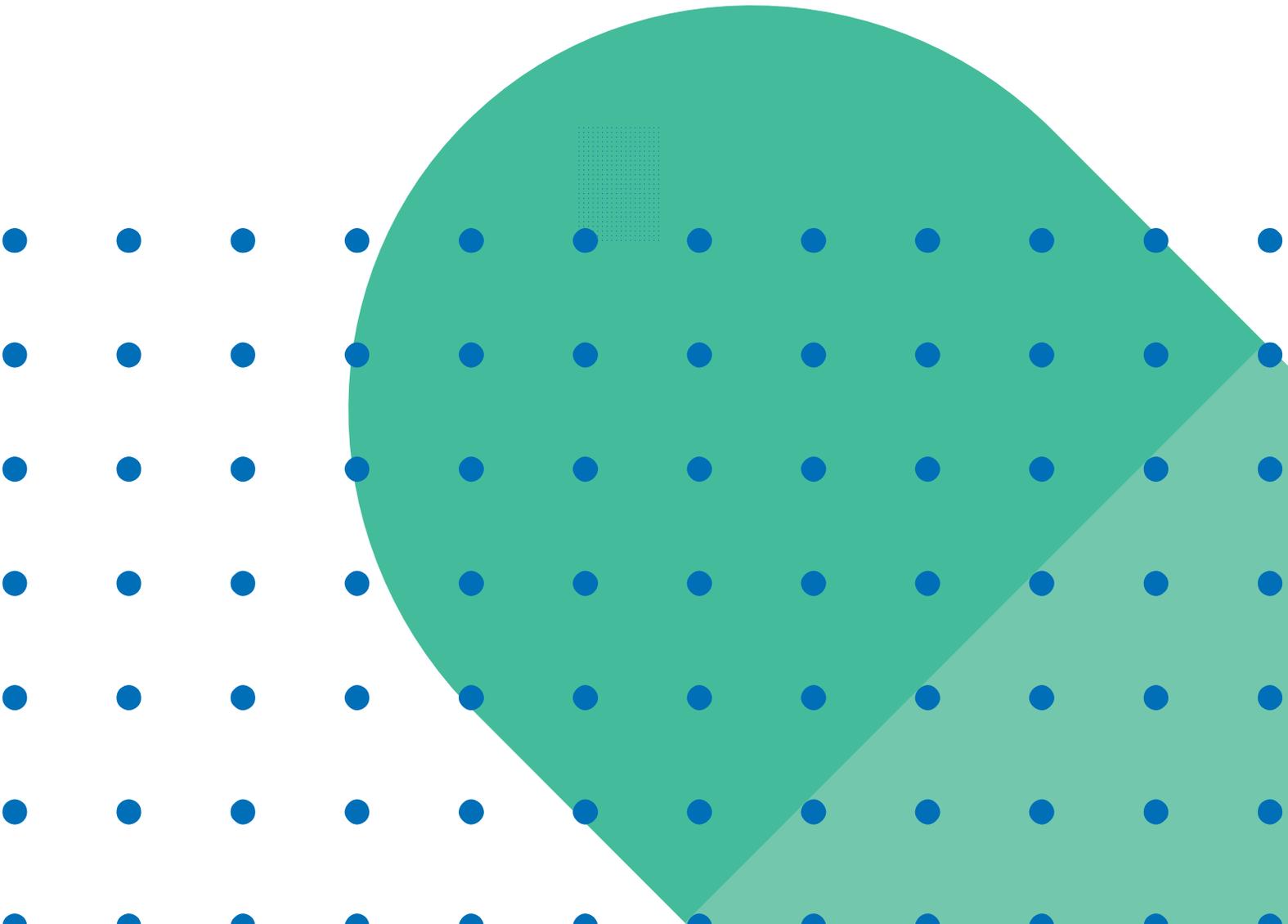
*"GSA Council, on the recommendation of the GSAB, approves modification of Plan coverage."*



# UAGSA HEALTH & DENTAL PLAN

## Preliminary Internal Analysis

February 18, 2021



## Introduction

The insurance policies that underlie the UAGSA Benefit Plan are (normally) one-year contracts that must be renewed with the Plan insurer each policy year. This renewal process generally begins in March and is concluded by mid-April to set the Plan fee, as well as the premiums and benefits for the following school year.

However, this year the UAGSA is entering its second year of a two-year premium guarantee from the insurer, Desjardins, arising from the competitive request for proposals process undergone in Fall 2019. The projected costs in this report are only to give the GSA an idea of the growth of their Plan, should the premium guarantee had not existed. This is to provide additional information to the GSA's Directly Elected Officers and Council when making their decision on the 2021-2022 Health & Dental Fee.

This report provides an overview of the projected Plan cost structure for the upcoming 2021-2022 policy year on a fully-insured basis. This report is **preliminary, using Studentcare's internal projection methodology**, based on an analysis of the Plan's historical claims experience and claims from the **first five months of the current policy year**.

## Determining the Plan Cost

Our projections are based on an analysis of the Plan's claims experience. We project forward the current year's claims, adjust for inflation, and add the insurer expenses, our provider fee, and the Plan's fixed costs. It is important to note that the current year's claims are the largest factor in setting the Plan cost for the following year.

### Renewal Rate Formula



## Inflation Trend

Claims generally tend to increase over time, leading to increases in Plan premiums. Various factors contribute to this inflation trend, including the following:

- Increases in the cost of health services (e.g. increase in dental fees)
- Introduction of new services (e.g. new or previously unavailable medications)
- Changing patterns of use (e.g. increase in dental visits because of increased access and convenience)

While the typical inflation trend for an employee benefit plan is in the double-digits, the demographics and usage patterns of a student health and dental plan enable the use of a much lower inflation trend. Desjardins, the Plan insurer, uses customized inflation trend assumptions derived from its large block of student business.

<i>Type of Health Plan</i>	<i>Typical Inflation Trend</i>
Employee Health & Dental Plan	15-20%
Typical Student Health & Dental Plan	5-8%

## Monthly Claims Experience

### HEALTH

	<u>PREMIUMS*</u>	<u>CLAIMS</u>	<u>LOSS RATIO</u>
SEPTEMBER	\$119,832	\$144,803	121%
OCTOBER	\$119,832	\$79,712	67%
NOVEMBER	\$119,832	\$132,647	111%
DECEMBER	\$119,832	\$112,798	94%
JANUARY	\$128,028	\$113,033	88%
<b>PAID HEALTH CLAIMS TOTAL</b>	<b>\$607,355</b>	<b>\$582,994</b>	<b>96%</b>

### DENTAL

	<u>PREMIUMS*</u>	<u>CLAIMS</u>	<u>LOSS RATIO</u>
SEPTEMBER	\$86,657	\$77,077	89%
OCTOBER	\$86,657	\$95,459	110%
NOVEMBER	\$86,657	\$100,561	116%
DECEMBER	\$86,657	\$71,258	82%
JANUARY	\$92,460	\$72,978	79%
<b>PAID DENTAL CLAIMS TOTAL</b>	<b>\$439,086</b>	<b>\$417,333</b>	<b>95%</b>
<b>PAID CLAIMS GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,046,441</b>	<b>\$1,000,327</b>	<b>96%</b>

\*Insurer premiums are non-reconciled and net of fixed costs, Studentcare fees, and premium tax.

## Projected Plan Cost for 2020-2021

<b>2020-2021 CLAIMS ANALYSIS</b>	<b>Health</b>	<b>Dental</b>	<b>Total</b>
Paid Claims (September 2020 through January 2021)	\$582,994	\$417,333	\$1,000,327
Ratio to Project Claims to Year End	42.39%	46.05%	
2020-2021 Projected Paid Claims (through August)	\$1,375,221	\$906,247	\$2,281,468
IBNR adjustment	\$512	(\$2,492)	
2020-2021 Projected Incurred Claims (through August)	\$1,375,732	\$903,755	\$2,279,488
<b>2021-2022 PLAN COST ANALYSIS</b>	<b>Health</b>	<b>Dental</b>	<b>Total</b>
2020-2021 Projected Incurred Claims (through August)	\$1,375,732	\$903,755	\$2,279,488
Enrolled Units	6,023	5,974	
Projected Claims per Enrolled Unit (2020-2021)	\$228.43	\$151.27	\$379.70
Inflation Trend	7%	7%	
Projected Claims per Enrolled Unit (2021-2022)	\$244.42	\$161.86	\$406.28
Insurer Claims Administration (4% of claims)	\$9.78	\$6.47	\$16.25
Insurer General Admin, Risk Charge & Premium Tax	\$19.87	\$13.16	\$33.03
Plan Administration (Studentcare)	\$11.00	\$11.00	\$22.00
Accidental Death & Dismemberment (Pooled Benefit)	\$1.72	-	\$1.72
Travel (Pooled Benefit)	\$9.72	-	\$9.72
<b>Projected Annual Premium</b>	<b>\$296.50</b>	<b>\$192.49</b>	<b>\$489.00</b>
<b>Plan Premium (RFP 2-year Premium Guarantee) (2019-2020)</b>	<b>\$278.20</b>	<b>\$198.82</b>	<b>\$477.02</b>
Difference between Current & Projected Plan Premium	\$18.30	(\$6.33)	\$11.98
<b>Projected Change in Premium</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>-3%</b>	<b>3%</b>

## Plan Fee Analysis

<b>Plan Premium (RFP 2-year Premium Guarantee) (2019-2020)</b>	<b>\$278.20</b>	<b>\$198.82</b>	<b>\$477.02</b>
<b>Current Plan Fee (2019-2020)</b>	<b>\$285.61</b>	<b>\$214.75</b>	<b>\$500.36</b>
Difference between Plan Premium & Plan Fee	(\$7.41)	(\$15.93)	(\$23.34)

## Next Steps

As your premiums are currently locked-in with a two-year rate guarantee at \$477.02, and according to our internal analysis this is saving you money (with a projected premium of \$489.00), the GSA's Plan is in a healthy financial position this year and the RFP you underwent is paying off. You will contribute \$23.34 per member to your reserve fund this year.

We recommend that you hold the Plan Fee steady this year. You will continue to collect a healthy reserve and your members will appreciate the cost stability during COVID-19.

As we saw the Plan Premiums would have gone up this year due to usage, the GSA should prepare for a small Plan Fee increase after the two-year rate guarantee expires. We do not see a need to increase the Plan Fee this year.

### Outline of Issue

#### **2021 GSA General Election Results: To Receive For Information For Purposes of Transferring Banking Signing Authority**

#### **Suggested Motion for GSA Council:**

That GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the results of the 2021 GSA General Election wherein the following graduate students were duly elected as President, Vice-President Academic, Vice-President External, Vice-President Labour, and Vice-President Student Services:

<b>President</b>	<b>Anas Fassih</b>
<b>Vice-President Academic</b>	<b>Kathy Haddadkar</b>
<b>Vice-President External</b>	<b>Mohd Tahsin Bin Mostafa</b>
<b>Vice-President Labour</b>	<b>Jessica Grenke</b>
<b>Vice-President Student Services</b>	<b>Paresh Kumar</b>

#### **Background:**

The 2021 GSA General Election official results were announced to all graduate students by the Chief Returning Officer on Friday, 26 February 2021.

GSA Council is now asked to receive these results for information as the GSA's bank requires that the names of the newly Directly-Elected Officers appear in the minutes of GSA Council in order to transfer signing authority on 1 May 2021.

#### **Jurisdiction:**

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section D.POL.10.1.e.iii:

*"The CRO reports to GSA Council, in writing, the names of all elected GSA DEOs, following the release of the official results for a GSA General Election or by-election, for the purposes of transferring bank signing authority."*

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section K.POL.3.7.a:

*"Financial documents requiring signature, including but not limited to cheques and investment instructions, require two (2) signatures: either any two (2) Directly-Elected Officers (DEOs), or any one (1) DEO and one (1) Director."*

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section K.POL.3.7.b:

*"The President, at least two (2) Vice-Presidents, and at least two (2) Directors, renewed annually, will each as individuals have authority as signing officers for the GSA."*

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section K.POL.3.7.c:

*"Wherever possible, it is preferable for the signatories to be the President and the ED (or delegate)."*

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section I.POL.13.1:

*"Upon completion of the ballot count, the CRO will announce provisional results. Results will be made official only after the deadline to lodge a complaint with the CRO about an alleged breach of GSA Bylaw or Policy has expired and none have been received or when the GSA's process of dealing with alleged breaches of GSA Bylaw or Policy on elections and any appeals within that process are exhausted."*

**President  
Report to GSA Council for the 15 March 2021 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Marc Waddingham  
Date: 12 March 2021

To my colleagues in Council,

Here is a summary of some of my recent activities and updates:

**2021 GSA Elections**

As you are all no doubt aware, the 2021 elections have concluded and I extend my congratulations to all of the successful candidates, and my heartfelt thanks to those who stood to compete for these positions. Competitive, fair elections are a cornerstone of any strong student association, and I believe this year's process has produced a dynamic, diverse, and strong team of incoming officers who will be led by incoming President Anas Fassih. We will be looking towards transition come April, with eyes on 1 May when the incoming team officially takes the reins.

**UA SU & GSA Child Care Access Pilot**

I am pleased to announce that the contract between ourselves, the Students' Union, and Kids & Co. has now been finalized, and we will begin advertising the service before the end of term. Full details will be provided on the GSA website alongside our other available services, and we encourage GSA Council members to share those details with colleagues who may be interested. Through review of the contract, we noted that elder care was included in the available services, potentially broadening the value of the service to our membership.

**Letter to the Government of Canada re: New Isolation Requirements**

In what may be the first joint-federal advocacy project in years, I had the opportunity to draft a letter with Humaira Inam and Alireza Kamyabi, the President of the University of Saskatchewan Graduate Students' Association and Vice-President External Relations of the University of British Columbia Graduate Student Society, respectively. The letter, signed by nine associations, was a request of the federal Minister of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship, as well as the Minister of Health, to consider utilizing already functional and effective university isolation packages, instead of potentially expensive and inaccessible hotel accommodations. We stressed that the impact extends beyond the personal circumstances of international students, but that this move has potential to negatively impact recruitment and retainment of these students. Future impacts on skilled individuals choosing to remain in Canada were also considered. The letter dropped with a simultaneous media-mailing to newsrooms across the country, and I hope to have an update as to the uptake of the letter's suggestions at our upcoming meeting.

**Academic Restructuring/SET Update**

Given the ramp-up in the budget proceedings, there are no substantial updates regarding restructuring or SET at this time, save for additional resources for non-academic staff. While the University UAT website provides an overview on the proposed service-hub model, as to my knowledge we have not yet seen specifics on how the relevant student services on campus will be consolidated. Again, I stress the importance of GSA Council members reaching out to their local GSAs and colleagues to determine areas of concern such that we can expediently address them.

I am glad to field any comments or questions you may have.

Kind Regards,  
Marc Waddingham, President 2020-2021

## 8.1

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 22 February 2021 and 15 March 2021 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

23 February	Meeting with B Milne, Vice-Provost and Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR)
23 February	Meeting with Minister D Nicolaides, Advanced Education
24 February	Board Governance Committee (BGC)
24 February	General Faculties Council Academic Planning Committee (GFC APC)
25 February	Meeting with B Milne, Vice-Provost and Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR)
25 February	Board Finance and Property Committee (BFPC)
25 February	Conference Call with Alberta Government re Budget
26 February	Monthly Meeting with A Costopoulos, Dean of Students
26 February	Strategy Meeting re Alberta Budget
1 March	GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC)
1 March	Meeting with P Garritty, Chancellor
2 March	Call with D Nicolaides, Minister of Advanced Education
4 March	Meeting with B Flanagan, President
4 March	University Governance Joint Summit Advisory Meeting
5 March	Student Associations Budget Strategy Meeting
8 March	Special General Faculties Council Academic Planning Committee (GFC APC)
9 March	Meeting with B Milne, Vice-Provost and Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR)
9 March	Special Board Finance and Property Committee (BFPC)
11 March	Meeting with S Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
11 March	Board of Governors (BoG) Members Only Dinner
12 March	Board of Governors (BoG) Virtual Meeting
12 March	Meeting with E MacDonald, Vice-President (External Relations)
12 March	GSA Volunteer Appreciation Event

**GSA Board  
Report to GSA Council for the 12 March 2021 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Marc Waddingham, President  
Date: 12 March 2021

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 18 (Executive Director's Report to GSA Council).

**24 February 2021 GSA Board Meeting:**

Main Agenda Items:

GSA Health and Dental Plan Fee for 2021-2022; Kids and Company: Joint Service Agreement with the Students' Union; COVID-19 Update; and Meeting Reports.

Motions and Agreements:

**MOTION:** Members **AGREED** to move into **CLOSED SESSION**. Members discussed the **Board Governance Committee (BCG)**. Members **AGREED** to move out of **CLOSED SESSION**.

**3 March 2021 GSA Board Meeting:**

Main Agenda Items:

GSA Health and Dental Plan Fee for 2021-2022; GSA Council Debrief; COVID-19 Update; and Meeting Reports.

Motions and Agreements:

**MOTION:** That the GSA Board **RECOMMEND TO GSA COUNCIL** that the GSA Health and Dental Plan Fee be set at \$500.36/annum, effective 1 September 2021, with collection from graduate students to begin 1 September 2021. MW **MOVED**. AF Seconded. **CARRIED**.

**MOTION:** Members **AGREED** to move into **CLOSED SESSION**. Members discussed the **GSA Council Debrief**. Members **AGREED** to move out of **CLOSED SESSION**.

**10 March 2021 GSA Board Meeting:**

Main Agenda Items:

TD Insurance Meloche Monnex Annual Report for the Period Ending 31 December 2020; COVID-19 Update; and Meeting Reports.

Motions and Agreements:

**MOTION:** That the GSA Board **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the attached annual participation report, as provided by TD Meloche Monnex Insurance. SP **MOVED**. MW Seconded. **CARRIED**.

**GSA Budget and Finance Committee  
Report to GSA Council for the 15 March 2021 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Marc Waddingham  
Date: 12 March 2021

Dear Council Colleagues,

The GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC) met on 1 March 2021 to review the GSA's most recent quarterly investment statement, and members of our ATB investment management team were on hand to answer questions; our investments are performing well considering the current state of the economy.

The next GSA BFC meeting will be held over the summer to discuss the GSA's annual audit and the next term financial report.

I am happy to answer any questions.

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

**Vice-President Academic  
Report to GSA Council for the 15 March 2021 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Sachiketha Reddy Paspula  
Date: 12 March 2021

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 a Remote Learning Task Force meeting, in which we discussed the recording of lectures. The recommendation of the Task Force is that instructors record and post their lectures on eClass or YouTube. To facilitate students using the closed captioning option, instructors are encouraged to use YouTube, which has options for adding closed captioning after the video is recorded. Alternatively, instructors can post the transcribed lecture on eClass that is made automatically available with Zoom recordings.
- I attended a Graduate Program Support Team meeting, in which we discussed a new post-masters diploma (24 credits) that will be created to offer a recognized credential for a series of advanced clinical nursing courses previously approved for recognition for additional licensure in the category of "Nurse Practitioner" with provincial regulatory nursing colleges.
- GSA President Marc Waddingham and I attended a couple of meetings with Dr. Brooke Milne, Dean of FGSR, in which we discussed the new isolation rules for incoming and returning students.
- I attended a GFC Committee on Learning Environment (GFC CLE) meeting, in which we discussed the development of the Framework for Effective Teaching at the University of Alberta and its potential impact on student evaluation of teaching and learning. We also discussed the gaps that exist in current questions and the practise of the USRIs, including closing the feedback loop and providing students with evidence of how the information is being used and addressing equity issues in USRIs.

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

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

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 23 February 2021 and 15 March 2021 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

23 February	Meeting with B Milne, Vice-Provost and Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR)
23 February	Remote Learning Task Force Working Group
24 February	General Faculties Council Nominating Committee (GFC NC)
25 February	Graduate Program Support Team (GPST)
26 February	University Research Policy Committee (URPC)
26 February	Vice-President (Research and Innovation) Search Committee Meeting
2 March	Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) Executive Director Selection Meeting
3 March	General Faculties Council Committee on the Learning Environment (GFC CLE)
4 March	GSA Virtual Game Night
8 March	Teaching Awards Adjudication Meeting
9 March	Meeting with B Milne, Vice-Provost and Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR)
10 March	Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Policy Review Committee (FGSR PRC)
12 March	GSA Volunteer Appreciation Event

**Vice-President External  
Report to GSA Council for the 15 March 2021 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Anas Fassih  
Date: 12 March 2021

Dear Colleagues,

I trust you are all well. I attended a couple of meetings this month and here are the main updates:

- On 23 February, I had a meeting with the Hon. Nicolaides Demetrios, Minister of Advanced Education, in which we talked about Alberta 2030, the provincial budget, and performance-based funding models. I asked the Minister to increase funding for graduate students, especially with the current budget cuts to post-secondary education in the province. It is to be noted that the University of Alberta received the hardest hit in the budget (11%). The Minister stated that he is available for further conversations should we need to enquire about anything further. As he expressed interest in taking some concerns of graduate students to his cabinet, I mentioned funding. I advocated that this massive budget cut has to be accompanied by an increase in funding.
- On 2 March, I attended the executive committee meeting with the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC). We discussed the response to the provincial budget cut. Ab-GPAC agreed to join two other provincial lobbying groups in drafting a letter to the Ministry of Advanced Education.
- On 3 March, I met with K. Huising, Associate Vice-President (Ancillary Services), to discuss the U of A Isolation Program and General Faculties Council (GFC) Housing Policies. 30 graduate students are expected to use the isolation program from now till late April, which is not as busy as the Fall term. Of course, as a reminder, given the new regulations introduced by the Federal Government for international students to quarantine three days where they land before they come to a university residence, the U of A Isolation program allows the three-day quarantine to be counted toward the 14-day quarantine requirement. Students will be reimbursed by the University for the days they do not utilize in the Isolation Program.
- On 3 March, I had a meeting with Public Interest Alberta about the post-secondary education public campaign that the GSA contributed funds to. The ads on social media have not flown as expected and the campaign website was hacked. We discussed further actions to bring the campaign back up to speed. Another update: the term of Joel French, Executive Director of Public Interest Alberta, will end in mid-March.
- I contributed to the Graduate Student Societies of U15's letter to the federal government. I drafted a part concerning international immigration, calling on the federal government to amend the criteria under the National Occupation Code 4012 which does not count work experience (GTA, GRA, GRAF) acquired under a student visa towards an immigration application. Essentially, in the letter, we call for academic work experience to be counted as work experience in and of itself and to be included in the ranking score so international students can apply for permanent residency before graduating. Other advocacy areas in the letter are a) to increase Tri-council funding, b) funding for a national childcare program, and c) the elimination of interest on federal student loans.
- On 8 March, I met with the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Scoping Group Committee led by the Wendy Rodgers, Deputy Provost. We discussed the University's work on a student census around diversity, equity and inclusion. Also, a presentation was given around creating an age-friendly university. Given the age gap between students at the University and the reality that some older students might feel excluded, age inclusivity should be included in equity, diversity and inclusion. I expressed interest to remain available for any further feedback.
- The new ab-GPAC website is now active: <https://abgpac.ca/>
- On 5 March I attended the GSA Virtual Game Night. It was fun but I noticed only two graduate students attended aside from the GSA Executive. Graduate students should continue to benefit from GSA social and leisure events. They are quite fun and the GSA provides door prizes!

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

Thank you!

Anas Fassih, Vice-President External 2020-2021

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 22 February 2021 and 15 March 2021 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

23 February	Meeting with Minister D Nicolaides, Advanced Education
25 February	International Students' Association (ISA)
26 February	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Advocacy and Outreach Committee
2 March	GSA Brunch and Learn
2 March	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Executive Committee
3 March	Meeting with K Husing, Associate Vice-President (Ancillary Services)
3 March	Meeting with C Singh, International Students' Association (ISA) President
3 March	Public Interest Alberta (PIA) Post-Secondary Campaign Meeting
4 March	GSA Virtual Game Night
8 March	Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Scoping Group Committee
12 March	Meeting with E MacDonald, Vice-President (External Relations)
12 March	GSA Volunteer Appreciation Event
13 March	Alumni Council Retreat

**Vice-President Labour  
Report to GSA Council for the 15 March 2021 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Umesh Nimmathi  
Date: 12 March 2021

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope that everyone is doing fine. I want to congratulate all the incoming Directly-Elected Officers (DEOs) and Councillors-at-Large who were elected in the last month. Last month my focus was mostly on the upcoming ratification vote concerning the collective agreement, as well as the vote concerning the collection of a union due. Below are some of the highlights of the meetings that I have attended:

**University of Alberta Safety and Security Committee (UASSC):** Protective Services reported that due to COVID-19, incidents on campus are significantly low. They will send a student survey focusing on “campus safety” that refers to physical safety and security on campus and they are also analysing the video monitoring systems. In addition, there was a roundtable discussion regarding police officer presence on campus and there will be further discussion and interaction with groups who oppose police presence on campus.

**GSA Townhalls on the Collective Agreement:** We hosted a couple of townhalls on 8 and 11 March to discuss any questions or concerns that Academically-Employed Graduate students (AEGSs) have regarding the new collective agreement and associated ratification vote, and the proposed union due vote. We will send the ratification vote on 23 March 2021 and I would request you all to participate in this vote if you are an AEGS and to encourage your peers to do the same. A lot of hard work went into developing the new agreement, and the Negotiating Team is proud to present this to AEGSs.

I would also request all GSA Council members to share information regarding any GSA events with your friends or colleagues as we are seeing low participation in events – prizes are also available at these events.

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to email me at [gsavplab@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsavplab@ualberta.ca). As always, if you are encountering a labour issue, please reach out to me as well.

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

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 22 February 2021 and 15 March 2021 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

26 February	University of Alberta Safety and Security Committee (UASSC)
1 March	GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC)
4 March	GSA Virtual Game Night
8 March	GSA Townhall on the Collective Agreement and Union Due
11 March	GSA Townhall on the Collective Agreement and Union Due
12 March	GSA Volunteer Appreciation Event

**Vice-President Student Services  
Report to GSA Council for the 15 March 2021 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Sridhar Parasharamatham  
Date: 12 March 2021

Dear Council Colleagues,

Hope you all are doing well. I am happy to share my activities and to give you a brief update of the meetings I attended in the last month.

Firstly, I attended the Infrastructure and Operations Planning Team meeting. The Vaccine Working group has many recommendations for vaccine-related issues and space planning on campus, which should roll out in the next few weeks. Regarding work around the fall term, the Registrar's Office is focusing on getting first-year students back on campus. Also, there will be a requirement for detailed planning of traffic flow in specific buildings for safety. There are opportunities to continue working from home, but this is a complex issue as even after 31 August, which is the estimated return date, there are still many discussions happening and decisions to be made. Dining halls are now providing in dining services. Remedy in CCIS re-opened. Campus and Community Recreation (CCR) has opened facilities to the extent possible under the Stage 2 provincial guidelines. The Cardio Center will not be opened to decrease any conflict points of interpretation of high intensity vs low intensity exercise (as laid out in the provincial guidelines).

Secondly, I attended a Dean's Advisory Committee (DAC) meeting. The meeting started with a discussion on the provincial budget announced at the end of February. The University expected the cuts and is ready to handle them. The Task Force on Remote Learning is busy working on addressing concerns raised by students in terms of remote learning. Also, Kevin Friese, Assistant Dean Health & Wellness, Student Services, explained the new national post-secondary standard released by the Mental Health Commission of Canada in Fall 2020. This standard is meant to be a guide for post-secondary educational institutions to assess their student mental health status and university supports. Also, International Student Services is supporting students with their re-entry into Canada and tax filing.

Lastly, I attended Research Data Management (RDM), Student Equity Survey, and Campus Food Bank meetings.

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](mailto:gsavpsse@ualberta.ca).

Sincerely,  
Sridhar Parasharamatham, Vice-President Student Services, 2020-2021

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 22 February 2021 and 15 March 2021 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

24 February	Student Equity Survey
25 February	Research Data Management (RDM) Meeting
26 February	Monthly Meeting with A Costopoulos, Dean of Students
1 March	Campus Food Bank Board Meeting
3 March	Dean (of Students') Advisory Committee (DAC)
4 March	Infrastructure and Operations Planning Team
4 March	GSA Virtual Game Night
8 March	General Faculties Council Executive Committee (GFC EXEC)
11 March	Infrastructure and Operations Planning Team
11 March	Campus Food Bank Board Meeting
12 March	Meeting with E MacDonald, Vice-President (External Relations)
12 March	GSA Volunteer Appreciation Event
15 March	Student Equity Survey

**GSA Chief Returning Officer  
Report to GSA Council for the 15 March 2021 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Michael Huang  
Date: 12 March 2021

Dear Council Colleagues,

The report below serves as the written report that GSA Policy (Section D: GSA Officers, GSA Policy, Officer Portfolios, Section D.POL.10.1.e.ii) stipulates the Chief Returning Officer (CRO) will provide following the GSA General Election. This report also serves as my procedural report, as required by GSA Policy (Section I: Elections, GSA Policy, Elections, Section I.POL.14.1).

I am pleased to report that the 2021 GSA General Election and 2021 GSA Referenda ran smoothly. No formal complaints were received, which allowed us to release the official results on Friday, 26 February 2021. The GSA ERC has met to debrief and there were no significant amendments proposed to GSA Bylaw and Policy, or proposed changes to procedures associated with the administration of the election.

The total voter turnout for the 2021 GSA General Election was 7.59%, which represents a decrease from voter turnout in both 2018 (8.1%) and 2019 (12.7%). The total voter turnout for the 2021 GSA Referenda was 11.78%.

While these voter turnout numbers are low, it has been reported to me that other student associations in the province say similarly lower numbers this year, likely owing to the pandemic. You can learn more about the results and elected candidates [here](#).

I would like to thank all of the members of the GSA ERC, as well as the Deputy Returning Officer, for their contributions and efforts.

Best,  
Michael Huang, Chief Returning Officer 2020-2021

**GSA Nominating Committee  
Report to GSA Council for the 15 March 2021 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Kenzie Gordon  
Date: 12 March 2021

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 Councillors (including Alternates) are strongly encouraged to consider serving on these committees.**

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

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

On behalf of the GSA NoC, I strongly encourage GSA Councillors (and Alternates) and Councillors-at-Large to consider the next round of vacancies, which will be circulated to GSA Council electronically and which are listed below. Questions can be directed to me at [mlgordon@ualberta.ca](mailto:mlgordon@ualberta.ca) or GSA Elections Coordinator Monica Brzak at [gsanomco@ualberta.ca](mailto: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 was circulated via email to GSA Council on 19 and 26 February and 5 March 2021 with a nomination deadline of 9 March 2021. **No nominations were received; this vacancy will be advertised again.**

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

Information regarding the position for one (1) GSA Councillor was circulated via email to GSA Council on 19 and 26 February and 5 March 2021 with a nomination deadline of 10 March 2021. **No nominations were received; this vacancy will be advertised again.**

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

Information regarding the position for three (3) GSA Councillors was circulated via email to GSA Council on 19 and 26 February and 5 March 2021 with a nomination deadline of 10 March 2021. **No nominations were received; these vacancies will be advertised again.**

External Committees: Vacancies

**4) Faculty of Arts Council (Five (5) Faculty of Arts Graduate Student Positions)**

Information regarding the position for five (5) Faculty of Arts graduate students was circulated via email on 19 and 26 February and 5 March 2021 with a nomination deadline of 10 March 2021. **One nomination was received; Amanda Daignault was elected. The remaining vacancies will be advertised again.**

**5) Faculty of Arts Academic and Grade Appeals Committee (One (1) Faculty of Arts Graduate Student Position)**

Information regarding the position for one (1) Faculty of Arts graduate student was circulated via email on 19 and 26 February and 5 March 2021 with a nomination deadline of 10 March 2021. **No nominations were received; this vacancy will be advertised again.**

**6) Faculty of Arts Academic Affairs Committee (Three (3) Faculty of Arts Graduate Student Positions)**

Information regarding the position for three (3) Faculty of Arts graduate students was circulated via email 19 and 26 February and 5 March 2021 with a nomination deadline of 10 March 2021. **One nomination was received; Rissa Reist was elected. The remaining vacancies will be advertised again.**

**7) Faculty of Arts Research Committee (One (1) Faculty of Arts Graduate Student Position)**

Information regarding the position for one (1) Faculty of Arts graduate student was circulated via email 19 and 26 February and 5 March 2021 with a nomination deadline of 10 March 2021. **No nominations were received; this vacancy will be advertised again.**

**8) Faculty of Arts Committee on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (One (1) Faculty of Arts Graduate Student Position)**

Information regarding the position for one (1) Faculty of Arts graduate student was circulated via email 5 March 2021 with a nomination deadline of 10 March 2021. **No nominations were received; this vacancy will be advertised again.**

**GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC)  
Report to GSA Council for the 15 March 2021 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Jennifer Bertrand  
Date: 12 March 2021

Dear GSA Council Members,

Since the last GSA Council meeting, the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC) has been supporting the Chief Returning Officer (GSA CRO) and the Deputy Returning Officer in all matters pertaining to the 2021 GSA General Election and 2021 GSA Referenda (as per GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section I: Elections, GSA Policy: GSA Standing Committees, GSA Elections and Referenda Committee, Section I.POL.18.1, “the GSA ERC will advise the CRO on all matters pertaining to GSA General Elections, by-elections and referenda”). You can find more information about the 2021 GSA General Election and 2021 GSA Referenda in the GSA CRO’s report.

The GSA ERC met to debrief the 2021 GSA General Election and 2021 GSA Referenda on 12 March. As the CRO notes in his report, there are no proposed amendments to GSA Bylaw and Policy on elections and referenda. As the CRO notes, we saw a decrease in voter turnout this year, despite the best efforts of the GSA ERC to spread awareness about the election and encourage voting. The committee will continue to discuss possible future strategies to increase voter turnout.

Sincerely,  
Jennifer Bertrand, Chair of the GSA ERC

**GSA Executive Director  
Report to GSA Council for the 15 March 2021 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Courtney Thomas  
Date: 12 March 2021

Dear GSA Council Members,

The office staff's main focus since the last meeting of GSA Council has been providing support for the Chief Returning Officer, Deputy Returning Officer, and the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee with respect to the administration of the 2021 GSA General Election and associated referenda. We have also begun planning for the beginning of the terms of the new team of Directly-Elected Officers (DEOs) that will happen at the start of May. In order to facilitate this transition, the office prepares a transition manual for incoming DEOs, hosts a series of information sessions concerning various aspects of the GSA and its services and governance, arranges for job shadowing among DEOs, and a session with current and incoming DEOs to facilitate information sharing and strategic planning. This year's transition program will begin on later this month and continue into April.

As always, we continue to provide support for the DEOs as they engage with University administration and government (especially important in the climate of large budget cuts to the institution) and pursue initiatives in their respective portfolios. We are also engaged with some event planning (particularly the Volunteer Appreciation event) and hosting GSA Health and Dental Plan 101 sessions in advance of the proposed Plan fee for 2021-2022 coming before you.

Finally, Associate Director Erika Heiberg has been busy supporting the GSA Labour Relations Committee and the Vice-President Labour as they host town halls and distribute briefing notes to members of the bargaining unit in advance of a vote concerning the ratification of the newly negotiated collective agreement and a vote concerning the potential collection of a union due come forward to academically-employed graduate students.

I am happy to answer any questions and, as always, the weekly reports from myself to the GSA Board are attached (pages 18.1-18.3).

Best,

Courtney Thomas, Executive Director

### Management Report to the GSA Board, 24 February 2021

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 17 February 2021:

#### Strategic

- Support for the Chief Returning Officer (CRO) (planning the 2021 GSA General Election Forum, advising on questions from candidates, etc) and weekly meetings with the CRO and Deputy Returning Officer. Voting in the election and associated referenda began on Tuesday and these processes will command attention for the remainder of the week.
- Action associated with Monday's GSA Council meeting.
- Forward planning for transition.
- Reviewing a previously solicited legal opinion on the implications of Bill 32 for the GSA's structure, budget, etc.
- Work associated with the Collective Agreement (preparing for a ratification vote) and the development of a vote to academically-employed graduate students concerning the collection of a union due (and associated work to spread awareness and answer questions through town halls and briefing notes), and assessing strategies to build engagement through a steward network (conversations with the GSA Labour Relations Committee are ongoing).

#### Operations

- Staffing the virtual front desk.
- Issuing T4As for GSA Emergency Bursary recipients.
- Forward planning for upcoming engagement events.
- Working on a year-end report to the University concerning usage of the Graduate Student Support Fund.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Nominating Committee: vacancies on the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (advertised directly to GSA Council), the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (to be advertised directly to GSA Council), the GSA Governance Committee (advertised directly to GSA Council), and various Faculty of Arts standing committees (advertised directly to Faculty of Arts graduate students).
- Facebook = 1,632 likes (up 5 from 17 February) and 1,776 followers (up 5 from 17 February); Facebook posts reached 269 users last week and our "post engagement" count was 25. Twitter = 1,140 followers (up 1 from 17 February); our tweets earned 563 "impressions" over the past week. Instagram = 586 followers (up 1 from 17 February); Instagram posts reached 381 users last week.
- GSA Academic Travel Grants = new funding period starts 1 April (not accepting applications for travel outside the province; online costs accepted); GSA Child Care Grants = new funding period starts 1 April; GSA Emergency Bursaries = no funding periods for GSA EBs; GSA Graduate Student Group Grants = new funding period starts 1 April. All funding continues to be closely monitored so we can direct it to where the most need is 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, 3 March 2021

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 24 February 2021:

#### Strategic

- Wrap up associated with the 2021 GSA General Election and associated referenda (release of results, organization of records, preparing for a debrief meeting of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee meeting).
- Preparing for the first mailing of GSA Council meeting material.
- Forward planning for transition.
- Following up concerning a long ago solicited legal opinion on the implications of Bill 32 for the GSA's structure, budget, etc.
- Submitting the U-Pass agreement for legal review in advance of signing.
- Work associated with the Collective Agreement (preparing for a ratification vote with town halls and briefing notes), the development of a vote to academically-employed graduate students concerning the collection of a union due (and associated work to spread awareness and answer questions through town halls and briefing notes), and assessing strategies to build engagement through a steward network (conversations with the GSA Labour Relations Committee are ongoing and members have formed a working group to produce communication materials related to the ratification and union due votes).

#### Operations

- Staffing the virtual front desk.
- Support for a meeting of the GSA Budget and Finance Committee.
- GSA Brunch and Learn with the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research on 2 March.
- Forward planning for upcoming engagement events (volunteer appreciation event on 12 March).
- Working on a year-end report to the University concerning usage of the Graduate Student Support Fund (GSSF) and the 2021-2022 budget for the GSSF.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Nominating Committee: vacancies on the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (advertised directly to GSA Council), the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (advertised directly to GSA Council), the GSA Governance Committee (advertised directly to GSA Council), and replenishment of the Arts Committee (advertised via email to Arts students).
- Facebook = 1,637 likes (up 5 from 24 February) and 1,782 followers (up 6 from 24 February); Facebook posts reached 273 users last week and our "post engagement" count was 16. Twitter = 1,146 followers (up 6 from 24 February); our tweets earned 963 "impressions" over the past week. Instagram = 592 followers (up 8 from 24 February); Instagram posts reached 9 users last week.
- GSA Academic Travel Grants = new funding period starts 1 April (not accepting applications for travel outside the province; online costs accepted); GSA Child Care Grants = new funding period starts 1 April; GSA Emergency Bursaries = no funding periods for GSA EBs; GSA Graduate Student Group Grants = new funding period starts 1 April. All funding continues to be closely monitored so we can direct it to where the most need is 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, 10 March 2021

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 3 March 2021:

#### Strategic

- Preparing for a meeting of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee to debrief the 2021 GSA General Election and Associated Referenda.
- Planning for the inaugural meeting of the GSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee.
- Preparing for the second mailing of GSA Council meeting material.
- Planning the final GSA Board Strategic Work Plan update to GSA Council.
- Planning for transition.
- Following up concerning a long ago solicited legal opinion on the implications of Bill 32 for the GSA's structure, budget, etc.
- Work associated with the Collective Agreement (preparing for a ratification vote with town halls and briefing notes), the development of a vote to academically-employed graduate students concerning the collection of a union due (and associated work to spread awareness and answer questions through town halls and briefing notes), and assessing strategies to build engagement through a steward network (conversations with the GSA Labour Relations Committee are ongoing and members have formed a working group to produce communication materials related to the ratification and union due votes).

#### Operations

- Preparing for the fiscal year end with respect to budgets for the Graduate Student Support Fund (GSSF) and finalizing a year-end report to the University concerning usage of the GSSF.
- Planning for upcoming engagement events (volunteer appreciation event on 12 March and future Brunch and Learns are planned).
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Nominating Committee: vacancies on the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (advertised directly to GSA Council), the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (advertised directly to GSA Council), the GSA Governance Committee (advertised directly to GSA Council), the GSA Nominating Committee (advertised via the GSA newsletter), and replenishment of the Arts Committee (advertised via email to Arts students).
- Facebook = 1,637 likes (up 5 from 24 February) and 1,782 followers (up 6 from 24 February); Facebook posts reached 273 users last week and our "post engagement" count was 16. Twitter = 1,146 followers (up 6 from 24 February); our tweets earned 963 "impressions" over the past week. Instagram = 592 followers (up 8 from 24 February); Instagram posts reached 9 users last week.
- GSA Academic Travel Grants = new funding period starts 1 April (not accepting applications for travel outside the province; online costs accepted); GSA Child Care Grants = new funding period starts 1 April; GSA Emergency Bursaries = no funding periods for GSA EBs; GSA Graduate Student Group Grants = new funding period starts 1 April. All funding continues to be closely monitored so we can direct it to where the most need is 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.