

**GSA Council Meeting CONSOLIDATED AGENDA**

Monday, July 17, 2017 at 6:00 pm  
2-100 University Hall, Van Vliet Complex

**The GSA acknowledges that the University of Alberta is situated on Treaty Six territory and Métis homelands.**

**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 (in accordance with the Standing Orders of Council). 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.

**Former Speaker Roy Coulthard in the Chair**

A pizza dinner will be served at 5:15 pm.

**OPEN SESSION**

**Attached Numbered Pages**

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of the 17 July 2017 Agenda
3. Approval of the Minutes from the 19 June 2017 GSA Council Meeting  
*Attachment:*
  - i. Minutes from the 19 June 2017 GSA Council Meeting **3.0 - 3.5**
4. Changes in GSA Council Membership
  - i. Introduction of New Councillors (*If you are new to GSA Council, please let us know it is your first meeting*)
  - ii. Farewell to Departing Councillors (*If this is your last GSA Council meeting, or if your last Council meeting is approaching, please let us know*)

**Councillor Announcements**

5. Councillor Announcements

**Action Items:**

6. 2016-2017 GSA Audited Financial Statements  
**Babak Soltannia (GSA President) will introduce the guest.**

**Guest:** Tom Gee, GSA Auditor, MBA, FCPA, FCA, Collins Barrow LLP

**GSA BFC Members Who Are Members of GSA Council:** Babak Soltannia (GSA President and GSA BFC Chair); Sasha van der Klein (GSA Vice-President Labour and GSA BFC Vice-Chair); Dasha Smirnow (Councillor-at-Large)

**GSA BFC Members Invited to GSA Council as Guests:** Karen Turpin and Sina Yansori

*Attachments:*

- Outline of Issue **6.0**
- 2016-2017 GSA Audited Financial Statements **6.1 - 6.17**

Prepared by L Hareuther and J Tanguay for GSA Council 17 July 2017

7. GSA 2017-2018 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report  
**Babak Soltannia (GSA President) will present the item.**

**GSA BFC members Who Are Members of GSA Council:** Babak Soltannia (GSA President and GSA BFC Chair); Sasha van der Klein (GSA Vice-President Labour and GSA BFC Vice-Chair); Dasha Smirnow (Councillor-at-Large)

**GSA BFC Members Invited to GSA Council as Guests:** Karen Turpin and Sina Yansori

*Attachments:*

- Cover Letter from the President to GSA Council 7.0
- Outline of Issue 7.1
- GSA 2017-2018 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report 7.2 - 7.3
- GSA 2017-2018 Quarterly Operating Budget Narrative 7.4 - 7.16
- GSA 2017-2018 Quarterly Restricted and Other Funding Narrative 7.17 - 7.19

8. GSA Board 2017-2018 Strategic Work Plan  
**Babak Soltannia (GSA President) will present the item.**

*Attachments:*

- Cover Letter from the President to GSA Council 8.0 - 8.1
- Outline of Issue 8.2
- GSA Board 2017-2018 Strategic Work Plan 8.3 - 8.15

**Elections, Appointments, Special Business, Updates**

9. GSA Council Elections  
**Radim Barta (GSA Nominating Committee Chair) will present the item**

GSA Standing Committees

a. GSA Budget and Finance Committee (1 vacancy)

*Attachment:*

- i. Nominees for the GSA Budget and Finance Committee (1 vacancy) 9.0 - 9.1

b. GSA Governance Committee (1 vacancy)

*Attachment:*

- i. Nominees for the GSA Governance Committee (1 vacancy) 9.2 - 9.3

c. GSA Labour Relations Committee (1 - 5 vacancies)

*Attachment:*

- i. Nominees for the GSA Labour Relations Committee (1 – 5 vacancies) 9.4 - 9.6

**For Discussion:** None at this time

**Reports**

10. President (**Babak Soltannia, GSA President**)
- i. President’s Report 10.0 - 10.1
  - ii. GSA Board 10.2
  - iii. GSA Budget and Finance Committee (**no meetings this reporting period**)
  - iv. GSA Governance Committee (**no meetings this reporting period**)
11. Vice-President Academic (**Firouz Khodayari, GSA Vice-President Academic**)
- i. Vice-President Academic’s Report 11.0

Prepared by L Hareuther and J Tanguay for GSA Council 17 July 2017

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| <b>12. Vice-President External (Masoud Khademi, GSA Vice-President External)</b>                              |                    |
| i. Vice-President External's Report   | <b>12.0</b>        |
| ii. GSA Awards Selection Committee (no meetings this reporting period)  |                    |
| <b>13. Vice-President Labour (Sasha van der Klein, GSA Vice-President Labour)</b>                             |                    |
| i. Vice-President Labour's Report   | <b>13.0 - 13.3</b> |
| ii. Letter from the GSA Vice-President Labour to GSA Council Regarding Bill 7                                 | <b>13.4 - 13.6</b> |
| iii. GSA Negotiating Committee (no meetings this reporting period)  |                    |
| iv. GSA Labour Relations Committee  | <b>13.7</b>        |
| <b>14. Vice-President Student Services (Royle Feng, GSA Vice-President Student Services)</b>                  |                    |
| i. Vice-President Student Services' Report  | <b>14.0</b>        |
| <b>15. Senator (Trent Nabe, GSA Senator)</b>  |                    |
| i. Senator's Report (no written report at this time)  |                    |
| <b>16. Speaker (Joshua Connauton, GSA Speaker)</b>  |                    |
| i. Speaker's Report (no written report at this time)  |                    |
| <b>17. Chief Returning Officer (Darcy Bemister, GSA Chief Returning Officer)</b>                              |                    |
| i. Chief Returning Officer's Report (no written report at this time)  |                    |
| <b>18. GSA Nominating Committee (Radim Barta, GSA Nominating Committee Chair)</b>                             |                    |
| i. GSA Nominating Committee Report  | <b>18.0 - 18.1</b> |
| <b>19. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (Leigh Spanner, GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Chair)</b> |                    |
| i. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Report (no meetings this reporting period)                           |                    |
| <b>20. GSA Management (Julie Tanguay, GSA Associate Director and Acting Executive Director)</b>               |                    |
| i. Executive Director's Report  | <b>20.0 - 20.4</b> |

#### **Question Period**

- 21. Written Questions (none at this time)**
- 22. Oral Questions**

#### **Adjournment**

**GSA Council Meeting MINUTES**  
Monday, 19 June 2017 at 6:00 pm  
2-100 University Hall, Van Vliet Complex

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Babak Soltannia (President)	Michael Woolley (Arts and Design)	Neil Prather (History & Classics)	Andrew Woodman (Pharmacology)
Firouz Khodayari (VP Academic)	Swai Mon Khaing (Biochemistry)	Kenzie Gordon (Humanities Computing)	Hamdah Al Nebaihi (Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences)
Masoud Khademi (VP External)	Francesca Jean (Biological Sciences)	Shivam Srivastava (Internetworking)	Stephen Hunter (Phys Ed & Recreation)
Royle Feng (VP Student Services)	Graham Little (Biomedical Engineering)	Evelyn Asiedu (Laboratory Medicine and Pathology)	Drew Shepherd (Physics)
Preshit Verma (Deputy Speaker)	Rongrong Zhang (Business PhD)	Kris Joseph (Library & Info Studies)	Megan Aiken (Political Science)
Carolina Martinez (Chief Returning Officer)	Beth Richardson (Cell Biology)	Michelle Michelle (Math & Statistical Sciences)	Joanna Scanlon (Psychology)
Darcy Bemister (Deputy Returning Officer)	Mengqi Fang (Chemical & Materials Engineering)	Masoud Aliramezani (Mechanical Engineering)	Kevin Lien (Public Health)
Trent Nabe (Senator; Business MBA)	Michael Armstrong (Chemistry)	Allison Lewis (Medical Genetics)	Alesha Reed (Rehabilitation Med)
Maryse Kiese (Councillor-at-Large)	Natalie Mahé (Communication Sciences & Disorders)	Melissa Silva (Medicine)	Owain Bamforth (Religious Studies)
Kim Nguyen-Phuoc (Councillor-at-Large)	Melissa Woghiren (Computing Science)	Derya Cinar (MLCS)	Ryan Stanfield (Renewable Resources)
Dasha Smirnow (Councillor-at-Large)	Brette Harris (Earth & Atmospheric Sciences)	Cindy Wu (Nursing)	Yangzhe Cao (Resource Economics & Environmental Sociology)
Andrews Tawiah (Councillor-at-Large)	Benjamin Denga (Educational Policy Studies)	Kelsey Peterson (Occupational Therapy)	Robert Piazza (Secondary Education)
Brayden Whitlock (Councillor-at-Large)	Chantal Labonté (Ed Psych)	Radim Barta (Oncology)	Wenlong Huang (Surgery)
Kevin Laxamana (Anthropology)	David Li (Electrical & Computer Engineering)	Prabhjot Bedi (Paediatrics)	

Guests: Kerolous Messeha (Medicine; GSA Labour Relations Committee Nominee)

Deputy Speaker Preshit Verma in the Chair.

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

**Roll Call****1. Roll Call of GSA Council Members in Attendance****Approval of Agenda****2. Approval of the 19 June 2017 Consolidated Agenda**

Members had before them the 19 June 2017 Consolidated Agenda, which had been previously distributed on 16 June 2017. M Khademi **MOVED**; F Khodayari **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes****3. Minutes from the 15 May 2017 GSA Council Meeting**

Members had before them the 15 May 2017 GSA Council Meeting Minutes, which had been previously distributed on 9 June 2017. M Khademi **MOVED**; R Barta **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

**Changes in GSA Council Membership****4. Changes in GSA Council Membership**

Prepared by L Hareuther and F Robertson for the GSA Council Meeting of 19 June 2017

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None at this time.

### **Councillor Announcements**

#### **5. Councillor Announcements**

None at this time.

### **Action Items**

None at this time.

### **Elections**

#### **6. GSA Council Elections**

Radim Barta (Chair of the GSA Nominating Committee) presented the item by explaining the election process and noting that members had four ballots to consider.

#### **GSA Council-Elected Officers Elections: GSA Chief Returning Officer (CRO), GSA Deputy Returning Officer (DRO), GSA Speaker, and GSA Deputy Speaker**

R Barta noted that no nominations were received for the positions of GSA DRO or GSA Deputy Speaker and that nominees for GSA CRO and GSA Speaker were given the opportunity to address GSA Council by responding to a question provided in advance. The GSA DRO nominee was present to answer the question and the nominee for the position of GSA Speaker had submitted a video.

The question for the nominees was as follows and the nominee had 45 seconds to respond: "please tell GSA Council what motivated you to run for this position."

P Verma then invited GSA Council members to encourage their peers to nominate themselves for the position of GSA Deputy Speaker noting that the position was one in which nominees needed to be neutral and have a good understanding of GSA Council meeting procedures (as contained in the Standing Orders of GSA Council and in GSA Bylaw and Policy) and to move GSA Council meetings forward actively and with neutrality when presiding in the absence of the GSA Speaker.

T Nabe asked, as a point of clarification, what would happen if the GSA Speaker nominee was not elected and P Verma was away, in terms of who would chair the July meeting of GSA Council. J Tanguay clarified that the GSA would reach out to past Speakers, as recently happened at the April meeting of GSA Council.

Nominee for GSA CRO:  
Darcy Bemister (AFNS)

Nominee for GSA Speaker:  
Joshuha Connauton (Educational Policy Studies)

#### **GSA Standing Committees**

##### **a. GSA Board and GSA Nominating Committee (1 vacancy)**

Preshit Verma (Deputy Speaker) presented the item and introduced the nominee, who was given the opportunity to address GSA Council by responding to a question provided in advance.

The question for the nominee was as follows and the nominee had 45 second to respond: "please tell us why you'd like to serve in the joint position on the GSA Board and the GSA Nominating Committee."

Nominees for GSA Board and GSA Nominating Committee:  
Kenzie Gordon (Humanities Computing)

##### **b. GSA Labour Relations Committee (4-8 vacancies)**

R Barta explained to GSA Council that there were 4-8 vacancies on the GSA Labour Relations Committee (GSA LRC) and that 3 nominations were received. All of the nominees were invited to attend and address GSA Council by responding to a question provided in advance.

All nominees were in attendance. The question for the nominees was as follows and the nominees had 45 second to respond: "please tell us why you would like to serve on the GSA LRC."

Nominees for GSA Labour Relations Committee:  
Michael Armstrong (Chemistry)  
Kerolous Messeha (Medicine)

**For Discussion****7. GSA Board Strategic Work Plan – 2017-2018**

Babak Soltannia (GSA President) presented the item and noted that the GSA Directly-Elected Officers (DEOs) held a day-long workshop to develop a first draft of the 2017-2018 GSA Board Strategic Work Plan (SWP) and then held a town hall to solicit feedback from graduate students. He specified that GSA Council was now asked to share its feedback on the attached High Level Summary of the 2017-2018 SWP prior to the Plan itself coming forward for information at the July meeting of GSA Council. B Soltannia summarised some of the highlights of the SWP including advocating for a review of graduate student funding and the creation of minimum funding packages, encouraging the use of a standardized contract for Teaching Assistants, Research Assistants, and Graduate Research Assistant Fellowships, and residence issues.

P Verma asked for additional details with respect to minimum funding packages and B Soltannia responded that UBC and other universities offered minimum funding packages and while, at the U of A, most faculties offered some funding package to their incoming graduate students, the GSA would like to work with Administration to see institution-wide standardized offers of admission that included a guarantee of minimum funding. M Khademi added that the goal was to make the responsibilities and rights of graduate students more clear in both their contracts and admission offers, and that the GSA would like to see some security in terms of the funding received by graduate students.

With respect to residence issues, B Soltannia noted that many Michener Park residents were still concerned about delayed ETS from Michener Park to the Southgate LRT station.

B Soltannia then invited GSA Council members to discuss the SWP in small groups. D Smirnow asked if there was a specific question the groups should focus on during their discussion and B Soltannia stated that any feedback with respect to the High Level Summary of the 2017-2018 SWP was appreciated.

After the small group discussion, each group shared the highlights of their discussion.

Group 1: T Nabe as the group spokesperson noted that:

- The group liked that the GSA Board would continue advocating for tuition increases tied to CPI instead of API;
- UBC had a shuttle to transport students around campus late at night and the group suggested adding this idea to the SWP;
- It would be ideal to have professors being clear graduate students as to the exact amount of funding they could provide in offers of admission;
- The group discussed the possibility of having ranges of minimum funding to better suit graduate students with higher and lower funding needs; *and*
- Group members discussed minimum funding for course-based graduate students, as opposed to just thesis-based graduate students.

Group 2: D Shepherd as the group spokesperson noted that:

- The group liked the idea of ensuring all admission offers (including funding offers) were transparent;
- The group discussed whether graduate student enrollment would decrease if minimum funding packages were implemented; *and*
- The group discussed whether the GSA could support graduate student internship programs as an alternative for graduate students to secure funding.

Group 3: A Lewis as the group spokesperson noted that:

- The group discussed how “time to completion” could be best defined;
- They questioned how money would be secured to provide minimum funding packages;
- They discussed how to define sustainable housing and how standards of sustainable and/or affordable housing would be determined;
- In developing clear contracts to protect graduate students there was a need to ensure supervisors were also aware of these requirements;
- They asked how the GSA would improve transit for Michener Park residents; *and*
- They expressed the need to clearly define power imbalances with supervisors.

Group 4: N Prather as the group spokesperson noted that:

- Group members felt strongly about developing specific resources to facilitate supervisory relationships, such as developing a code of conduct for students and professors and they had a long discussion about minimum funding and how it related to the labour changes introduced by Bill 7.

Group 5: M Armstrong as the group spokesperson noted that:

- Group members discussed how minimum funding packages could affect entrance averages and the number of graduate students admitted to each department and they suggested adding an item to the SWP to address the recently implemented 'sticker price' increase to international tuition and the need to ensure that the commensurate rebate of \$2,000 for part-time international students and \$4,000 for full-time international students remained in place in future years.

Group 6: D Bemister as the group spokesperson noted that:

- Group members were wondering how much of a priority graduate student residence issues were in terms of how many graduate students were actually affected by them;
- Minimum funding would be complex to implement given that departments differ significantly; *and*
- Group members agreed that promoting the need for clear and concise contract terms in letters of offer was important and establishing early expectations could help alleviate potential financial issues more than the push for minimum funding packages.

Group 7: D Li as the group spokesperson noted that:

- Group members indicated that none of the group members had faced issues with respect to unclear funding or expectations for work but noted that it would be good to have standardized admission offers; *and*
- They suggested focusing on graduate students in course-based programs, as they often have limited access to funding.

Group 8: B Richardson as the group spokesperson noted that:

- Group members broadly agreed with elements of the SWP;
- One idea brought forward was the need for horizontal support (peer-to-peer support) to facilitate addressing graduate students' very specific needs;
- Current time to completion rates were very unrealistic and penalties for not completing on-time were imposed on graduate students rather than on their supervisors;
- Group members agreed on the need for a clear position on labour issues as a result of Bill 7;
- They wanted to see more specificity in the SWP in terms of the steps the GSA DEOs would take to achieve their goals; *and*
- They discussed feedback they heard from graduate students who felt it was important to have an explicit commitment to diversity included in the Collective Agreement.

Group 9: O Bamforth as the group spokesperson noted that:

- Group members discussed the minimum funding package proposal at length and thought it sounded good in theory but were concerned that it could discourage graduate students from applying for other external scholarships;
- Group members discussed whether a one-size-fits-all funding package would be the best way to go, and if it would be prudent to include an opt-out option if students did not want to receive a minimum funding package; *and*
- Group members discussed retaking courses and noted that while they were open to the suggestion they were concerned about its application and potential associated fairness issues.

F Khodayari responded to some of the questions raised by the various groups. He noted that, with respect to the difference in the individual and team goals, team goals were identified as those requiring all the GSA DEOs to work on the same issue through their differing committee appointments and meetings with different stakeholders. He then noted that, while it could be the case that by implementing minimum funding packages departments would admit fewer students, ensuring secure minimum funding packages and a great University of Alberta graduate student experience were equally important priorities. M Woghiren asked where the money for minimum funding packages would come from. She noted that, with respect to retaking courses, not all courses had exams and she suggested a broader discussion about deferral and extension policies. F Khodayari responded that the SWP emphasized the importance of first requesting the University to develop a solid set of data on current graduate student funding across campus and within faculties and departments. He also noted that they could explore the possibility of retaking project-based courses and that it would be important to balance fairness for all students in the process of retaking courses.

M Khademi thanked GSA Councillors for their input and noted that, on the topic of the minimum funding packages, the GSA DEOs had heard complaints from graduate students regarding funding, and that they did not yet know the extent of the problem or the level of complexity. He emphasized that this was the rationale behind the team's desire to convince the University to conduct a graduate student funding review. With respect to residence issues, M Khademi reported that in 2016-2017 there was a Residence Life Task Force which included representatives from the SU, GSA, Ancillary Services, and the Office of the Dean of Students. He added that this group would be working in the upcoming years on implementing the recommendations developed in the Task Force's report. M Khademi encouraged GSA Councillors to contact him with any additional feedback.

S Srivastava noted that graduate students in course-based programs were not provided with any funding and that his program was listed as a cost-recovery program. He suggested the GSA create a list of these departments.

B Soltannia thanked GSA Councillors for their feedback and indicated that the GSA Board would incorporate suggestions received prior to bringing the SWP forward to GSA Council for information at the July meeting.

## Reports

### **8. President**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 16 June 2017. The report stood as submitted.

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 16 June 2017. The report stood as submitted.

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 16 June 2017. The report stood as submitted.

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 16 June 2017. The report stood as submitted.

### **9. Vice-President Academic**

#### **i. Vice-President Academic's Report:**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 16 June 2017. The report stood as submitted. In addition, F Khodayari stated that two Motions recently passed at FGSR Council involving changes to the examination policy and the supervision policy and he added that these changes would now go through the University governance process with an implementation target of July 2018. He noted that he was happy with the changes, which increased transparency in the processes.

### **10. Vice-President External**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 16 June 2017. The report stood as submitted. In addition M Khademi invited GSA Councillors to talk with the DEOs after the meeting if they had further questions/comments about the SWP.

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

No meetings this reporting period.

### **11. Vice-President Labour**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 16 June 2017. The report stood as submitted. S van der Klein was not present as she was representing the GSA at a mental wellness summit in Calgary and GSA Councillors were invited to email her with any questions.

M Woghiren noted that she recently met with S van der Klein and urged any GSA Councillors who had not met already done so to book a time with her. M Woghiren encouraged GSA Councillors to discuss with their departmental colleagues about their wishes for the next Collective Agreement including the right to strike and noted that one key thing to consider was that having the right to strike would also mean that the University would have the right to lock graduate students out.

#### **ii. GSA Negotiating Committee**

No meetings this reporting period.

#### **iii. GSA Labour Relations Committee**

No meetings this reporting period.

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

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 16 June 2017. The report stood as submitted. In addition R Feng stated that he recently attended the Studentcare conference in Montréal and was impressed with the level of student activism at McGill University and Université de Montréal. He also noted that the Campus Food Bank had seen a usage increase over the past few years and reminded GSA Council that many of those relying on their services were graduate students. R Feng further urged GSA Council to be active in their departments and faculties, and to encourage their peers to make their voices heard.

### **13. Senator**

#### **i. Senator's Report**

No written report at this time. T Nabe added that he would submit a report to GSA Council as soon as he was assigned duties by the Senate.

**14. Speaker****i. Speaker's Report**

No written report at this time.

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

No written report at this time.

**16. GSA Nominating Committee****i. GSA Nominating Committee Report**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 16 June 2017. The report stood as submitted. In addition, R Barta stated that there were two vacancies on the Green and Gold Adjudication Committee, and asked GSA Councillors to consider nominating themselves before the deadline of June 21; he then reminded GSA Council of the vacancies for the GSA DRO and Deputy Speaker positions. He added that if anyone wanted to be more involved or have an impact, this was a good place to do that. R Barta invited GSA Council members to email him with any questions about these opportunities.

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

No meetings this reporting period.

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 16 June 2017. The report stood as submitted. In addition C Thomas stated that the recent GSA audit went very well and she noted that the GSA Auditor, Tom Gee, would attend GSA Council in July to present the audited financial statements. She also noted that this would be her last GSA Council meeting until the fall as she would soon be going on maternity leave.

A Tawieh asked for clarification on the recent GSA Board Policy changes noted in the GSA Board report to GSA Council. C Thomas responded that the change was to amend a previously unrealistic timeline for GSA Council remuneration to be completed in the Departmental Academically-Related Graduate Student Group Grant: Remuneration Based on Councillor Attendance at GSA Council section.

**Question Period****19. Written Questions**

None at this time.

**20. Oral Questions**

None at this time.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Outline of Issue

**2016-2017 GSA Audited Financial Statements**

**Suggested Motion for GSA Council:**

That the GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the 2016-2017 GSA Audited Financial Statements.

**Note:** At the meeting of June 14, 2017, the GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC) **received for information** the 2016-2017 GSA Audited Financial Statements. At the meeting of June 28, 2017, the GSA Board **approved and forwarded to GSA Council** the 2016-2017 GSA Audited Financial Statements. Members of the GSA BFC have been invited to attend the July 17, 2017 meeting of GSA Council.

**Background:**

The GSA is required by the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* (Section 97(1)) to have its financial statements audited annually. Our auditor is with the firm Collins Barrow LLP (Auditor Tom Gee, MBA, FCA).

**Note from the Executive Director:** The audit process begins with a Letter of Engagement, which sets out the parameters of the audit. Members of our audit firm, Collins Barrow LLP, then visit the GSA office to review relevant financial information and other files/policies. The audit representative(s) have access to any info they wish to see, and pose questions to the GSA Accountant, Financial Manager, and Executive Director. The President and Executive Director review and sign off on the audit and the audited financial statements then proceed to the GSA BFC, GSA Board, GSA Council, and, ultimately, the Board of Governors for information. They are also posted on the GSA website.

At the request of the Auditor, the GSA BFC discusses the audited financial statements in closed session prior to receiving them for information and the GSA Board discusses the audited financial statements prior to approving them. GSA Council is asked to discuss the audited financial statements in open session prior to receiving them for information.

**The main message from the Auditor is that the GSA is in solid financial shape.**

**Jurisdiction:**

*Post-Secondary Learning Act, Section 97(1)*

*"Each student organization of a public post-secondary institution shall provide audited financial statements annually to the board of the public post-secondary institution and shall make the audited financial statements available to students of the public post-secondary institution on request."*

*GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section K: Finances, GSA Policy, Budget Principles, Practices, and Procedures, Section K.POL.5.5.a:*

*"Following the GSA fiscal year end, the GSA Accountant and the GSA Financial Manager, in consultation with the ED, will arrange for an audit of the GSA's financial records by the approved auditor as required by the PSLA. Audited financial statements are normally due ninety (90) days after year-end. Audited financial statements will be submitted by the Auditor to the President and ED; then to GSA BFC for information; then to the GSAB for approval; then to GSA Council for information and onward transmission to the University of Alberta Board of Governors. The GSA Accountant and the GSA Financial Manager will prepare draft financial statements and the year-end working papers."*

**THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA**  
Financial Statements  
Year Ended March 31, 2017

# THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

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Year Ended March 31, 2017

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**Collins Barrow Edmonton LLP**  
 2500 Bell Tower  
 10104 – 103 Avenue NW  
 Edmonton, Alberta  
 T5J 0H8 Canada  
 T. 780.428.1522  
 F. 780.425.8189  
 www.collinsbarrow.com

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## INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

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### To the Members of The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta, which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2017 and the statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

#### Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

#### Auditors' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

#### Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta as at March 31, 2017 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

*Collins Barrow Edmonton LLP*

Edmonton, Alberta  
 June 28, 2017

Chartered Professional Accountants

# THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Statement of Financial Position

March 31, 2017

	2017	2016
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT</b>		
Cash	\$ 1,223,101	\$ 929,985
Accounts receivable	109,558	107,343
Prepaid expenses	981	2,001
	<b>1,333,640</b>	1,039,329
RESTRICTED CASH AND INVESTMENTS (Note 3)	<b>1,129,837</b>	1,110,968
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT (Note 4)	<b>18,315</b>	57,030
	<b>\$ 2,481,792</b>	<b>\$ 2,207,327</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT</b>		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 81,840	\$ 87,570
Dental and health plan payable	253,211	224,471
Deferred contributions (Note 5)	235,334	217,079
	<b>570,385</b>	529,120
DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS RELATED TO PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT (Note 6)	<b>9,166</b>	19,166
	<b>579,551</b>	548,286
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		
Invested in property and equipment	9,149	37,864
Internally restricted (Note 7)	1,100,603	1,060,757
Unrestricted	792,489	560,420
	<b>1,902,241</b>	1,659,041
	<b>\$ 2,481,792</b>	<b>\$ 2,207,327</b>

LEASE COMMITMENTS (Note 8)

## APPROVED ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD

\_\_\_\_\_  
President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Vice President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Executive Director

See notes to financial statements

# THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

## Statement of Operations

Year Ended March 31, 2017

	2017	2016
<b>REVENUES</b> <i>(Schedule 1)</i>		
Graduate Students' Support Fund	\$ 773,925	\$ 732,106
Administration, GSA fees and services	1,251,580	1,120,817
Other restricted	104,531	100,698
Commercial activities	47,643	36,105
Unitized Endowment Pool	-	53,864
	<b>2,177,679</b>	2,043,590
<b>EXPENSES</b> <i>(Schedules 2 and 3)</i>		
Graduate Students' Support Fund	773,925	732,606
Administration and services	1,049,134	1,098,129
Other restricted	82,714	79,026
Commercial activities	8,795	10,590
	<b>1,914,568</b>	1,920,351
	<b>263,111</b>	123,239
<b>Health and Dental Plan - net</b> <i>(Schedule 1)</i>	<b>(19,911)</b>	<b>(70,189)</b>
<b>REVENUES OVER EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 243,200</b>	<b>\$ 53,050</b>

See notes to financial statements

## THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

### Statement of Changes in Net Assets

Year Ended March 31, 2017

	Internally Restricted Net Assets (Note 7)						Unrestricted	2017	2016
	Invested in Property and Equipment	Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund	Legal Defense Fund	Financial Stabilization Fund	Human Resource Fund	Total Internally Restricted Funds			
<b>NET ASSETS - BEGINNING OF YEAR</b>	\$ 37,864	\$ 150,757	\$ 150,000	\$ 700,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 1,060,757	\$ 560,420	<b>\$ 1,659,041</b>	1,605,991
Revenues over (under) expenses	(28,715)	(19,991)	-	-	-	(19,991)	291,906	<b>243,200</b>	53,050
Transfers	-	2,223	10,063	46,953	598	59,837	(59,837)	-	-
<b>NET ASSETS - END OF YEAR</b>	\$ 9,149	\$ 132,989	\$ 160,063	\$ 746,953	\$ 60,598	\$ 1,100,603	\$ 792,489	<b>\$ 1,902,241</b>	1,659,041

See notes to financial statements

## THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Statement of Cash Flows

Year Ended March 31, 2017

	2017	2016
<b>CASH PROVIDED BY (USED IN):</b>		
<b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Revenues over expenses	\$ 243,200	\$ 53,050
Items not affecting cash:		
Amortization	38,715	25,460
Amortization of deferred contributions related to property and equipment	(10,000)	(10,000)
	<b>271,915</b>	68,510
Changes in non-cash working capital <i>(Note 9)</i>	<b>40,070</b>	(54,192)
	<b>311,985</b>	14,318
<b>INVESTING ACTIVITY</b>		
Increase in restricted cash and investments	(18,869)	(47,793)
	<b>(18,869)</b>	(47,793)
<b>INCREASE (DECREASE) IN CASH</b>	<b>293,116</b>	(33,475)
Cash - beginning of year	<b>929,985</b>	963,460
<b>CASH - END OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$ 1,223,101</b>	\$ 929,985

See notes to financial statements

# THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Notes to Financial Statements

Year Ended March 31, 2017

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## 1. NATURE OF OPERATIONS

The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta (the "Association") is a not-for-profit organization incorporated on December 20, 1972 pursuant to Section 94(1) of The Post-Secondary Learning Act. The purpose of the Association is to represent the interests of graduate students before the University administration and the general public. As a not-for-profit organization under the Income Tax Act (Canada), the Association is exempt from income taxes.

## 2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

### (a) Basis of presentation

The financial statements were prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

### (b) Cash

Cash is defined as cash on hand and cash on deposit, net of cheques issued and outstanding at the reporting date.

### (c) Restricted cash and investments

Restricted cash consists of guaranteed investment certificates that are being held for long-term purposes.

Restricted investments have quoted prices in an active market and are carried at fair value. Unrealized gains or losses are reported in operations.

### (d) Property and equipment

Property and equipment are recorded at cost and amortized on the straight-line basis over their estimated useful lives using the following annual rates:

Leasehold improvements	10%
Furniture and fixtures	20%
Computer equipment	30%

### (e) Revenue recognition

The Association follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions. Restricted contributions are recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured.

Student fees cover the academic year from September to August. A portion of fees received for the period from April to August is recorded as unearned fees and recognized as revenue in the following fiscal year. Other revenue is recorded in the period in which it is earned.

*(continues)*

# THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Notes to Financial Statements

Year Ended March 31, 2017

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## 2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (*continued*)

### (f) Donated goods and services

The work of the Association is dependent on the donated goods and voluntary services of many members. The value of donated goods and services is not recognized in these statements.

### (g) Activity expenses

The Association has chosen to classify their expenses by function. Detailed revenue and expenses for each function are disclosed in the supporting schedules.

### (h) Use of estimates

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenue and expenses during the reporting period. Significant estimates used in the preparation of the financial statements include estimated useful life of property and equipment for purposes of calculating amortization, accrued liabilities and deferred contributions related to property and equipment. Actual results could differ from those estimates.

### (i) Financial instruments

#### *Measurement of Financial Instruments*

Financial instruments are financial assets or financial liabilities of the Association where, in general, the Association has the right to receive cash or other financial asset from another party or the Association has the obligation to pay another party cash or other financial assets.

The Association initially measures its financial assets and financial liabilities at fair value.

The Association subsequently measures all its financial assets and financial liabilities at amortized cost except for restricted investments which are measured at fair value.

Financial assets measured at amortized cost include cash, accounts receivable and restricted cash.

Financial liabilities measured at amortized cost include accounts payable and accrued liabilities and health and dental plan payable.

#### *Impairment*

Financial assets measured at cost are tested for impairment when there are indicators of impairment. The amount of the write-down is recognized in operations. A previously recognized impairment loss may be reversed to the extent of the improvement, directly or by adjusting the allowance account, provided it is no greater than the amount that would have been reported at the date of the reversal had the impairment not been recognized previously. The amount of the reversal is recognized in operations.

# THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Notes to Financial Statements

Year Ended March 31, 2017

## 3. RESTRICTED CASH AND INVESTMENTS

	2017	2016
Health and Dental Reserve Fund, Financial Stabilization Fund, Legal Defense Fund, and Human Resources Fund:		
Investments, recorded at fair value	\$ 907,016	\$ -
Two guaranteed investment certificates, bearing interest at 1.5% and 1.55% per annum maturing April 2017 and January 2018 respectively	222,821	1,110,968
	<b>\$ 1,129,837</b>	<b>\$ 1,110,968</b>

Restricted cash has been designated for specific purposes described in Note 7.

## 4. PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

	Cost	Accumulated amortization	2017 Net book value	2016 Net book value
Leasehold improvements	\$ 198,000	\$ 179,685	\$ 18,315	\$ 38,115
Furniture and fixtures	104,373	104,373	-	15,195
Computer equipment	73,622	73,622	-	3,720
	<b>\$ 375,995</b>	<b>\$ 357,680</b>	<b>\$ 18,315</b>	<b>\$ 57,030</b>

## 5. DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS

Deferred contributions represent unspent resources externally restricted for specific purposes as follows:

	2016	Contributions received during the year	Amounts recognized as revenue	2017
Graduate Students' Support Fund	\$ 85,740	\$ 789,000	\$ 773,925	\$ 100,815
Graduate Student Assistance Program	113,848	87,245	68,014	133,079
Alberta Graduate Council Fees	15,901	7,356	21,817	1,440
Continuum Funding	1,590	-	1,590	-
	<b>\$ 217,079</b>	<b>\$ 883,601</b>	<b>\$ 865,346</b>	<b>\$ 235,334</b>

# THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Notes to Financial Statements

Year Ended March 31, 2017

## 6. DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS RELATED TO PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

Deferred contributions related to property and equipment represent funds received from the University of Alberta which have been used to fund the renovation of the Killam Centre for Advanced Studies. The deferred contributions related to property and equipment is amortized on the same basis as the related leasehold improvements.

Changes to the deferred contributions related to property and equipment balance were as follows:

	2017	2016
Balance at beginning of year	\$ 19,166	\$ 29,166
Amount recognized as revenue	(10,000)	(10,000)
	<b>\$ 9,166</b>	<b>\$ 19,166</b>

## 7. INTERNALLY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS

Internally restricted net assets are comprised of the following funds:

### Legal Defense Fund

The Legal Defense Fund was established to provide resources to enter into legal action where appropriate. Any unspent funds at year-end from the budgeted legal fees are placed into the fund.

During the year, \$10,063 (2016 - \$63,724) was transferred into the fund.

### Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund

The Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund was established to ensure that adequate funds would be available in the event the Health and Dental Plan costs exceed the amounts collected in fees from graduate students. The fund balance fluctuates to allow for the addition or withdrawal of investment funds depending on when fees collected exceed or are less than plan costs.

During the year, \$2,223 (2016 - \$nil) was transferred into the fund.

### Financial Stabilization Fund

The Financial Stabilization Fund was established to safeguard the Association against uncertainty and to provide for unknown, unexpected expenditures that would provide for the ongoing operations of the Association. The balance will be adjusted annually at the discretion of the Board and will grow until it is equal to at least six months' operating costs.

During the year, \$46,953 (2016 - \$50,000) was transferred into the fund.

### Human Resource Fund

The Human Resource Fund was established to fund medical and parental leave for the staff and the managers.

During the year, \$598 (2016 - \$60,000) was transferred into the fund.

# THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Notes to Financial Statements

Year Ended March 31, 2017

## 8. LEASE COMMITMENTS

The Association has a five year lease which expires June 2021, to lease a portion of the Killam Centre for Advanced Studies from the University of Alberta at \$1 per year and utilities at no cost.

The Association leases photocopiers under operating leases expiring in 2018. The future minimum annual lease payments to the expiry of the lease is \$3,833.

## 9. CHANGES IN NON-CASH WORKING CAPITAL

	2017	2016
Accounts receivable	\$ (2,215)	\$ (5,961)
Prepaid expenses	1,020	1,300
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	(5,730)	(39,129)
Health and dental plan payable	28,740	26,675
Deferred contributions	18,255	(37,077)
	<b>\$ 40,070</b>	<b>\$ (54,192)</b>

## 10. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The Association's financial instruments consist of cash, accounts receivable, restricted cash and investments, accounts payable and accrued liabilities and health and dental plan payable.

The Association is exposed to various risks through its financial instruments. The following provides information about the Association's risk exposure as of March 31, 2017.

### Credit risk

Credit risk is the risk that one party to a financial instrument will cause a financial loss for the other party by failing to discharge an obligation. The Association does not believe it is subject to any significant concentration of credit risk. Cash is in place with a major financial institution. Accounts receivable are generally amounts receivable from the University of Alberta.

### Liquidity risk

Liquidity risk arises from the possibility that the Association might encounter difficulty in settling its debts or in meeting its obligations related to financial liabilities. It is the Association's opinion that there is no significant liquidity risk as of March 31, 2017.

### Interest rate risk

Interest rate risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates. The Association is exposed to interest rate risk arising on its interest bearing guaranteed investment certificates. As the guaranteed investment certificates are cashable at any time, the Association is not subject to interest rate risk.

# THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

## Schedule of Revenues

(Schedule 1)

Year Ended March 31, 2017

	2017	2016
<b>Graduate Students' Support Fund</b>		
Child care grants	\$ 373,000	\$ 277,000
Emergency bursaries	45,220	130,770
Graduate student recognition awards	18,000	18,000
Academic travel awards	337,705	306,336
	<b>773,925</b>	<b>732,106</b>
<b>Administration, GSA Fees and Services</b>		
Awards night	1,550	3,000
Graduate Students' Association fees	1,126,136	1,069,695
Investment and interest	78,016	10,191
Killam Centre for Advanced Studies	10,000	10,000
Miscellaneous	28,378	17,931
Orientation	7,500	10,000
	<b>1,251,580</b>	<b>1,120,817</b>
<b>Other Restricted</b>		
Graduate student assistance program	68,014	64,837
CJSR fees	14,700	14,189
ab-GPAC fees	21,817	21,672
	<b>104,531</b>	<b>100,698</b>
<b>Commercial Activities</b>		
Handbook	8,755	10,605
PAW revenue	38,888	25,500
	<b>47,643</b>	<b>36,105</b>
<b>Unitized Endowment Fund Pool</b>		
Investment income	-	12,880
Realized gain	-	40,984
	<b>-</b>	<b>53,864</b>
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$ 2,177,679</b>	<b>\$ 2,043,590</b>
<b>Health and Dental Plan</b>		
Plan fees	\$ 2,525,937	\$ 2,177,754
Plan expenses	(2,545,848)	(2,247,943)
	<b>\$ (19,911)</b>	<b>\$ (70,189)</b>

See notes to financial statements

# THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

## Schedule of Expenses

(Schedule 2)

Year Ended March 31, 2017

	2017	2016
<b>Graduate Students' Support Fund</b>		
Child care grants	\$ 373,000	\$ 277,000
Emergency bursaries	45,220	130,770
Graduate student recognition awards	18,000	18,500
Academic travel awards	337,705	306,336
	<b>773,925</b>	<b>732,606</b>
<b>Administration and Services (Schedule 3)</b>		
Governance	189,892	186,057
Advocacy	30,614	30,877
Human resources	653,588	725,993
Office administration	29,969	27,319
Professional	45,001	62,406
Services	61,355	40,017
Amortization	38,715	25,460
	<b>1,049,134</b>	<b>1,098,129</b>
<b>Other Restricted</b>		
Graduate student assistance program	68,014	64,837
CJSR fees	14,700	14,189
	<b>82,714</b>	<b>79,026</b>
<b>Commercial Activities</b>		
Handbook	8,795	10,590
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 1,914,568</b>	<b>\$ 1,920,351</b>

See notes to financial statements

# THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

## Schedule of Administration and Services Expenses

(Schedule 3)

Year Ended March 31, 2017

	2017	2016
<b>Governance</b>		
Elected Officers Stipends and Benefits	\$ 166,324	\$ 163,284
Employer Contributions		
Employer CPP contributions	7,023	7,077
Employer EI contributions	3,983	4,188
	<b>11,006</b>	11,265
Elected Officers - Other		
Insurance (Director and Officer liability insurance)	1,215	1,215
Transition/Early Call for Talent	2,671	1,188
Executive officers recognition	-	147
Executive officers discretionary expenses	268	545
Board and other committees	1,019	2,632
	<b>5,173</b>	5,727
Council		
Council/food/other	3,349	2,647
Election	1,098	69
Council Speaker honorarium	1,860	1,500
Chief Returning Officer honorarium	1,082	1,065
Other honorarium	-	500
	<b>7,389</b>	5,781
	<b>\$ 189,892</b>	\$ 186,057
<b>Advocacy</b>		
Government and External Relations	\$ 8,425	\$ 8,579
University Relations	372	626
New Provincial Graduate Student Advocacy Fees (formerly Alberta Graduate Council Fee)	21,817	21,672
	<b>\$ 30,614</b>	\$ 30,877

(continues)

See notes to financial statements

# THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Schedule of Administration and Services Expenses *(continued)*

*(Schedule 3)*

Year Ended March 31, 2017

## Human Resources

Salaries and Benefits	\$ 610,587	\$ 685,232
Employer Contributions		
Employer CPP contributions	18,935	21,145
Employer EI contributions	9,672	11,343
	<b>28,607</b>	<b>32,488</b>
Other HR		
Staff recognition	503	948
Professional expense allowance	10,845	4,304
Workers' Compensation Board	1,495	1,581
Parking	1,551	1,440
	<b>14,394</b>	<b>8,273</b>
	<b>\$ 653,588</b>	<b>\$ 725,993</b>

## Office Administration and Operational Costs

Small equipment purchases	\$ 13,058	\$ 8,775
Telephone and cable	3,291	3,442
Office supplies	1,630	2,655
Repairs and maintenance	2,696	2,051
Payroll and bank service charges	1,319	1,168
Photocopier lease (office)	7,440	8,613
Insurance	535	615
	<b>\$ 29,969</b>	<b>\$ 27,319</b>

## Professional

Financial audit	\$ 11,025	\$ 9,660
Consultants	-	2,481
IT consultants	6,732	29,766
Legal fees - general	16,486	20,499
Investment advisor	10,758	-
	<b>\$ 45,001</b>	<b>\$ 62,406</b>

*(continues)*

See notes to financial statements

## THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Schedule of Administration and Services Expenses *(continued)*

*(Schedule 3)*

Year Ended March 31, 2017

### Services

Grants and Subsidies		
Academic workshop subsidies	\$ 5,500	\$ 5,500
External grants	1,525	1,550
	<b>7,025</b>	<b>7,050</b>
Student Groups		
Academically-related student group awards	14,957	14,981
Council remuneration student groups	4,700	4,475
	<b>19,657</b>	<b>19,456</b>
Other		
Annual Strategic Plan Initiatives	6,528	8,788
Association of Managers in Canadian College University and Student Centre membership	650	650
Food Bank	9,000	-
Awards night	12,967	2,786
Orientation	5,528	1,287
	<b>34,673</b>	<b>13,511</b>
	<b>\$ 61,355</b>	<b>\$ 40,017</b>
<b>Amortization</b>	<b>\$ 38,715</b>	<b>\$ 25,460</b>
<b>TOTAL ADMINISTRATION AND SERVICES EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 1,049,134</b>	<b>\$ 1,098,129</b>

See notes to financial statements



Dear GSA Council Colleagues,

July 7, 2017

Having reviewed the attached statements in depth with the members of the GSA's Financial Team of Courtney Thomas, Shirley Ball, Dorte Sheikh, and Heather Hogg, as well as with the GSA Budget and Finance Committee, I am pleased to report we are on track overall after the end of the first two months of our fiscal year. Since we are only working with two months worth of data related to our revenue and expenses it is not possible to make definitive statements concerning how our budget will ultimately unfold (however, there is no reason to believe we will not remain on track). I have highlighted a few areas to draw your attention to below.

### **Advocacy**

The Financial Team and the GSA BFC are committed to closely reviewing the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council's budget over the coming year in advance of any proposal related to increasing the fee, and to reviewing the various mechanisms by which any agreed upon increases to the fee can be paid.

### **Enrolment**

As a fees based organization, graduate student enrolment levels are the key drivers of our budget and, as has been the case in previous years, the Financial Team will closely monitor these as the fall term begins and report back to the GSA Budget and Finance Committee, the GSA Board, and GSA Council on how any increases or decreases in enrolment will affect our budget.

### **Capital Items**

Pursuant to the office's five-year evergreening plan, we have purchased a few much-needed laptops this year.

### **Bill 7**

We are anticipating expenses associated with this legislation in upcoming months. As you are aware, and has been reported to GSA Council, we have requested a legal review to ensure we are compliant with the provisions of Bill 7 and are in the process of reviewing the feedback received as well as discussing the best means to further communicate with graduate students on this pivotal issue.

In closing, let me both stress that, overall, we continue to be in excellent shape financially and offer my thanks to the Financial Team and to the members of the GSA BFC.

Babak Soltannia, GSA President and Chair of the GSA BFC

Outline of Issue  
**GSA 2017-2018 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report**

**Suggested Motion for GSA Council:**

That GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the GSA 2017-2018 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report.

**Background:**

These reports have been created to build year-over-year tracking and monitoring into the GSA's financial systems, and allow greater control over budget. In addition to yearly comparisons, regular reporting allows for better forward planning and illustrates the GSA yearly financial cycle.

The Financial Team (GSA Executive Director Courtney Thomas, CPA and GSA Accountant Shirley Ball, GSA Financial Manager Dorte Sheikh, and GSA Director of Operations Heather Hogg) agrees that the GSA's budget is on track and there are no issues of concern at the end of the first two months of the GSA's 2017-2018 fiscal year.

At its meeting of June 14, 2017 the GSA BFC received for information and forwarded to the GSA Board the GSA 2017-2018 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report. At its meeting of June 28, 2017, the GSA Board received for information and forwarded to GSA Council the GSA 2017-2018 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report. Members of the GSA BFC have been invited to attend the July 17, 2017 meeting of GSA Council.

GSA President and GSA BFC Chair Babak Soltannia sets out additional background in the attached cover letter.

**Jurisdiction:**

Section K: Finances, GSA Policy, GSA Standing Committees, GSA Budget and Finance Committee, Section K.POL.3.3:

*"The GSA BFC will receive for information and forward to the GSAB quarterly reports on expenses and revenues; these reports will present comparative information from previous years in a way that shows, in transparent fashion, the percent of the annual budget spent in each quarter, by budget division."*

Section K: Finances, GSA Policy, Budget Principles, Practices, and Procedures, Section K.POL.5.4.a:

*"The GSA Accountant and the GSA Financial Manager will prepare a Budget and Expenditure Quarterly Report which will first be submitted to the Executive Director (ED), then the GSA President and then to the GSA BFC, the GSAB, and to GSA Council for information. It is suggested that these reports be organized by budget divisions and lines, with the following information in easy-to-follow columns: current budget; actual year-to-date expenditure, forecast to the year end, total forecast, balance remaining, percent remaining, informative comment on any variance or approved reallocation, and comment on significant comparisons from previous years. All such reports will be compliant with Alberta's Personal Information Privacy Act and other applicable laws."*

The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta

2017-2018 GSA Operating Budget (including Capital Budget)

Budget and Expenditure Report

1st Update, April to May 2017 actuals and June 2017 to March 2018 forecast

	CURRENT YEAR April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018						PRIOR YEAR Comparative	
	2017-2018	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	% Variance	Actual	Total Actual 2016-2017
	Approved Budget	Apr 2017 to May 2017	Jun 2017 to Mar 2018				Apr 2016 to May 2016	Apr 2016 to March 2017
<b>REVENUE</b>								
GSA Fees Revenue	1,133,333	453,335	679,998	1,133,333	-	0%	432,176	1,126,136
Investment Revenue	25,000	2,286	22,714	25,000	-	0%	2,186	47,390
Funding from Others	24,690	-	24,690	24,690	-	0%	-	28,380
Chopped Leaf (PAW Centre) Revenue	40,162	6,694	33,468	40,162	-	0%	7,028	38,887
Other Revenue	1,300	1,300	-	1,300	-	0%	1,000	9,048
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>1,224,485</b>	<b>463,615</b>	<b>760,870</b>	<b>1,224,485</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>442,390</b>	<b>1,249,841</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>								
Governance	208,204	31,650	175,576	207,226	978	0%	32,801	190,247
Advocacy	32,129	1,185	30,944	32,129	-	0%	4,573	23,253
Human Resources	697,220	109,609	585,365	694,974	2,246	0%	118,678	651,511
Office Administration	37,874	7,526	29,278	36,804	1,070	3%	5,514	22,753
Professional	60,200	-	60,200	60,200	-	0%	10,367	46,500
Services Expenses	77,777	27,044	50,733	77,777	-	0%	13,124	61,355
Operating/Contingency Fund	33,000	-	33,000	33,000	-	0%	7,217	7,437
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>1,146,404</b>	<b>177,014</b>	<b>965,096</b>	<b>1,142,110</b>	<b>4,294</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>192,274</b>	<b>1,003,056</b>
<b>BALANCE</b>	<b>78,081</b>	<b>286,601</b>	<b>(204,226)</b>	<b>82,375</b>	<b>4,294</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>250,116</b>	<b>246,785</b>

Explanatory notes:

Under the variance column black numbers indicates more revenue received than budgeted, or an expense savings.

Projected surplus funds will be applied to the Financial Stabilization Fund.

Since only two months of actuals are being reported the budget variances are very preliminary.

For further reference, see the attached narrative.

The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta  
**2017-2018 GSA Restricted and Other Funding**  
 Budget and Expenditure Report  
 1st Update, April to May 2017 actuals and June 2017 to March 2018 forecast

	<b>CURRENT YEAR</b>					<b>PRIOR YEAR</b>		
	<b>April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018</b>					<b>Comparative</b>		
	2017-2018	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	% Variance	Actual	Total Actual
	Approved Budget	Apr 2017 to May 2017	Jun 2017 to Mar 2018				Apr 2016 to May 2016	2016-2017 Apr 2016 to March 2017
<b>Fundraised Activity</b>								
GSA Planner	11,000	-	11,000	11,000	-	0%	-	8,795
<b>Graduate Student Support Fund (GSSF) Projects (Restricted Revenue)</b>								
GSA Recognition Awards	18,000	-	18,000	18,000	-	0%	-	18,000
GSA Child Care Grants	254,720	108,000	146,720	254,720	-	0%	92,000	249,000
GSA Emergency Bursaries	143,280	44,236	99,044	143,280	-	0%	7,253	137,500
GSA Academic Travel Awards	398,000	37,506	360,494	398,000	-	0%	97,285	384,500
	814,000	189,742	624,258	814,000	-	0%	196,538	789,000
<b>Other Restricted Funding</b>								
ab-GPAC	7,275	-	7,275	7,275	-	0%	-	7,361
CJSR Fees Collected - \$1.00 per student goes to the radio operation	14,550	-	14,550	14,550	-	0%	-	14,700
GSAP (Graduate Student Assistance Program) Fees Collected	65,800	-	65,800	65,800	-	0%	-	68,014
Health Plan Revenue	1,512,388	-	1,512,388	1,512,388	-	0%	-	1,465,117
Dental Plan Revenue	1,130,384	-	1,130,384	1,130,384	-	0%	-	1,080,732
	2,730,397	-	2,730,397	2,730,397	-	0%	-	2,635,924
<b>BALANCE</b>	<b>3,555,397</b>	<b>189,742</b>	<b>3,365,655</b>	<b>3,555,397</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>196,538</b>	<b>3,433,719</b>

**Explanatory notes:**

Since only two months of actuals are being reported a balanced budget is presented. As such the budget is neither over spent or under spent.

0% means no variance at this point, budget is on target.

For further reference, see attached narrative.

Account Name and Budget	Brief Description	Narrative and Variance
<b>GSA REVENUE</b>		
<b>GSA Fees</b>		
<p>GSA Fees (annual membership fee)</p> <p><b>\$1,133,333 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Graduate Students’ Association (GSA) is supported by graduate student annual membership fees which are levied by GSA Council and collected by the University. The fees received are based on the number of full-time and part-time graduate students attending the University. Following approval of the fee amount by GSA Council the annual fees are submitted to the University Board of Governors to provide for collection.</li> <li>• Based on the three-year funding agreement signed between the GSA and the University on March 2, 2016, the GSA will receive:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 40% advance in May based on the projected fall/winter enrollment</li> <li>○ 90% (of fall term fees) in October based on the assessed fees for the fall/winter terms, <i>after the fall term 100% withdrawal deadline in October</i></li> <li>○ 90% (of winter term fees) in February based on the assessed fees for the fall/winter terms, <i>after the winter term 100% withdrawal deadline in February</i></li> <li>○ Final payment in April (next fiscal year) after the actual graduate student enrollment is reconciled.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>For 2017-2018, the projected GSA revenue is \$1,133,333.</b> This is based on fees paid by an estimated 5,975 full-time graduate students (5,975 @ \$163.07 per graduate student) and an estimated 1,300 part-time graduate students (1,300 @ \$122.30 per graduate student)</li> <li>• <b>Actual April to May: \$453,335</b></li> <li>• <b>Forecast June to March: \$679,998</b></li> <li>• <b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$1,126,136</b></li> </ul>
<b>Investment Revenue</b>		
<p>Interest and Investment Income</p> <p><b>\$25,000 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interest income on investment portfolio and bank account holdings.</li> <li>• An investment strategy for these funds has been established. ATB Investment Management Inc. is managing the investment portfolio.</li> <li>• Interest income on bank account holdings is deposited monthly.</li> <li>• Interest income on investment portfolio is re-invested and not cashed out.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>On target</b></li> <li>• <b>Actual April to May: \$2,286</b></li> <li>• <b>Forecast June to March: \$22,714</b></li> <li>• <b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$47,390</b></li> </ul>

<b>Funding from Others</b>		
Funding from the Dean of Students and the Dean of FGSR  <b>\$7,500 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This funding is described in letters from the Dean of FGSR and Dean of Students and covers, for instance, the expenses of the GSA-hosted fall and winter orientation events and other graduate student engagement and/or professional development events. FGSR funding has to be requested yearly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$0.00</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$7,500</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$11,690</b></li> </ul>
Funding from Studentcare  <b>\$5,190 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Studentcare provides \$5,190 per year to the GSA to be used for the benefit of graduate students entirely at the discretion of the GSA (additional to funds provided for their yearly ad in the GSA Planner and sponsorship of GSA Awards Night).</li> <li>The commitment is for 5 years starting in 2015-2016.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$0.00</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$5,190</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$5,190</b></li> </ul>
Funding from TDIMM  <b>\$12,000 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TD Insurance Meloche Monnex provides this funding for various events and initiatives organized by the GSA, such as GSA Awards Night and orientation events. Funding includes an annual award of \$500 distributed at GSA Awards Night.</li> <li>Signed agreement provides annual sponsorship of \$12,000 from 2016-2021, up from \$4,000 per year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$0.00</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$12,000</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$11,500</b></li> </ul>
<b>Revenue from Commercial Activities (Chopped Leaf)</b>		
Chopped Leaf (in Physical Activity and Wellness (PAW) Centre) Revenue  <b>\$40,162 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The GSA has a financial arrangement, in the form of a sub-lease, with the Students' Union to receive rental revenue from the Chopped Leaf food outlet.</li> <li>Revenues commenced in August 2015.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$6,694</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$33,468</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$38,887</b></li> </ul>
<b>Other Revenue</b>		
Other Revenue  <b>\$1,300 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This account is used to record revenue that may arise from other sources or one-time funding/grant opportunities.</li> <li>An Unwind Your Mind grant was received in April 2017, which meets our revenue target.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$1,300</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$0.00</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$9,048</b></li> </ul>

<b>GSA GOVERNANCE</b>		
<b>Directly-Elected Officer Stipends</b>		
Directly-Elected Officers Stipends  <b>\$164,408 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Directly-Elected Officers (DEOs) include the President, the VP Academic, the VP External, the VP Labour, and the VP Student Services. In 2017-2018, the President receives an annual stipend of \$39,144 and the four VP positions each receive \$31,318. Any changes in the stipends above the Alberta Consumer Price Index are subject to explicit approval by GSA Council (GSA Bylaw &amp; Policy, Section D: GSA Officers, GSA Bylaw, GSA Officers, Section D.BYL.2.3.b)</li> <li>Note that the stipends are gross stipends and include tax, Employment Insurance (EI) and Canada Pension Plan (CPP). Remittances are made on behalf of Directly-Elected Officers from their stipend totals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$27,199</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$137,006</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$161,765</b></li> </ul>
<b>Directly-Elected Officer Benefits</b>		
GSA Health and Dental Plan  <b>\$2,835 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The rate currently is \$500.36 per graduate student per annum.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$0.00</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$2,502</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$2,465</b></li> </ul>
U-Pass  <b>\$2,175 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The U-Pass is set at \$145 each term in 2017-2018 per agreement with the transit systems and the University. This amount is reimbursed in May, September, and January.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$708</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$1,416</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$2,094</b></li> </ul>
<b>Directly-Elected Officer Employer Contributions</b>		
Employer CPP Contributions  <b>\$7,400 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is the GSA's contribution for the CPP which is at a rate of 1.0 times the employee's contribution. CPP is calculated at a rate of 4.95% of salary up to the maximum annual premium. This line shows the employer's contribution only (not the employee contribution).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$1,202</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$6,060</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$7,245</b></li> </ul>
Employer EI Contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is the GSA's contribution for EI which is at a rate of 1.4 times the employee's contribution. EI is calculated at a rate of 1.63% of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$621</b></li> </ul>

<p><b>\$4,000 budget</b></p>	<p>salary up to the maximum annual premium. This line shows the employer’s contribution only (not the employee contribution).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forecast June to March: \$3,127</li> <li>• The 2016-2017 actual was \$4,116</li> </ul>
<p><b>Directly-Elected Officers - Other Expenses</b></p>		
<p>Insurance <b>\$1,250 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directors and Officers Liability Insurance. Paid annually in January.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On target</li> <li>• Actual April to May: \$0.00</li> <li>• Forecast June to March: \$1,250</li> <li>• The 2016-2017 actual was \$1,215</li> </ul>
<p>Transition/Early Call for Talent <b>\$4,767 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Early Call for Talent and Training occurs in the fall.</li> <li>• Transition activity typically occurs in March and April.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On target</li> <li>• Actual April to May: \$412</li> <li>• Forecast June to March: \$4,355</li> <li>• The 2016-2017 actual was \$2,671</li> </ul>
<p>Training/Development (NEW) <b>\$3,000 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Account created to meet an identified need for training and development of the DEOs to promote the effective performance of their duties.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New for 2017-2018</li> <li>• On target</li> <li>• Actual April to May: \$0.00</li> <li>• Forecast June to March: \$3,000</li> </ul>
<p>Directly-Elected Officers’ Expenses <b>\$2,653 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expenses related to hosting/food/conferences to pursue GSA goals or initiatives. E.g. one-on-one meetings with graduate students to discuss the role of the GSA in the lives of graduate students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On target</li> <li>• Actual April to May: \$138</li> <li>• Forecast June to March: \$2,515</li> <li>• The 2016-2017 actual was \$268</li> </ul>
<p>GSA Board and Other Committee Expenses <b>\$3,500 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The cost estimate is based on 52 GSA Board meetings per year at \$65 per meeting and occasional meetings of other committees.</li> <li>• The primary expense is the provision of a lunch. Costs are being contained by the use of economical frozen foods which are prepared in-house.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On target</li> <li>• Actual April to May: \$93</li> <li>• Forecast June to March: \$3,407</li> <li>• The 2016-2017 actual was \$1,019</li> </ul>
<p><b>GSA Council Expenses</b></p>		
<p>GSA Council Food and Other Expenses <b>\$4,100 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The estimate is based on 12 meetings per year at \$341 per meeting. In 2017-2018 this includes use of the SU plate service program which eliminates the use of paper plates.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On target</li> <li>• Actual April to May: \$907</li> <li>• Forecast June to March: \$3,193</li> <li>• The 2016-2017 actual was \$3,349</li> </ul>
<p>Election Expenses <b>\$2,395 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is used to cover expenses associated with the GSA General Election that takes place in February/March.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On target</li> <li>• Actual April to May: \$0.00</li> <li>• Forecast June to March: \$2,395</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The 2016-2017 actual was \$1,098</li> </ul>
<p>GSA Council Speaker Honorarium</p> <p><b>\$2,220 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Speaker is paid an honorarium for chairing (and related duties) each GSA Council meeting (\$185 per meeting).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On target</li> <li>Actual April to May: \$370</li> <li>Forecast June to March: \$1,850</li> <li>The 2016-2017 actual was \$1,860</li> </ul>
<p>Chief Returning Officer Honorarium</p> <p><b>\$1,500 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chief Returning Officer (CRO) is paid an honorarium for managing the GSA General Election, including any by-elections and referenda.</li> <li>Per recommendation by the GSA ERC, the honorarium was increased for 2017-2018.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On target</li> <li>Actual April to May: \$0.00</li> <li>Forecast June to March: \$1,500</li> <li>The 2016-2017 actual was \$1,082</li> </ul>
<p>Other Honoraria</p> <p><b>\$2,000 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This pool of money may be used to pay an honorarium to an individual(s) for significant and high-level work similar to that done by the Speaker or CRO.</li> <li>Example, Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) needs to fill in for CRO for a significant period.</li> <li>Pre-approval by two signing authorities is needed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On target</li> <li>Actual April to May: \$0.00</li> <li>Forecast June to March: \$2,000</li> <li>The 2016-2017 actual was \$0.00</li> </ul>
<b>GSA ADVOCACY</b>		
<p>Government and External Relations</p> <p><b>\$16,483 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relationship-building, with a focus on advocacy, between the GSA, government, and other organizations. Usually in the form of travel expenses, hosting, or meetings related to advocacy.</li> <li>In its Strategic Work Plan (SWP), the GSA Board identified the need for a strong voice at the table with government (Alberta government in particular) and other decision-making and influential groups at the national level in order to promote the best interests of graduate students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On target</li> <li>Actual April to May: \$1,235</li> <li>Forecast June to March: \$15,248</li> <li>The 2016-2017 actual was \$8,425</li> </ul>
<p>University Relations</p> <p><b>\$1,096 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expenses related to the building and maintenance of relationships between the GSA and University units. Usually in the form of hosting/meeting expenses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On target</li> <li>Actual April to May: \$0.00</li> <li>Forecast June to March: \$1,146</li> <li>The 2016-2017 actual was \$372</li> </ul>
<p>ab-GPAC</p> <p><b>\$14,550 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2013, the Alberta Graduate Council (AGC) closed its operations. The new Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) was formed under the <i>Societies Act</i> in October 2014. Its mandate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On target</li> <li>2017-2018 budget doubled as the reserve is expended</li> </ul>

	<p>is to lobby to the Alberta government and promote the interests and concerns of graduate students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fees for the new ab-GPAC have been set at \$3.00 per graduate student per year, effective September 2015.</li> <li>• Previously the fees for AGC were \$2.00 per year, covered in part by a dedicated fee of \$0.50 assessed per graduate student per term that was implemented by a referendum in 2000. The remaining \$0.50 per graduate student per term is paid out of the GSA operating budget as the “GSA contribution.” In the time between the disbanding of AGC and the start-up of ab-GPAC the dedicated fees collected were held in reserve. This reserve has been drawn down to cover the \$1.00 difference in fees. Consequently, in 2017-2018 the budget has been increased to cover the fees from the Operating Budget.</li> <li>• Pending a future assessment of the stability and effectiveness of ab-GPAC, a referendum could be initiated to enable graduate students to vote for the full fee amount to be collected directly from graduate students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Actual April to May: \$0.00</b></li> <li>• <b>Forecast June to March: \$14,550</b></li> <li>• <b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$14,456</b></li> </ul>
<b>GSA Office – Human Resources</b>		
<b>Support Staff (Represented by NASA)</b>		
<p>Support Staff - Salaries <b>\$195,308 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are four full-time support staff positions (one is vacant).</li> <li>• Salaries are gross salaries including tax, employee EI and CPP, and union dues – remittances are made on behalf of employees from their salary totals.</li> <li>• Includes contractual cost of living increases and one-time payments (e.g. responsibility pay).</li> <li>• The 2017-2018 budget is understated by approximately \$58,000 due to a vacant staff position.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>On target</b></li> <li>• <b>Actual April to May: \$32,367</b></li> <li>• <b>Forecast June to March: \$161,386</b></li> <li>• <b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$190,177</b></li> </ul>
<p>Support Staff – Benefits <b>\$15,625 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The GSA provides lump sum payments in lieu of benefits for continuing staff. The budget was calculated on the basis of 8% (as a starting point) of the salaries of continuing staff which is lower</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>On target</b></li> <li>• <b>Actual April to May: \$0.00</b></li> <li>• <b>Forecast June to March: \$15,625</b></li> </ul>

	than the benefit package for University staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The 2016-2017 actual was \$13,698</li> </ul>
Support Staff – GSA Health and Dental Plan and GSAP <b>\$1,764 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The rate currently is \$500.36 per staff per annum.</li> <li>The Graduate Student Assistance Plan is \$21 per staff per annum.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On target</li> <li>Actual April to May: \$0.00</li> <li>Forecast June to March: \$1,564</li> <li>The 2016-2017 actual was \$1,479</li> </ul>
Support Staff – Employer CPP Contributions <b>\$8,000 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is the GSA’s contribution for the CPP which is at a rate of 1.0 times the employee’s contribution. CPP is calculated at a rate of 4.95% of salary up to the maximum annual premium. This line shows the employer’s contribution only (not the employee contribution).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On target</li> <li>Actual April to May: \$1,516</li> <li>Forecast June to March: \$6,054</li> <li>The 2016-2017 actual was \$7,780</li> </ul>
Support Staff – Employer EI Contributions <b>\$3,600 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This is the GSA’s contribution for Employment Insurance which is at a rate of 1.4 times the employee’s contribution. EI is calculated at a rate of 1.63% of salary up to the maximum annual premium (down from 2016-2017 rate of 1.88%). This line shows the employer’s contribution only (not the employee contribution).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On target</li> <li>Actual April to May: \$739</li> <li>Forecast June to March: \$2,861</li> <li>The 2016-2017 actual was \$3,984</li> </ul>
Support Staff Development <b>\$2,400 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The staff NASA contract provides for support of \$800.00 per staff for courses related to staff development, commencing in 2016-2017.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On target</li> <li>Actual April to May: \$0.00</li> <li>Forecast June to March: \$2,400</li> <li>The 2016-2017 actual was \$1,213</li> </ul>
	<b>Administrative/Professional Staff</b>	
Administrative/Professional Staff - Salaries <b>\$361,858 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Executive Director’s salary and other employment related expenses are established in a contractual agreement. The Executive Director changed in September 2016 and resulted in modest salary savings in the 2017-2018 budget.</li> <li>The Associate and Assistant Director work full-time.</li> <li>The Labour Professional, Financial Manager, and Chartered Accountant work part-time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On target</li> <li>Actual April to May: \$58,685</li> <li>Forecast June to March: \$303,173</li> <li>The 2016-2017 actual was \$328,341</li> </ul>
Administrative/Professional Staff - Merit Pay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In accordance with the Executive Director’s contract as of 2017-2018, the ED has the opportunity to receive an annual merit increment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On target</li> <li>Actual April to May: \$4,276</li> <li>Forecast June to March: \$25,724</li> </ul>

# GSA 2017-2018 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Narrative

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<p><b>\$30,000 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additionally funds from this line may be used to augment RRSP payments or other administrative/professional staff benefits to take into account the realities of the competitive market (e.g. the GSA does not have a pension plan).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$30,348</b></li> </ul>
<p>Administrative/Professional Staff - Benefits <b>\$25,979 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2013 the GSA began to provide benefit compensation for administrative/professional staff. The budget was calculated on the basis of 8% (as a starting point) of salary which is lower than the comprehensive benefit package for University staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>On target</b></li> <li>• <b>Actual April to May: \$4,205</b></li> <li>• <b>Forecast June to March: \$21,774</b></li> <li>• <b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$25,256</b></li> </ul>
<p>Administrative/Professional Staff - RRSP <b>\$16,237 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administrative/professional staff receive RRSP payments for contribution to their own plans.</li> <li>• The budget was calculated on the basis of 5% of salary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>On target</b></li> <li>• <b>Actual April to May: \$2,628</b></li> <li>• <b>Forecast June to March: \$13,609</b></li> <li>• <b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$15,489</b></li> </ul>
<p>Administrative/Professional Staff - GSA Health and Dental Plan and GSAP <b>\$2,940 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The rate currently is \$500.36 per administrative/professional staff per annum.</li> <li>• The Graduate Student Assistance Plan is \$21 per administrative/professional staff per annum.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>On target</b></li> <li>• <b>Actual April to May: \$0.00</b></li> <li>• <b>Forecast June to March: \$2,602</b></li> <li>• <b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$2,793</b></li> </ul>
<p>Administrative/Professional Staff - Employer CPP Contributions <b>\$12,000 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is the GSA's contribution for the CPP which is at a rate of 1.0 times the employee's contribution. CPP is calculated at a rate of 4.95% of salary up to the maximum annual premium. This line shows the employer's contribution only (not the employee contribution).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>On target</b></li> <li>• <b>Actual April to May: \$3,007</b></li> <li>• <b>Forecast June to March: \$8,993</b></li> <li>• <b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$10,934</b></li> </ul>
<p>Administrative/Professional Staff - Employer EI Contributions <b>\$6,000 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is the GSA's contribution for Employment Insurance which is at a rate of 1.4 times the employee's contribution. EI is calculated at a rate of 1.63% of salary up to the maximum annual premium (down from 2016-2017 rate of 1.88%). This line shows the employer's contribution only (not the employee contribution).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>On target</b></li> <li>• <b>Actual April to May: \$1,453</b></li> <li>• <b>Forecast June to March: \$4,547</b></li> <li>• <b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$5,555</b></li> </ul>

<b>Other HR Expenses</b>		
Office Recognition <b>\$1,200 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This pool of money is used for recognition of GSA staff members (e.g. when a staff member leaves or reaches significant benchmarks).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$13</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$1,187</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$503</b></li> </ul>
Vacation Payout <b>\$5,323 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contractual arrangement with the Executive Director for vacation payout, for vacation payout for NASA-represented support staff in accord with their Collective Agreement, and for administrative/professional staff at the ED's discretion.</li> <li>Unspent funds from this line may be used to augment RRSP payments, or professional development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$0.00</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$5,323</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$1,506</b></li> </ul>
Professional Expense Allowance <b>\$6,386 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contractual arrangement with the Executive Director. Budget also used for other administrative/professional staff and professional development.</li> <li>Unspent funds may be used for other administrative/professional staff benefits at the discretion of the ED.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$0.00</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$6,386</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$9,410</b></li> </ul>
Workers' Compensation <b>\$2,100 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WCB-Alberta is disability insurance for workers against the impact of workplace injuries. Our insurance providers strongly recommended that the GSA enrol in Workers' Compensation.</li> <li>WC was acquired on April 7, 2014.</li> <li>WCB-Alberta requires an annual return be filed by the last day of February each year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$719</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$1,206</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$1,495</b></li> </ul>
Parking <b>\$500 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Covers occasional parking for DEOs, NASA-represented support staff, and administrative/professional staff for meetings or events.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$0.00</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$500</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$1,551</b></li> </ul>
<b>GSA Office Administration and Operational Costs</b>		
Capital items <b>\$7,300 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This budget line refers to purchases of major assets that the GSA will need and is part of a five-year evergreening plan established in 2011 and renewed in 2016.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$4,250</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$3,050</b></li> </ul>

# GSA 2017-2018 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Narrative

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The 2016-2017 actual was \$5,841</li> </ul>
Information Technology Service Agreement (NEW) <b>\$6,000 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective 2017 established a service agreement with Information Service Technology (IST) to support the GSA's IT (recently upgraded to minimum University standards by an IT consultant) to provide regular reviews and troubleshooting services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On target</li> <li>New budget line for 2017-18.</li> <li>Actual April to May: \$0.00</li> <li>Forecast June to March: \$6,000</li> </ul>
Telephone & Cable <b>\$4,258 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Billed monthly.</li> <li>The number of phones was reduced from 15 to 7 in 2011 and reduced to 6 in 2015.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On target</li> <li>Actual April to May: \$667</li> <li>Forecast June to March: \$2,646</li> <li>The 2016-2017 actual was \$3,291</li> </ul>
Office Supplies <b>\$6,400 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General office expenses including office supplies, postage, swag purchases, printing/photocopying, and miscellaneous office expenses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On target</li> <li>Actual April to May: \$447</li> <li>Forecast June to March: \$5,953</li> <li>The 2016-2017 actual was \$1,630</li> </ul>
Repair and Maintenance <b>\$3,053 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contingency fund for repair and maintenance of office furniture, appliances, computers, and equipment.</li> <li>Includes monthly fees for Adobe Creative Cloud.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On target</li> <li>Actual April to May: \$217</li> <li>Forecast June to March: \$2,836</li> <li>The 2016-2017 actual was \$2,696</li> </ul>
Payroll and Banking Service Charges <b>\$1,703 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The payroll processing charges to CERIDIAN (payroll service provider).</li> <li>Business banking plan fees and corporate MasterCard annual fees.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On target</li> <li>Actual April to May: \$277</li> <li>Forecast June to March: \$1,426</li> <li>The 2016-2017 actual was \$1,319</li> </ul>
Photocopier Lease and Meter <b>\$8,500 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The GSA leases two photocopiers from Xerox on a three-year contract (2015-2018) for office use.</li> <li>Billing for the lease and metering charges occurs monthly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On target</li> <li>Actual April to May: \$1,133</li> <li>Forecast June to March: \$7,367</li> <li>The 2016-2017 actual was \$7,440</li> </ul>
General Liability Insurance (Office) <b>\$660 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General liability insurance to cover property damage, personal injury, tenants' legal liability, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On target</li> <li>Actual April to May: \$535</li> <li>Forecast June to March: \$0.00</li> <li>The 2016-2017 actual was \$535</li> </ul>

	<b>GSA Professional</b>	
Financial Auditing <b>\$11,200 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GSA has an annual audit performed by Collins Barrow.</li> <li>Required by <i>Post-Secondary Learning Act</i> and submitted to the University Board of Governors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$0.00</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$11,200</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$11,025</b></li> </ul>
Consultants <b>\$14,800 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IT and other consultants utilized in previous years. Since an agreement has recently been reached for IT support with IST the costs associated with this are in the new IT Service Agreement line under GSA Office Administration and Operational Costs.</li> <li>Other consulting services (e.g. visual identity consultant, labour relations consultant) will potentially be utilized in 2017-2018.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$0.00</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$14,800</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$8,232</b></li> </ul>
Investment Advisor <b>\$9,200 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As of 2016-2017 there are investment advisor fees for ATB Investment Management Inc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$0.00</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$9,200</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$10,758</b></li> </ul>
Legal Fees - General <b>\$25,000 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Legal advice on significant operational issues as needed.</li> <li>Budget line was fully spent in 2016-2017 so a modest increase has been applied in addition to CPI.</li> <li>If there are monies remaining at year-end these funds are added to continue build-up of a healthy Legal Defence Fund, on advice from our auditor.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$0.00</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$25,000</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$16,486</b></li> </ul>
	<b>GSA Services Expenses</b>	
	<b>Grants and Subsidies Expenses</b>	
Academic Workshop Subsidies <b>\$5,500 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The GSA Board, GSA Council, and the GSA Budget and Finance Committee have approved the continuation of these subsidies to the Student Success Centre and the Career Centre as graduate students' reviews (reviewed regularly by the GSA Board) of the workshops are outstanding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$5,500</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$0.00</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$5,500</b></li> </ul>

<p>External Grants <b>\$2,400 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funds request for external grants such as a grant for the Long Night Against Procrastination and International Week.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$0.00</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$2,400</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$1,525</b></li> </ul>
<p>Campus Food Bank <b>\$9,000 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contribution made to the Campus Food Bank (which was founded by the GSA).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$9,000</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$0.00</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$9,000</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Graduate Student Groups</b></p>		
<p>GSA Council Remuneration for Student Groups <b>\$10,800 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GSA funding program for eligible departmental graduate student groups based on the attendance of their department councillor over the GSA Council year.</li> <li>Budget increased to reflect increase in number of departmental graduate student groups and a higher remuneration (from \$100 to \$200).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$3,200</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$7,600</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$4,700</b></li> </ul>
<p>Academically-Related Graduate Student Group Awards <b>\$25,000 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The GSA provides a grant program, ongoing through the year, for departmental academically-related graduate student groups to:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bring in special guest lecturers or host academic-style events.</li> <li>Support the academic activities of graduate students at the departmental level.</li> <li>Provide modest start-up funding for new groups.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Budget increased to meet strong demand for this grant.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$6,192</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$18,808</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$14,957</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Other Expenses</b></p>		
<p>Annual Strategic Plan Initiatives <b>\$3,000 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any new strategic planning initiatives may be funded from this account.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$0.00</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$3,000</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$6,528</b></li> </ul>
<p>Engagement Initiatives (NEW)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The GSA hosts a number of professional development and other engagement events for its membership.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>New budget line for 2017-18.</b></li> </ul>

<p><b>\$7,000 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding for these was previously drawn from the Annual Strategic Plan Initiatives budget line.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$1,338</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$5,662</b></li> </ul>
<p>Orientations and Departmental Outreach <b>\$5,000 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Covers the expenses of the GSA-hosted fall and winter orientation events for new graduate students, other graduate student departmental outreach initiatives and events.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$0.00</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$5,000</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$5,528</b></li> </ul>
<p>AMICCUS-C Membership <b>\$700 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Membership to AMICCUS-C (Association of Managers in Canadian Colleges and University Student Centers).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$0.00</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$700.00</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$650</b></li> </ul>
<p>Additional GSA Planner Printing (NEW) <b>\$2,000 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demand for the GSA Planner has been greater than the number printed (number printed is based on the ad sales and the GSA ran out of planners in 2016-2017). This budget line allows the GSA to print additional planners in 2017-2018 even if ad sales do not increase.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>New budget line for 2017-18.</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$0.00</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$2,000</b></li> </ul>
<p>GSA Awards Night <b>\$7,377 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expenses for the annual GSA Awards Night (normally in March).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$1,814</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$5,563</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$12,967</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>GSA Operating/Contingency Fund</b></p>		
<p>Operating /Contingency Fund <b>\$33,000 budget</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A fund set aside to handle unexpected and unanticipated expenses that are outside the range of the operating budget. Use of contingency is upon recommendation of the President.</li> <li>Budget line increased on the recommendation of the GSA Budget and Finance Committee.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$0.00</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$33,000</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$7,437</b></li> </ul>

## GSA 2017-2018 Restricted and Other Funding Budget (Narrative)

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Account Name and Budget	Brief Description	Narrative
<b>Restricted and Other Funding</b>		
<b>Fundraised Activity</b>		
GSA Planner  <b>\$11,000 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The GSA sells advertising space in the yearly graduate student planner to subsidize printing costs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$0.00</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$11,000</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$8,795</b></li> </ul>
	<p><b>Graduate Student Support Fund (GSSF) Projects (Restricted Revenue)</b></p> <p>The Memorandum of Settlement provided for total funds of \$814,000 for the GSSF for 2017-2018, and the budget is based on the funding remaining the same. Individual budgets have been set for the components of Graduate Student Recognition Awards, Child Care Grants, Emergency Bursaries, and Academic Travel Awards. Reallocation of funds between these components are recommended to and approved by the GSA Board.</p>	
GSA Recognition Awards  <b>\$18,000 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funds provide for various awards presented at the annual GSA Awards Night.</li> <li>Revenue is received in the form of GSSF funds.</li> <li>Expenses for the GSA Awards Night are processed in March.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$0.00</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$18,000</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$18,000</b></li> </ul>
GSA Child Care Grants  <b>\$254,720 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graduate students can apply for this Grant to offset the cost of child care.</li> <li>Revenue is received in the form of GSSF funds.</li> <li>Expenses are processed throughout the year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$122,000</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$132,720</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$373,000</b></li> </ul>
GSA Emergency Bursaries  <b>\$143,280 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emergency Bursaries are a non-repayable bursary for graduate students who need assistance due to an unanticipated emergency.</li> <li>Revenue is received in the form of GSSF funds.</li> <li>Expenses are processed throughout the year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$44,236</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$99,044</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$45,220</b></li> </ul>
GSA Academic Travel Awards  <b>\$398,000 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Graduate students can apply for this award to participate in academic activities such as conferences and research trips.</li> <li>Revenue is received in the form of GSSF funds.</li> <li>Expenses are processed throughout the year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$61,196</b></li> <li><b>Forecast June to March: \$336,804</b></li> <li><b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$337,705</b></li> </ul>
ab-GPAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2013, the Alberta Graduate Council (AGC) closed its operations. A new Provincial Graduate Student Advocacy group (ab-GPAC) was formed under</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>On target</b></li> <li><b>Actual April to May: \$0.00</b></li> </ul>

## GSA 2017-2018 Restricted and Other Funding Budget (Narrative)

7.18

Account Name and Budget	Brief Description	Narrative
<b>\$7,275 budget</b>	<p>the <i>Societies Act</i> in October 2014. Its mandate is to lobby the Alberta government and promote the interests and concerns of graduate students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fees for the new ab-GPAC have been set at \$3.00 per graduate student per year, effective September 2015.</li> <li>• Previously the fees for AGC were \$2.00 per year, covered in part by a dedicated fee of \$0.50 assessed per graduate student per term that was implemented by a referendum in 2000. The remaining \$0.50 per graduate student per term is paid out of the GSA operating budget as the “GSA contribution.” In the time between the disbanding of AGC and the start-up of ab-GPAC, the dedicated fees collected were held in reserve. This reserve has been drawn down year to cover the \$1.00 difference in fees. Consequently, in 2017-2018 the budget was increased to cover the fees from the Operating Budget.</li> <li>• Pending a future assessment of the stability and effectiveness of ab-GPAC, a referendum could be initiated to enable graduate students to vote for the full fee amount to be collected directly from graduate students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Forecast June to March: \$7,275</b></li> <li>• <b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$7,361</b></li> </ul>
CJSR Fees <b>\$14,550 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The U of A campus radio station (CJSR) receives \$1.00 per graduate student per term. This is a dedicated fee that was implemented by a referendum in 1999.</li> <li>• Revenue and the related expenses are processed in October and February.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>On target</b></li> <li>• <b>Actual April to May: \$0.00</b></li> <li>• <b>Forecast June to March: \$14,550</b></li> <li>• <b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$14,700</b></li> </ul>
GSAP (Graduate Students Assistance Program) <b>\$65,800 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Graduate Students Assistance Plan began in September 2009, and is funded in part by a \$12 per graduate student per year dedicated fee that was implemented by a referendum in 2009. The \$12 is split up as \$4 per fall term, and \$8 per winter term.</li> <li>• Revenue and the related expenses are processed in October and February.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>On target</b></li> <li>• <b>Actual April to May: \$0.00</b></li> <li>• <b>Forecast June to March: \$65,800</b></li> <li>• <b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$68,014</b></li> </ul>
Health Plan <b>\$1,512,388 budget</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is the fee that is charged to graduate students for the health part of the Health and Dental plan.</li> <li>• The 2017-2018 fee is \$285.61 per graduate student per year.</li> <li>• Revenue and the related expenses are processed in October, February, and March.</li> <li>• There is a Dental and Health Plan Reserve Fund which was established to ensure that adequate funds are available in the event the Dental and Health Plan costs exceed the amounts collected in fees.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>On target</b></li> <li>• <b>Actual April to May: \$0.00</b></li> <li>• <b>Forecast June to March: \$1,512,388</b></li> <li>• <b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$1,465,117</b></li> </ul>
Dental Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is the fee that is charged to graduate students for the dental part of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>On target</b></li> </ul>

**GSA 2017-2018 Restricted and Other Funding Budget (Narrative)**

**7.19**

<b>Account Name and Budget</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>	<b>Narrative</b>
<p><b>\$1,130,384 budget</b></p>	<p>the Dental and Dental plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The 2017-2018 fee is \$214.75 per graduate student per year.</li> <li>• Revenue and the related expenses are processed in October, February, and March.</li> <li>• There is a Dental and Health Plan Reserve Fund which was established to ensure that adequate funds are available in the event the Dental and Health Plan costs exceed the amounts collected in fees.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Actual April to May: \$0.00</b></li> <li>• <b>Forecast June to March: \$1,130,384</b></li> <li>• <b>The 2016-2017 actual was \$1,080,732</b></li> </ul>



Dear GSA Council Colleagues,

July 7, 2017

Each spring the GSA Directly-Elected Officers (DEOs) produce a GSA Board Strategic Work Plan (SWP). The SWP serves to identify key priorities and initiatives, direct the GSA's efforts for the coming year, and identify areas where we can work with others in the University community.

In developing the first draft of the 2017-2018 SWP, the GSA President and Vice-Presidents used the 2016-2017 SWP as a starting point and made several updates, including removing projects that were fully completed in 2016-2017, minor rephrasing, and including points from the 2017-2018 DEO platforms not already included in the 2016-2017 SWP.

Following this preliminary work, the elected team participated in a workshop on May 18 to develop the 2017-2018 SWP. Next, the draft 2017-2018 SWP was reviewed and discussed by the GSA Board on May 24 and May 31. During these conversations, the DEOs identified several key team goals, as well as other pivotal initiatives associated with individual DEO portfolios. These goals were shared with GSA Council on June 19, 2017, and following the GSA Councillor group discussions, the GSA Board reviewed and incorporated the feedback and ideas received into the SWP. The elected team is committed to working on all the initiatives outlined in their SWP, but will use the team and individual portfolio goals, as listed below, to guide their conversations and work with key stakeholders in the University community.

**Team Goals:**

- Advocate for the University to launch a review of the current state of graduate student funding on campus and to consider the creation of transparent and sustainable funding packages for all thesis-based graduate students that support a reasonable standard of living and which take into consideration 'time to completion' requirements, the cost of living in Edmonton, and current tuition costs.
- Promote the need for clear and concise contract terms in letters of offer issued by the University, and urge that these letters be made available to graduate students well in advance of deadlines for offers of admission.
- Advocate for the continuation of a tuition model that ties graduate student tuition increases to the Alberta Consumer Price Index (CPI), oppose across-the-board increases, and advocate that provincial regulations concerning tuition increases be applied to international graduate students. Should some formulary aside from tethering increases to Alberta CPI be considered (such as the Academic Price Index), ensure that proper consultation is undertaken and that any such proposals will benefit graduate students.
- Support the need for sustainable, affordable, and well-maintained graduate student housing on campus and other options to both prevent homelessness and enhance the graduate student experience.
- Advocate for appropriate training and accountability measures that retain a focus on addressing power imbalances in supervisory relationships and create a culture in which graduate students are acknowledged as junior colleagues.



**Individual Portfolio Goals:**

- Ensure active participation in the Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees (MNIFs) Oversight Committee. (*President*)
- Maintain engagement with the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) to ensure the priorities of U of A graduate students are heard by both ab-GPAC and the provincial government. (*President and Vice-President External*)
- Support professional development and internship opportunities for graduate students. (*Vice-President Academic*)
- Engage with Residence Associations and other stakeholders concerning the collection of Residence Association fees. (*Vice-President External*)
- Assist graduate students living in residences to ensure safe conditions and the provision of excellent services, which will include securing GSA representation on the newly formed Residence Oversight Committee. (*Vice-President Student Services and Vice-President External*)
- Negotiate for increased compensation for graduate assistantships in the Collective Agreement and educate the campus community on the provisions of the Collective Agreement. (*Vice-President Labour*)
- Ensure the GSA's compliance with Bill 7 and consult with/educate graduate students on the implications of this legislation. (*Vice-President Labour*)
- Support the Campus Food Bank in its mission to ensure the delivery of adequate food for students and their families. (*Vice-President Student Services*)

Along with the GSA Vice-Presidents, I am looking forward to a productive and engaging year working closely with the University's administration team, and other stakeholders, as we pursue these goals on behalf of our graduate student constituents. I encourage you all to read the full 2017-2018 GSA SWP, and look forward to discussing it in more detail at our July meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Babak Soltannia'.

Babak Soltannia  
2017-2018 GSA President

### Outline of Issue

#### **GSA Board 2017-2018 Strategic Work Plan**

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

That GSA Council, on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Board, **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the GSA Board 2017-2018 Strategic Work Plan, as attached.

#### **Background:**

Please see the attached cover letter for background information.

At the June 21, 2017, meeting of the GSA Board, members approved forwarding to GSA Council the GSA Board 2017-2018 Strategic Work Plan.

#### **Jurisdiction:**

##### Post-Secondary Learning Act (PSLA) 94(3):

*“The graduate students association of a university shall provide for the administration of graduate student affairs at the university, including ... the promotion of the general welfare of the graduate students consistent with the purposes of the university.”*

##### GSA Policy, GSA Standing Committees, Section F.POL.3.2.a

*“The GSAB is the senior administrative authority of the GSA as delegated to it by Council.”*

*The GSA respectfully acknowledges that it is located on Treaty 6 territory and Métis homelands.*

**VISION:** The Graduate Students' Association (GSA) advocates for an engaging environment that is safe, respectful, supportive, healthy, accessible, and inclusive, and that empowers graduate students to be agents of change during their time at the University of Alberta, and beyond.

**MISSION:** Recognizing the multi-faceted roles played by graduate students at the University of Alberta, the GSA: advocates for comprehensive, timely, and excellent supports for all graduate students from both the University and the Alberta Government; negotiates a collective agreement that equitably supports graduate students who are employed by the University and works to ensure compliance with said agreement; engages graduate students and supports their endeavours; and works to sustain the excellent reputation of the GSA.

The GSA believes that a healthy organization is nurtured through effective relationships with all stakeholders, including constituent groups of the academy.<sup>1</sup> Nonetheless, an organization that evolves over time must be prepared to take steps at critical junctures that may or may not be endorsed by all its stakeholders. The GSA sees this as a living document, shifting directions as needed, as the provincial, federal, and University landscapes change. It is developed by both the previous and current teams of Directly-Elected Officers and provides a planning document for this and future years. Our overall goal is to create a campus community where all graduate students feel encouraged to learn and are provided with reasonable supports (and accommodations, when necessary) to ensure their success.

**OUR IDEAL DEFINITION, SITUATION, AND EXPERIENCE FOR ALL GRADUATE STUDENTS:**

A graduate student is a junior colleague who contributes to their field of study in pursuit of an advanced degree through collaborative work with the professoriate and senior colleagues in research, teaching, administrative tasks, and the development of learning environments within the University. These contributions may be accomplished through: extensive coursework, for which graduate students pay tuition; academic employment, for which graduate students are paid; the co-creation and writing of scholarly work; the securing of academic funding; presentations, conferences, and community engagement; and capstone projects, theses, or dissertations. This multi-faceted position takes place in an environment of mutual respect and fairness aimed at developing skills and knowledge for future careers.

<sup>1</sup>Stakeholders include: individuals, groups, and offices that can affect or are directly affected by, the GSA and its initiatives. Constituent groups of the academy include: faculty, graduate students, undergraduate students, non-academic staff, and post-doctoral researchers and fellows.

### ADVOCATE

**GOAL 1:** Work with the University and government to ensure graduate students receive affordable tuition, funding packages, and access to bursaries, scholarships, and awards.

Post-secondary education plays an important role in a prosperous society. Graduate students' success is dependent upon access to sustainable and appropriately sized funding packages for the duration of their programs so they can focus on their studies and research. The GSA will advocate that all graduate students should be offered baseline funding. The GSA will also advocate for greater financial supports, including higher compensation for assistantships, more scholarships, awards, and bursaries, and increases to the Graduate Student Support Fund (GSSF).

Strategic Objectives	Action Steps (2017-2018 and ongoing)
<p>1. <b>Advocate</b> for transparent and sustainable funding packages that support a reasonable standard of living, taking into consideration the cost of living in Edmonton and current tuition costs for all thesis-based graduate students for the duration of their programs.</p>	<p>Present, to the Board Human Resources and Compensation Committee, on the need for higher assistantship rates and increases to the GSSF (2017-2018).</p> <p>Take all opportunities to share the GSA's proposal requesting a review of graduate student funding at the U of A and advocate to the President, Provost, and Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) that such an internal review begin as soon as possible (2017-2018).</p> <p>Engage the Minister of Advanced Education with respect to the significant contributions of graduate students to the quality of education and research offered at comprehensive, research intensive universities, and the need for a funding models that specifically recognize graduate students and their research and undergraduate teaching (ongoing).</p> <p>Maintain discussion with the Dean of the FGSR and the Provost on how to create financial packages that correspond with realistic times to completion and collaborate to assess current gaps in funding for graduate students (ongoing).</p> <p>Take all opportunities to remind University administration that funding tied to a supervisor that is not subject to appropriate oversight within the broader framework of a minimum funding package can increase the power imbalance between these parties (ongoing).</p>
<p>2. <b>Advocate</b>, to University administration and the FGSR, on the need to include clear and concise contract terms in letters of offer to the University, and make these letters available to graduate students well in advance of deadlines for offers of admission.</p>	<p>Ask regularly in meetings with the Dean of the FGSR and other members of University administration that documentation provided to new graduate students upon an offer of admission be reviewed and that specific expectations and requirements for graduate assistantships during a program be outlined in letters of offer (ongoing).</p>
<p>3. <b>Negotiate</b> for increased compensation and benefits for graduate assistants in the Collective Agreement and advocate for more education and compliance within the campus community on the provisions of the Collective Agreement.</p>	<p>Negotiate a new Collective Agreement to take effect in September 2018 (2017-2018).</p> <p>Advocate for more education and compliance concerning the Collective Agreement within the campus community (ongoing).</p> <p>Continue to track information associated with compliance in order to prepare for future negotiations (ongoing).</p>

	Ensure the GSA's compliance with Bill 7 and consult with/educate graduate students, particularly Graduate Assistants, on the implications of the legislation and the provisions of the Collective Agreement ( <i>ongoing</i> ).
4. <b>Advocate</b> for the inclusion of international graduate students in the eligibility requirements for existing scholarships, awards, and bursaries.	Collaborate with the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) on issues and necessary improvements for international graduate student tuition and funding in Alberta ( <i>2017-2018</i> ).  Maintain the GSA's stance that international graduate students should have access to Tri-Council funding and enhanced access to provincial funding opportunities, as well as be included in provincial nomination programs related to permanent residency ( <i>ongoing</i> ).
5. <b>Advocate</b> for assistance, support, and encouragement for all graduate students to apply for internal, provincial, and federal awards, grants, and scholarships.	Promote the FGSR and departmental workshops and resources designed to assist graduate students with application processes and communicate with individual departments as required to provide sufficient notice to graduate students of internal application deadlines ( <i>ongoing</i> ).
6. <b>Advocate</b> for quality measures, funding models, and graduate student management plans that do not favour some faculties or departments over other faculties or departments.	Ensure graduate students are involved in any reform discussions associated with quality measures, funding models, or graduate student enrolment management plans ( <i>ongoing</i> ).  Create opportunities to discuss the University's decentralized faculty model and how it creates significant disparities in program expectations and requirements, funding options, and time to completion for graduate students ( <i>ongoing</i> ).
7. <b>Advocate</b> for the continuation of a tuition model that ties graduate student tuition increases to the Alberta Consumer Index (CPI) and opposes across-the-board increases.	Meet with University administration to get updates concerning the 2017-2018 changes made to international graduate student tuition and ensure continuation of the full "rebate" (\$4,000 for full-time graduate students and \$2,000 for part-time graduate students) associated with the commensurate increases in international tuition ( <i>2017-2018</i> ).  Maintain the GSA's past stance in opposition to across-the-board tuition increases beyond the Alberta CPI for all graduate students and, in partnership with ab-GPAC, advocate for the inclusion of international student tuition fees in the province's Tuition Fees Regulation. Should tuition increases be tied to some other agreed upon formulary, advocate to ensure that graduate student support levels increase commensurately ( <i>ongoing</i> ).  Ensure ongoing appropriate graduate student consultation prior to and after the introduction of any increases to tuition fees ( <i>ongoing</i> ).
8. <b>Advocate</b> against the introduction of new market modifiers or other fees that are not currently a part of an agreed upon regulatory framework.	Ensure appropriate graduate student consultation prior to the introduction of any new or increased fees, including Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees (MNIFs) ( <i>ongoing</i> ).  Maintain active participation in the MNIF Oversight Committee and closely monitor proposals to apply the Academic Price Index formulary to fees other than MNIFs to ensure any such proposals will benefit graduate students ( <i>ongoing</i> ).

## ADVOCATE

**GOAL 2:** Work to develop supportive and respectful relationships between graduate students and their academic supervisors.

Graduate student success relies on quality supervision and mentoring throughout a degree program. The GSA will build on work by previous graduate student leaders and collaborate with the FGSR and senior University administrators to make quality graduate student supervision an institutional priority.

Strategic Objectives	Action Steps (2017-2018 and ongoing)
<p>1. <b>Advocate</b> for the development of a supervisory training program for both incoming graduate students and supervisors and for the development of an accountability structure that rewards quality supervision and mentoring while creating incentives to improve poor supervision.</p>	<p>Finalize the GSA's "list of questions to ask before pursuing graduate studies" document and circulate it to the FGSR Council (2017-2018).</p> <p>Collaborate, with the FGSR, on the implementation of recommendations from the Quality of Graduate Student Supervision Report and other similar initiatives (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Take any opportunities to promote and develop resources to ensure a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of both graduate students and supervisors that provide clear expectations for both (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Promote a restorative justice and mediation process to encourage prompt resolution of any graduate student-supervisor conflicts (<i>ongoing</i>).</p>
<p>2. <b>Advocate</b> for departments to develop a means by which graduate students can report concerns regarding their supervisors.</p>	<p>Collaborate with the FGSR on programs to track the quality of the graduate student-supervisor relationship over time, including the creation of a feedback process for graduate students (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Related to the above, advocate to the FGSR that it work with other Faculties to develop an online platform to support the safe disclosure of supervisory concerns in order to better track the level and types of concerns over time, and discuss ways to address any systemic issues that emerge (<i>ongoing</i>).</p>
<p>3. <b>Advocate</b> for realistic 'time to completion' rates in order for both graduate students and supervisors to develop reasonable expectations regarding the length of the degree program.</p>	<p>Collaborate with the FGSR on ways to mitigate systemic 'time to completion' problems, ensure transparency concerning expectations, and to develop metrics to track faculty and graduate student adherence to program timing and associated requirements to allow proactive intervention if problems arise (<i>ongoing</i>).</p>
<p>4. <b>Advocate</b> for enhanced flexibility with respect to course-related examination practices in the interests of promoting enhanced mental wellness and career outcomes.</p>	<p>Discuss, with the FGSR, the possibility of revising FGSR policies concerning course-related examinations (including the ability to retake examinations and amend transcripts accordingly) (2017-2018).</p>

## ENGAGE

**GOAL 1:** Develop and maintain relationships with all GSA stakeholders, both internal and external to the University, to support graduate student success.

Graduate students play unique and multifaceted roles in a university environment. The GSA will advocate for further resources to support graduate students by reinforcing strong relationships with key players to create a common vision of excellence for all graduate students at the University, as well as across Alberta and Canada.

Strategic Objectives	Action Steps (2017-2018 and ongoing)
1. <b>Engage</b> with the Students' Union (SU), the Academic Staff Association (AASUA), the Postdoctoral Fellows' Association (PDFA), and the Non-Academic Staff Association (NASA) to identify shared priorities and maintain strong partnerships.	Meet regularly with SU counterparts to discuss mutual priorities and arrange annual meetings with all partner associations to discuss common issues and priorities ( <i>ongoing</i> ).
2. <b>Engage</b> with the President, Provost, Deputy Provost, Vice-Presidents, Board of Governors' members, University Governance, Dean of the FGSR, Dean of Students, Senators, the Alumni Association, service providers, and other key partners to determine shared priorities and maintain effective and collaborative relationships.	Meet regularly with the Dean of the FGSR and the Dean of Students to discuss specific issues affecting graduate students and maintain effective graduate student representation on bodies such as the Alumni Council and the Senate ( <i>ongoing</i> ).  Continue to discuss key issues for graduate students with senior University Administration and participate in functions to build and foster relationships ( <i>ongoing</i> ).
3. <b>Engage</b> with our provincial lobby group to ensure the priorities of U of A graduate students are heard by the provincial government.	Participate in all ab-GPAC meetings to ensure the needs of U of A graduate students are included in ab-GPAC activities and take an active role in the ab-GPAC executive team and key working groups/committees ( <i>ongoing</i> ).  Investigate attending advocacy meetings of other lobby groups in order to observe, learn, and gather information ( <i>ongoing</i> ).
4. <b>Engage</b> with the GSAs from other comprehensive and research intensive universities in Alberta and across Canada to share information, discuss best practices, and collaborate on common issues.	Attend meetings with other GSAs to share information, determine best practices, and maintain relationships ( <i>ongoing</i> ).

**ENGAGE**

**GOAL 2:** Increase graduate student awareness of and participation with the GSA and its services.

The GSA believes engagement occurs from the time someone asks for information about the graduate studies admission process through to convocation. The GSA supports continuing graduate student engagement through University governance, networks in residence and elsewhere, professional development, and in other settings where collaboration can occur. The GSA is committed to continue offering orientation sessions, 101s, and investigating other means to reach graduate students, as well as to investigating effective communication methods that will create opportunities for graduate student awareness and engagement.

Strategic Objectives	Action Steps (2017-2018 and ongoing)
<p>1. <b>Engage</b> graduate students through social media and the GSA newsletter more effectively and by promoting activities and events to increase participation.</p>	<p>Maintain a robust social media presence and investigate innovative new methods to promote awareness of the GSA among graduate students to increase participation in GSA activities and events, and engagement with the GSA more broadly (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Provide events throughout the academic year to support social engagement and reduce stress amongst graduate students (<i>ongoing</i>).</p>
<p>2. <b>Engage</b> with graduate students through workshops about important services and governance matters.</p>	<p>Continue to host roundtable discussions, town halls, and 101 sessions to educate graduate students about University governance and services as well as other important issues (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Meet with graduate student groups and departmental GSAs to better understand how to assist their members (<i>ongoing</i>).</p>
<p>3. <b>Engage</b> graduate students by advocating for the provision of additional graduate student social space on campus.</p>	<p>Meet the Vice-President (Facilities and Operations) to follow up on the 2010 Memorandum of Understanding with the University regarding the North Power Plant, as well as the ongoing discussions concerning the space with the Alumni Association and the SU (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Lobby for space for the exclusive use of graduate students to encourage collaboration, idea sharing, and informal meetings (<i>ongoing</i>).</p>

**SUPPORT**

**GOAL 1:** Ensure all graduate students have access to sufficient resources to meet their basic needs.

The GSA is a vigilant voice for the graduate student experience, including funding, housing, and services. In order for graduate students to have a positive experience at the U of A, key infrastructure pieces must be in place before graduate students register. The current unpredictable and unsustainable funding model can create situations where graduate students cannot afford safe housing and/or sufficient food. The lack of sustainable graduate student funding creates significant strain on mental health and leads to: increased drop-out rates; increased draws on Health and Wellness services; and a decreased focus on studies and research productivity.

Strategic Objectives	Action Steps (2017-2018 and ongoing)
1. <b>Support</b> the Campus Food Bank (CFB) in its mission to ensure the delivery of adequate food for students and their families.	Continue to support the CFB and maintain active GSA representation on the CFB Board, and regularly review the CFB's annual budget and audited financial statements and graduate student usage statistics ( <i>ongoing</i> ).
2. <b>Support</b> the need for sustainable, affordable, and well-maintained graduate student housing on campus and other options to prevent homelessness and enhance the graduate student experience.	Meet with potential advocates and allies regarding the issue of graduate student homelessness to brainstorm potential solutions to short-term and chronic homelessness amongst graduate students and continue collaboration with the Dean of Students on this emerging issue ( <i>2017-2018</i> ).
3. <b>Support</b> and assist graduate students living in residences, and their Residence Associations, to ensure students are living in safe conditions and receiving excellent services.	<p>Continue discussions with the SU concerning the collection of Residence Association fees and meet with Residence Associations to hear their concerns (<i>2017-2018</i>).</p> <p>Advocate for flexible and transparent residence rental contracts between the University and graduate students that use 'plain language' (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Discuss the on-going issue of general unhealthy living conditions at Michener Park and other residences with senior administration and advocate to improve the quality of life for graduate students and their families (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Advocate for affordable and high quality graduate residences that are easily accessible via public transit, and continue conversations with University administration and ETS with respect to commuting issues affecting the residents of Michener Park (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Collaborate with the SU to advocate for timely and compassionate responses from Residence Services to ensure the needs of all students in residence are met (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Secure GSA representation on the newly established Residence Oversight Committee (ROC) and maintain engagement with the implementation of the recommendations arising from the final report of the Residence Life Task Force (<i>2017-2018</i>).</p>

**SUPPORT**

**GOAL 2:** Strive for a positive experience that meets the needs, and furthers the development of, graduate students.

The GSA supports and encourages an empowering environment for all graduate students and increases to the number and diversity of professional development opportunities for graduate students. The GSA will continue to collaborate with the stakeholders to ensure graduate students are able to develop the skills necessary for future careers and maintain its support of University services that benefit graduate students' professional development.

Strategic Objectives	Action Steps (2017-2018 and ongoing)
1. <b>Support</b> a variety of high quality professional development (PD) and internship opportunities for graduate students in recognition of the diverse future career paths ahead of graduate students.	<p>Support the implementation of the professional experience leave policy (2017-2018).</p> <p>Continue supporting the Graduate Student Internship Program (ongoing).</p> <p>Meet regularly with campus PD providers to hear program updates and discuss feedback from participants and explore and collaborate on the offering of additional events and opportunities from the GSA and other partners (ongoing).</p> <p>Participate in PD4Grads meetings to assist with the development of PD workshops and events (ongoing).</p>
2. <b>Support</b> workshops and services that assist graduate students with academic progress and professional development opportunities.	Subsidize and support graduate student workshops, courses, and sessions offered by the Career Centre, the Student Success Centre, and others, as well as evaluate their effectiveness (ongoing).
3. <b>Support</b> graduate students financially so that they can attend local, regional, national, and international conferences to promote their work and develop new academic networks.	Advocate for increased GSSF funding to support GSA Academic Travel Awards (2017-2018).
4. <b>Support</b> the expansion of a mentorship program available to graduate students in partnership with the FGSR, the Alumni Association, the City of Edmonton, and the Government of Alberta.	Discuss graduate student mentorship opportunities with the FGSR and other partners (ongoing).
5. <b>Support</b> the need for high-quality graduate-level programs and courses and opportunities for graduate students to have international research and study opportunities.	<p>Participate in University committees to promote interdisciplinary and alternative learning opportunities, including international exchanges, for graduate students (ongoing).</p> <p>Meet with partners and stakeholders to discuss opportunities to promote and expand international educational experiences available to graduate students (ongoing).</p>

6. <b>Support</b> the need for high-quality graduate-level programs and courses.	Participate in reviews of the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction ( <i>ongoing</i> ).  Participate in Campus Alberta Quality Council reviews of graduate student programs ( <i>ongoing</i> ).
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**SUPPORT**

**GOAL 3:** Continue to build a safe, respectful, supportive, and appreciative learning and work environment for all graduate students that is compliant with the GSA's Collective Agreement governing graduate student assistantships.

All graduate students are entitled to a safe and respectful work environment, free from harassment, discrimination, and bullying. For graduate students with assistantships, the Collective Agreement is a legally binding document between the GSA and the Board of Governors that outlines the expectations for fair compensation and a beneficial work environment. The GSA will build upon the advances it has made to assist graduate students with Collective Agreement issues, and ensure University-wide awareness and compliance of the Collective Agreement.

Strategic Objectives	Action Steps (2017-2018 and ongoing)
1. <b>Support</b> graduate students and build upon advances made by previous GSA teams in resolving issues associated with the Collective Agreement (CA) and in tracking systemic CA compliance issues.	Present, to the Board Human Resources and Compensation Committee, on the types of CA issues addressed by the GSA to demonstrate the impact of these issues on the University ( <i>2017-2018</i> ).  Continue to collect sample letters of appointment in order to assess CA compliance and track issues associated with the CA to discuss during subsequent rounds of collective bargaining ( <i>ongoing</i> ).  Discuss the CA in all orientation presentations by the GSA ( <i>ongoing</i> ).
2. <b>Support</b> the development of partnerships with Departmental Councillors and Departmental GSAs to advocate for graduate students who have experienced issues related to the CA, and for those who face issues outside of the Collective Agreement.	Meet with Departmental Councillors, Departmental GSAs, and individual graduate students to better understand the range of issues and experiences across campus ( <i>ongoing</i> ).
3. <b>Support</b> and advocate for graduate students who have experienced issues related to the CA, and for those who face issues outside of the CA.	Advocate, on behalf of graduate students, for the prompt resolution of ongoing and systemic issues associated with the CA, and advocate for and assist graduate students who face issues aside from those associated with the CA and aid them in navigating University structures ( <i>ongoing</i> ).
4. <b>Support</b> partnerships with the FGSR and the Office of the Provost to ensure a better understanding of the CA within the University.	Review, in collaboration with the Office of the Provost, all CA Information Sheets and discuss, with the FGSR and the Office of the Provost, the way information regarding the CA is shared with incoming professors, graduate coordinators, and graduate chairs ( <i>ongoing</i> ).  Take all opportunities to provide informational presentations on the CA ( <i>ongoing</i> ).

**SUPPORT**

**GOAL 4:** Enhance supports for international graduate students.

The University's community of international graduate students is a vital part of the overall graduate programs offered at the University of Alberta. The GSA will support, and advocate for, initiatives and programs that specifically support international graduate students in all aspects of their lives.

Strategic Objectives	Action Steps (2017-2018 and ongoing)
1. <b>Support</b> the GSA's partnership with University of Alberta International (UAI) and student groups who represent international graduate students.	<p>Meet with the Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President (International) to discuss issues faced by international graduate students (2017-2018).</p> <p>Promote the UAI peer-mentoring program and other supports for international students via the GSA newsletter and on social media (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Meet with UAI at least two (2) times per year to discuss issues faced by international graduate students (<i>ongoing</i>).</p>

**SUSTAIN**

**GOAL 1:** Continue to offer high-quality, affordable services to all graduate students.

The GSA will continue to offer a wide variety of beneficial services that are available to all graduate students. The GSA will also continue to negotiate for affordable health, dental and transit programs for graduate students based on graduate student needs and wants.

Strategic Objectives	Action Steps (2017-2018 and ongoing)
1. <b>Sustain</b> and develop on-campus and GSA negotiated and subsidized services to obtain the highest value possible for graduate students.	<p>Remain committed to regularly reviewing services offered by the GSA in response to feedback from graduate students (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Discuss, with other Edmonton-based universities, negotiating for a discounted U-Pass rate for spouses and dependents of students in future (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Maintain relationships with partners and sponsors of GSA events and activities (<i>ongoing</i>).</p>

**SUSTAIN**

**GOAL 2:** Maintain the GSA's excellent reputation and culture of respect, tolerance, and professionalism.

The GSA aims to be among the best-managed graduate student associations in Canada, with effective and well-trained elected leadership supported by a professional and engaged support team.

Strategic Objectives	Action Steps (2017-2018 and ongoing)
1. <b>Sustain</b> a supportive, respectful, and professional work environment for GSA Directly-Elected Officers (DEOs) and support the Executive Director's work to ensure a similar environment within the GSA office.	<p>Work collaboratively with the Executive Director to enhance the GSA's health, stability, and reputation in all areas over time (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Maintain a commitment to annual transition programming and regular training opportunities relevant to their GSA portfolios/positions for DEOs and other graduate students involved with the GSA (<i>ongoing</i>).</p>
2. <b>Sustain</b> regular reviews and updates of GSA Bylaw and Policy, and other key documents, to ensure good governance.	<p>Communicate during annual transition the necessity for on-going review of the GSA's governing documents and support the work of GSA Standing Committees and GSA Council in the pursuit of said reviews and associated proposed amendments (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Sustain the commitment to strategic planning, regular follow-through on goals and action steps, and regular reporting to the GSA Council as required by GSA Policy (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Review and regularly update the GSA Councillor Handbook to assist Councillors to better understand their roles and responsibilities (<i>ongoing</i>).</p>
3. <b>Sustain</b> reasonable workloads for all DEOs by reallocating roles and responsibilities to meet the changing University environment.	<p>Maintain an ongoing commitment to assigning DEOs to committees and other involvements in a manner that ensures the best use of talent while aiming for an equitable distribution of the overall workload (<i>ongoing</i>).</p>

**SUSTAIN**

**GOAL 3:** Promote a welcoming, equitable, sustainable, and healthy campus for all members of the University community.

The GSA supports a University that values continuous learning and development and measures success, both through traditional metrics and alternative, less competitive and more collaborative, methods. The GSA supports the development of critical thinking skills, opportunities to fail without punishment, assignments that develop self-awareness of strengths, and opportunities to give back to the community and will continue to foster a culture of inclusion and acceptance.

Strategic Objectives	Action Steps (2017-2018 and ongoing)
<p>1. <b>Sustain</b> a respectful and welcoming environment for all Indigenous peoples.</p>	<p>Acknowledge we are on Treaty 6 territory and Métis homelands in all official meetings and on all official documents produced by the GSA (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Maintain an engagement with efforts to implement the Calls to Action expressed in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s report (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Continue to explore opportunities, and associated partnerships, to further awareness of Indigenous initiatives on campus (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Advocate for learning environments within the University that honour Indigenous approaches to living and learning (<i>ongoing</i>).</p>
<p>2. <b>Sustain</b> working relationships with stakeholders to ensure an inclusive campus free from discrimination, harassment, and bullying for all members of the University community, and one that offers high levels of support for graduate students in diverse circumstances.</p>	<p>Advocate for increased GSSF funding to support GSA Child Care Grants (<i>2017-2018</i>).</p> <p>Maintain engaged participation in the Sexual Assault Response Implementation Committee (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Advocate for a campus shuttle program during public transit’s off peak hours to provide safe transportation for graduate students working late on campus (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Maintain support for resources and engagement opportunities for LGBTQ+ members of the campus community (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Advocate and continue to participate on initiatives with the Dean of Students concerning the enhancement of the U of A as a family-friendly campus that includes an increase in the number of breastfeeding rooms on campus, as well as enhanced access to affordable child care for graduate student parents (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Take all opportunities to advocate for a campus community that supports gender and sexual diversity (<i>ongoing</i>).</p>
<p>3. <b>Sustain</b> the development of alternative dispute resolution techniques to help address power imbalances and to nurture a respectful and productive University environment.</p>	<p>Continue to collaborate with the FGSR, the Graduate Student Ombudsperson, and the Office of Safe Disclosure and Human Rights to develop a graduate student rights document (<i>2017-2018</i>).</p> <p>Encourage training for Graduate Chairs in restorative and mediation practices to help resolve conflicts within a</p>

	<p>department and work to increase awareness of alternative dispute resolution techniques and practical communication skills for graduate students, administrators, and professors (<i>ongoing</i>).</p>
<p>4. <b>Sustain</b> and support campus-wide health and wellness initiatives and graduate student mental wellness.</p>	<p>Collaborate with the FGSR and Dean of Students to support efforts at expanding mental wellness resources at the U of A, including peer support programs (<i>2017-2018</i>).</p> <p>Organize events during the academic year to provide mental wellness breaks and networking opportunities for graduate students (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Encourage graduate student participation in local and provincial health and wellness meetings, events, and summits and maintain a strong advocacy presence within the U of A concerning the necessity of top tier health and wellness resources, including the Graduate Student Assistance Program (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Promote resources that address the stigma of mental wellness to change the culture of isolation and fear that can inhibit success (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Encourage ab-GPAC to maintain pressure on the provincial government to guarantee long-term equitable funding for mental health programs (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Participate in committee meetings to ensure the continuation of a fair and equitable system for booking the campus's new Interfaith Prayer and Meditation Space (<i>ongoing</i>).</p>
<p>5. <b>Sustain</b> and support leadership in environmental sustainability and stewardship efforts.</p>	<p>Regularly evaluate GSA events to determine their environmental impact and work with the Office of Sustainability to reduce that impact (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Continue to limit printing of documents by encouraging the use of laptops and other technologies (<i>ongoing</i>).</p> <p>Promote the University's sustainability initiatives (<i>ongoing</i>).</p>

GSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE (GSA NoC)  
**GSA BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE (GSA BFC) (1 POSITION FOR A GRADUATE STUDENT MEMBER):**  
**1 NOMINEE**

This position was advertised in the June 29, 2017 GSA newsletter with a nomination deadline of July 6, 2017. No nominations were received. A second call for nominations was circulated to GSA Council on July 6, 2017 with a nomination deadline of July 13, 2017. One (1) additional nomination was received.

The overall mandate of the GSA BFC is to “advise the President and management on the financial affairs of the GSA and to provide for the long-term financial health of the organization. Members are expected, by GSA Council, to rise above any local/departmental views or issues and to take into account the needs of the GSA as a whole.” (GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section K: Finances, GSA Policy, GSA Standing Committees, GSA Budget and Finance Committee, Section K.POL.3.1).

**There will be a paper ballot vote held at the July 17, 2017 GSA Council meeting.**

*If you and your alternate are unable to attend the July 17, 2017, meeting of GSA Council and would like to cast an electronic vote for this position, you must contact the GSA Nominating Committee Coordinator ([gsa.nomcomm@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsa.nomcomm@ualberta.ca)) BEFORE 3:00 PM on Monday July 17, 2017, in order to cast your vote in advance of the GSA Council meeting.*

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

**1. Michele DuVal (Biological Sciences)**

**Member Leaving GSA BFC:** Karen Vera Lyn Turpin (School of Public Health)

**Member Staying on GSA BFC:** Sina Yansori (Mathematical and Statistical Sciences)

**GSA Council Member Staying on GSA BFC:** Dasha Smirnow (Business)

**Jurisdiction:**

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section E: Nominating, GSA Policy, Nominating, Section E.POL.6.6

*“The GSA NoC will provide GSA Council with nominations to fill vacancies on the GSA Board, all GSA Standing Committees, Speaker, Chief Returning Officer, and Senator. Additional nominations may be made by Councillors, in writing, in advance of the GSA Council meeting where elections will take place.”*

The name and biography received for the one (1) nominee is **BELOW on page 9.1**. The biography is presented as **received** (ie not edited).

**Nominations for GSA BFC (1 vacancy)  
One (1) Nominee**

**1. Michele G. DuVal**

<b>Other governance bodies you currently serve on (whether GSA or UAlberta)</b>	
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**Statement of Interest**

I've previously served on a number of GSA bodies including Council, Board, and the Nominating Committee for several years, and so I am familiar with the GSA's services, bylaws, policies, general operations, and current and past budgets. In addition, I've served on a professional development advisory committee for FGSR and the Green and Gold Leadership & Professional Development grant for the past year. Now I want to bring my experience to the Budget and Finance Committee!

**Bio**

The U of A has been my home for quite a while- I completed my Bachelor's of Science here and started an MD-PhD program in a zebrafish research lab in Biological Sciences. I am fascinated by the complexity of the eye and the brain, and in the future I hope to work with patients with neurodegenerative diseases. When I'm not in the lab, I enjoy reading Terry Pratchett novels, running in the river valley and marathoning shows on Netflix.

**Summary Resume**

My primary research foci include: understanding how colour-sensitive neurons develop, with the hope to manipulate stem cells into becoming colour-sensitive neurons to reverse blindness; and how a key protein, SOD1, becomes toxic and causes neurons to die as happens in ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease). As a grad student who has been at the U of A for a while now, I've collected a variety of experiences: I've taught as a TA, mentored over a dozen students in basic science research, managed husbandry and breeding programs comprising 2500 research animals, delivered science and human sexuality educational outreach programs to youth, volunteered for Edmonton track and field events including the PanAm Junior Athletics Championships, and served on several committees. I've been told I am who people are talking about when they say, "if you want something done, give it to a busy person," which is nice to hear (on most days!). My coursework is complete and my schedule can accommodate BFC meetings.

GSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE (GSA NoC)  
**GSA GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE (GSA GC) (1 POSITION FOR A GSA COUNCIL MEMBER):**  
**1 NOMINEE**

On June 23, 2017, GSA Council members were notified via email of one (1) vacancy on the GSA GC for a member of GSA Council. The deadline to receive nominations was July 5, 2017 and no nominations were received. A call for additional nominations was emailed to GSA Council on July 6, 2017. The deadline to receive additional nominations was July 12, 2017 and one (1) additional nomination was received.

The overall mandate of the GSA GC is to “advise GSA Council on matters of GSA Bylaw and Policy not in the purview of any other GSA Standing Committee, or other governance issues, and recommend changes to GSA Council” and to “make any editorial changes (such as factual inaccuracies and other editorial issues) to the GSA governing documents as deemed necessary by the GSA GC” (GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section F: GSA Standing Committees, GSA Policy, GSA Standing Committees, GSA Governance Committee, Section F.POL.4.2.a and F.POL.4.2.b).

**There will be a paper ballot vote held at the July 17, 2017 GSA Council meeting.**

*If you and your alternate are unable to attend the July 17, 2017, meeting of GSA Council and would like to cast an electronic vote for this position, you must contact the GSA Nominating Committee Coordinator ([gsa.nomcomm@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsa.nomcomm@ualberta.ca)) BEFORE 3:00 PM on Monday July 17, 2017, in order to cast your vote in advance of the GSA Council meeting.*

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

**1. Michael Armstrong (Chemistry)**

**GSA Council Member Leaving GSA GC:** Maryse Kiese (Humanities Computing)

**GSA Council Members Staying on GSA GC:** Justin Leifso (Political Science) and Nicole Noel (Biological Sciences)

**Jurisdiction:**

**GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section E: Nominating, GSA Policy, Nominating, Section E.POL.6.6**

*“The GSA NoC will provide GSA Council with nominations to fill vacancies on the GSA Board, all GSA Standing Committees, Speaker, Chief Returning Officer, and Senator. Additional nominations may be made by Councillors, in writing, in advance of the GSA Council meeting where elections will take place.”*

**The name and biography received for the one (1) nominee is BELOW on page 9.3. The biography is presented as received (ie not edited).**

**Nominations for GSA GC (1 Vacancy)  
One (1) Nominee**

**1. Michael Armstrong**

<b>Other governance bodies you currently serve on (whether GSA or UAlberta)</b>	GSA LRC
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**Statement of Interest**

I am a recently elected representative of graduate students in the Department of Chemistry. I already serve on the Labour Relations Committee, and would like to help out by submitting my nomination to serve on the Governance Committee. I hope that by gaining practical knowledge with GSA bylaws will allow me to serve as a more effective councillor. I have been learning a lot during these last few months; maybe the most surprising to me has been the diversity of interests different graduate students have. Knowing this, I hope I would be as fair as possible serving on Governance Committee. I know that the world does not begin and end with the needs of my own department.

**Bio**

I started out at the University of Alberta with a double major in Philosophy and Classical Languages. I wasn't very good at either of those subjects, so I transferred to the Faculty of Science and graduate with a Bachelor of Science with Specialization in Chemistry in 2016. The summer following I was fortunate to have to opportunity to perform research at Soochow University in Jiangsu Province, PRC. I am currently performing research with the Metabolomics Innovation Centre (TMIC) and the Harynuk group studying quantitative metabolomics using 2D GCxGC-TOFMS. I play violin in a polka band part-time, and practice languages as a hobby.

**Summary Resume**

Relevant work and volunteer experience includes but is not limited to: Volunteer with Let's Talk Science | Parlons Sciences, Vice-President External of the Chemistry Graduate Students' Society (CGSS), Volunteer for National Chemistry Week, former Community Outreach Officer with Elections Canada, and former Vice-President Internal for the Undergraduate Philosophy Club.

GSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE (GSA NoC)  
**GSA LABOUR RELATIONS COMMITTEE (GSA LRC) (1 – 5 POSITIONS):**  
**2 NOMINEES**

These positions were advertised in the June 29, 2017 GSA newsletter with a nomination deadline of July 6, 2017. Two (2) nominations were received. A second call for nominations was circulated to GSA Council on July 11, 2017 with a nomination deadline of July 13, 2017. No additional nominations were received.

The mandate of the GSA LRC is to “advise the VPL [Vice-President Labour] and the GSA NC [GSA Negotiating Committee] with respect to the development of the Opening Position for CA negotiations” (GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section F: GSA Standing Committees, GSA Policy, GSA Standing Committees, Section F.POL.8.2).

**There will be a paper ballot vote held at the July 17, 2017 GSA Council meeting.**

*If you and your alternate are unable to attend the July 17, 2017, meeting of GSA Council and would like to cast an electronic vote for this position, you must contact the GSA Nominating Committee Coordinator ([gsa.nomcomm@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsa.nomcomm@ualberta.ca)) BEFORE 3:00 PM on Monday July 17, 2017, in order to cast your vote in advance of the GSA Council meeting.*

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

- 1. Katelyn Humphreys (Agricultural, Food & Nutritional Science)**
- 2. Elisabeth Richardson (Cell Biology)**

**Jurisdiction:**

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section E: Nominating, GSA Policy, Nominating, Section E.POL.6.6

*“The GSA NoC will provide GSA Council with nominations to fill vacancies on the GSA Board, all GSA Standing Committees, Speaker, Chief Returning Officer, and Senator. Additional nominations may be made by Councillors, in writing, in advance of the GSA Council meeting where elections will take place.”*

The names and biographies received for the two (2) nominees are BELOW on pages 9.5 – 9.6. The biographies are presented as received (ie not edited).

**Nominations for GSA LRC (1-5 vacancies)  
Two (2) Nominees**

**1. Katelyn Humphreys**

<b>Other governance bodies you currently serve on</b>	None
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**Statement of Interest**

The leadership and volunteer experience I gained as VP Social for the Pre-Vet Animal Health Club will benefit the work that this committee does. I have a good understanding of Alberta labour laws that will also benefit this committee.

**Bio**

I was born and raised in Brooks, Alberta, where I grew up on a Ranch. I completed my BSc. in Animal Health at the University of Alberta (2016). I started my Masters Degree in Animal Production at the University of Alberta in September 2016.

**Summary Resume**

I am in my 1<sup>st</sup> year of my Masters Degree under the supervision of Dr. Martin Zuidhof. I am working on the effect of maternal nutrition on offspring in chickens.

**Nominations for GSA LRC (1-5 vacancies)  
Two (2) Nominees**

**2. Elisabeth Richardson**

<b>Other governance bodies you currently serve on</b>	Graduate Programmes Committee (Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry)
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**Statement of Interest**

I have extensive experience with serving on executive committees for various societies, both as an undergraduate and graduate student and have strong organisational and communication skills. I have been a member of the Cell Biology Student Association and Graduate Student Association for three years, and have a good background knowledge of labour issues as they relate to graduate students.

**Bio**

I am an international student from the UK. I attended Murray Edwards College, Cambridge for my undergraduate and master's degrees, and have a BA and MSci in Natural Sciences, with a specialisation in biochemistry. As an undergraduate I wrote on science and society issues for several student publications, and acted as a science communicator for Cambridge Hands-on Science (CHaOS) and The Triple Helix. Since moving to Canada as a graduate student, I have been a co-ordinator for Let's Talk Science at the University of Alberta and have worked in science communication for multiple organisations.

**Summary Resume**

I am finishing my third year of my PhD, studying evolution of micro-organisms with respect to environmental pressures in the Alberta oil sands. I have also carried out research into psychological factors which motivate action on climate change in collaboration with the Political Sciences department and the Institution of Public Administration Canada. I have acted as a TA for multiple courses in the Faculty of Medicine. I have held TA, RA and GRAF positions in the university, and am currently one of the student reps on the Graduate Programmes Committee for the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry.

**GSA President  
Report to GSA Council for the July 17, 2017 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Babak Soltannia  
Date: July 14, 2017

Dear Valued Councillor Friends and Colleagues,

I hope everything is going well for each of you, and that everyone has had the chance to spend time outside and enjoy the weather!

Following the previous GSA Council meeting and our great discussion about the GSA Board Strategic Work Plan (SWP), we integrated your valuable comments into the final SWP. We are honored to present it to GSA Council, and will be sharing it with University administrators and stakeholders in the near future. If anyone would like to provide more feedback, beyond the discussion we will have on Monday, please feel free to email me at [gsa.president@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsa.president@ualberta.ca).

During the past months, the GSA's annual audit was completed and the GSA's Financial Team prepared the first financial report of the current fiscal year. As the GSA auditor stated during meetings of the GSA Budget and Finance Committee and the GSA Board, and as you will hear during the GSA Council meeting on July 17, the GSA continues to be in an excellent financial position.

Highlights from my meetings during the past month include my discussion with Dr. Heather Zwicker (Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR)) on how the FGSR and the GSA can continue collaborating this year to assist grad students. We're working on several items, including finalizing the list of questions for prospective thesis-based graduate students to ask before applying to graduate school, reviewing the GSA's proposal to initiate a review of graduate student funding, as well as highlighting common issues affecting grad students. I found this meeting very positive and constructive, and Dean Zwicker expressed support for our funding review proposal. Another very positive and constructive discussion arose from my meeting with Dr. Steven Dew (Provost and Vice-President Academic) to hear his feedback and comments about our priorities for this year, including (again) the funding review proposal, issues connected to time to completion rates, and Collective Agreement compliance. This meeting also was very constructive and positive, and Dr. Dew expressed interest in our funding review proposal. In future meetings with the Provost I will discuss the proposal further and how to potentially initiate the review.

In addition to several other meetings that the others DEOs and I attended, and as Masoud mentioned in his report, Masoud and I met with University of Alberta International and outlined several key issues concerning international graduate students.

Finally, I want to share how proud and thankful I am to my team for being very responsible, hardworking, collaborative, and helpful even during times when they are on short academic or personal leaves.

Kindest regards,  
Babak Soltannia, GSA President

## 10.1

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between June 19, 2017 to July 17, 2017. The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

June 20	Meeting with Roy Coulthard, Former GSA President
June 21	Dinner with the Executives of the Student's Union
June 22	Board of Governors (BoG) Recognition Dinner
June 23	Board of Governors (BoG)
June 23	Meeting on Bill 7 with Alberta Advanced Education
June 26	Meeting with Doug Weir, Executive Director Student Programs and Services at University of Alberta International
June 26	Meeting with Alberta Innovates
June 27	Meeting with Graduate Students
June 29	Meeting with André Costopoulos, Dean of Students
June 29	Meeting with Sean Price, Associate Vice-President Alumni Relations
July 6	Meeting with Heather Zwicker, Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR)
July 6	Lunch meeting with Elizabeth Johannson, President of the Non-Academic Staff Association (NASA)
July 20	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Board of Directors Meeting
July 10	Meeting with Steve Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
July 11	Meeting with the Office of Safe Disclosure and Human Rights

**GSA Board (GSAB)  
Report to GSA Council for the July 17, 2017 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
 From: Courtney Thomas, Executive Director; Julie Tanguay, Acting Executive Director and Acting Coordinator of the GSA Board; Heather Hogg, Director of Operations; and Lisa Hareuther, Assistant Director  
 Date: July 14, 2017

The 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. Open session Minutes are available upon request. The President, Vice-Presidents, Director of Operations, Associate Director, and I 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 20 (Executive Director's Report to GSA Council) on pages 20.1-20.4.

**21 June 2017 GSA Board Meeting**

Main Agenda Items:

GSA Board Strategic Work Plan 2017-2018; Career Centre 2016-2017 Summary Report on GSA Subsidized Workshops; and Bill 7

Motions and Agreements:

That the GSA Board **APPROVE** the estimated expense for one (1) representative of the GSA to attend the Studentcare Stakeholder meeting, June 14-16, 2017, in Montreal, QC, as noted below. SvK **MOVED**. MK Seconded. **CARRIED**.

That the GSA Board **APPROVE AND FORWARD TO GSA COUNCIL FOR INFORMATION** the GSA Board Strategic Work Plan 2017-2018. MK **MOVED**. SvK Seconded. **CARRIED**.

That the GSA Board **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the attached summary report as submitted by the Career Centre. RF **MOVED**. MK Seconded. **CARRIED**.

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

Members discussed **Bill 7**.

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

**28 June 2017 GSA Board Meeting**

Main Agenda Items:

2016-2017 GSA Audited Financial Statements; Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report; and Bill 7

Motions and Agreements:

That the GSA Board **APPROVE AND FORWARD TO GSA COUNCIL (FOR INFORMATION)** the 2016-2017 GSA Audited Financial Statements. BS **MOVED**. MK Seconded. **CARRIED**.

That the GSA Board **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION AND FORWARD TO GSA COUNCIL (FOR INFORMATION)** the GSA 2017-2018 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report. BS **MOVED**. MK Seconded. **CARRIED**.

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

Members discussed **GSA LRC Meeting and Opening Position**.

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

**5 July 2017 GSA Board Meeting**

Main Agenda Items:

Actual Expenses for Attendance at the Studentcare Stakeholder Meeting, June 14 to 16, 2017 in Montréal, QC: External Relation Travel Expenses; Bill 7; and List of Questions to Ask Before Applying to Graduate Studies

Motions and Agreements:

The GSA Board is asked to **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the attached summary of actual expenses incurred through attendance at the Studentcare Stakeholder Meeting, June 14-16, 2017 in Montréal, QC. BS **MOVED**. RF Seconded. **CARRIED**.

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

Members discussed **Bill 7**.

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

**12 July 2017 GSA Board Meeting**

Main Agenda Items:

Bill 7

Motions and Agreements:

None at this time

**GSA Vice-President Academic  
Report to GSA Council for the July 17, 2017 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Firouz Khodayari  
Date: July 14, 2017

Dear Council Colleagues,

These long days of summer are the best for hiking and other outdoor activities, and I hope you are taking advantage of them. As Vice-President Academic, I have attended several meetings and been involved with various discussions during the last month; I will share the highlights with you in this report.

**Study Hall Program**

The aim of this program is to provide services for students, including support in English writing and mathematics. The program will be run by the Dean of Students Office. The plan is to identify the available services on campus, improve them, and then fill in any gaps. The tutors will be chosen from among graduate students and these will be paid positions. The tentative plan is to start the program during the upcoming academic year and to focus on three groups of students: Lister residents, international students, and graduate students. I will get back to you with more details as the program moves forward.

**Signature Areas Development Panel**

The panel agreed moving forward two themes to Deans' Council for discussion and possible support in the early fall: Energy Systems and Precision Health. Out of the current proposed themes, these two were the only ready to move to the next step. I will update you as the panel makes more progress and other themes get approved.

I am happy to answer any questions or comments that you might have regarding this report. Also, I would be more than happy if you would like to share your suggestions or concerns regarding any academic related issues you have encountered at the University.

Thanks,

Firouz Khodayari, GSA Vice-President Academic

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between June 19, 2017 and July 17, 2017. The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

June 21	Dinner with the Executives of the Student's Union
June 23	Dean of Students' Study Hall Program Meeting
June 28	Signature Areas Development Panel
June 29	Meeting on Co-Curricular Records and Professional Development
July 6	Meeting with Heather Zwicker, Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR)

**GSA Vice-President External  
Report to GSA Council for the July 17, 2017 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Masoud Khademi  
Date: July 14, 2017

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope everything is going well and that you are enjoying the summer so far. I am on a personal leave for July so the list of meetings I attended since the last GSA Council meeting is short and I will try to keep my report short and sweet this time.

During the past month, as Royle reported, we attended a dinner with the other GSA Directly-Elected Officers and the Students' Union (SU) executive team. The main purpose of this meeting was to get to know the undergraduate student leaders and building a strong relationship between the two U of A student associations. During this meeting, I had a productive discussion with Reed Larsen, Student Union VP External and Chair of the Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS), regarding his plans for the upcoming year and areas of potential collaboration between the GSA and the SU.

The other meeting I attended this past month, along with the GSA President, was with Doug Weir, Executive Director Student Programs and Services at University of Alberta International (UAI). We discussed international student recruitment strategies and international collaboration for the U of A. Babak and I shared some of the issues and concerns that international graduate students currently face at the U of A and we will continue to meet with UAI to discuss these topics.

The other important meeting that I attended this month was the GSA Labour Relations Committee (GSA LRC) meeting. We discussed Bill 7 and the upcoming round of collective agreement bargaining. Please refer to the GSA LRC report for more information, on page 13.7.

At the end, as always, if you need more information or have any questions regarding the meetings that I have attended this past month, do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,  
Masoud Khademi, GSA Vice-President External

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between June 19, 2017 and July 17, 2017. The meetings were accurate at the time of printing. Please note that I am away July 3-August 4.*

June 21	Dinner with the Executives of the Student's Union
June 26	Meeting with Doug Weir, Executive Director Student Programs and Services at University of Alberta International
June 27	GSA Labour Relations Committee (GSA LRC)

**GSA Vice-President Labour  
Report to GSA Council for the July 17, 2017 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Sasha van der Klein  
Date: July 14, 2017

Dear Council Colleagues,

Again, I have to say sorry I cannot be there! I am attending a chicken conference in Orlando, Florida – the Poultry Science Association Annual Meeting. I know, currently not the greatest time or destination for a conference, but I owe it to my chickens to present my research on them. I realize my report is enormous but I hope you take the time to read it; it does contain essential information about 1) Bill 7, 2) the labour consultations, 3) a Teaching Assistantship survey, and 4) tuition deductions for scholarship holders.

**1) Bill 7**

Please review the document attached to my report on pages 13.4-13.6. In it I summarize all the information we have up until now. Additionally the GSA will hold a second town hall to do an overview of, and get feedback on, the changes brought forward by Bill 7 on July 24. You can RSVP for this session using this link: <https://goo.gl/forms/wVolhyRYfDDFOgi33>.

**2) GSA Councillor Labour Consultations**

The second issue I want to update you on is the labour consultations I have been having over the past few months. I met with 59% of the departmental Councillors that currently fill a seat on our Council, 49% if you also count seats that are currently not filled. Although you can still book meetings with me using this link: [goo.gl/Kbbzfd](http://goo.gl/Kbbzfd), the following is a summary of the feedback that I have received and that I will consider for next year's negotiations and in developing our strategy to implement changes towards compliance with Bill 7.

**The labour situation**

- Majority of the Councillors would rate the situation in their department as good, but could see ways to improve.
- Most Councillors see current issues as a lack of transparency, unclear communication, and unclear procedures around appointments.
- Some departments are divided in several different divisions and therefore the situation in each of these divisions might differ.
- In general, most Councillors recognized that the situation for students in a thesis based masters or doctoral program is mostly dependant upon the supervisor, not necessarily the department.

**The right to strike and Bill 7**

- All Councillors were worried about the financial consequences for graduate students in the case of a strike.
- The majority of Councillors supported having the right to strike, some were surprised we didn't have this right already.

- Councillors from departments with course based masters or professional programs only, or departments where limited Graduate Assistant positions are available, did not see the right to strike as an added value for their situation.
- Solidarity might be an issue if a strike vote would go out. A minority of departments would step up for other departments, and only if the issues involve unsafe situations.
- Councillors' opinions on building a strike fund were very diverse, often depending on the funding opportunities within each department.

### **Conclusions**

From the labour consultations, I have concluded that although there are several ways departments can improve their labour practices, graduate students overall evaluate their labour situation as satisfactory. I believe that improvements can be made institutionally by increasing compliance with the Graduate Student Assistantship Collective Agreement and encouraging structural and/or cultural changes within departments and the University. In addition, graduate students value the opportunity to develop teaching skills. Regarding the recent legislative changes, the impact on departments might differ very much depending on the student population and the available Graduate Assistant positions within departments. The majority of the Councillors were in support of maintaining the right to strike. Overall, the labour consultations confirmed that the GSA should strive towards a situation where there is clarity, open communication, predictability, and sustainability around graduate student funding and graduate assistantships.

### **3) Teaching Assistantship Survey**

Thank you all of you who took the time to fill out the survey! This is very important to show the University that TAships are not accessible for all graduate students, and therefore not all graduate students will be able to develop teaching skills in their program. Below is a short report of the survey's results.

The survey was sent out to all GSA Councillors and open from June 2 to July 7 for responses. Out of the 58 filled GSA Council seats, 41 Councillors and Alternates responded out of 37 departments (64% of all departments).

#### **Available Opportunities – Councillors' Responses**

- About 78% of the respondents have access to TA positions within their department, 22% don't out of this another 22% don't have opportunities to TA in other departments.
- About 67% of the respondents that don't have TA positions available indicated that there were positions in other department they could apply for, however, they had little chance of being appointed.
- In 35% of the respondents noted that students in their department are promised the TA opportunities.

#### **TAships and Funding/Income – Councillors' Responses**

- About 63% of the respondents indicated that TA positions were part of the funding package in their department, but for only about 34% is holding a TA position a requirement to hold the funding package.
- About 63% of the respondents indicated that offer letters in their departments were clear about the fact that they (might) have to TA for receiving the promised funding.
- About 9% responded that their departments don't have a guaranteed funding package.

- 72% responded that the TA positions are an essential part of the graduate students' income in their department.

#### **TAships and Academic Requirements – Councillors' Responses**

- 13% of the respondents indicated that, in their department, TA positions were an academic requirement for their program, 6% of the respondents indicated that they didn't know if TA positions were a requirement of their program.

#### **Procedures Around Appointments – Councillors' Responses**

- 59% responded that TA positions are not advertised in their department and 60% responded that they are no clearly defined eligibility requirements for the TA positions.
- 19% of the respondents indicated that they didn't think that the process of appointing TA positions is not fair.
- 29% of the respondents indicated that they didn't know who to contact if they had questions around TA appointments.

The next step is to take these results to the Dean of Students and the Dean of Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) to show them that it is necessary to educate departments around these issues. Hopefully this will be a first step towards a more transparent system, where graduate students get equal opportunities to develop their teaching skills.

#### **4) Tuition Deductions for Scholarship Holders**

Another development for this month has been the discussion with FGSR around tuition deductions for scholarship holders. Currently, only when you hold a GRAF, TA, or RA position can you get your tuition deducted from your pay. Internal or external scholarship holders have to pay their tuition at the beginning of the term. These are, for example, students who receive a doctoral recruitment scholarship from FGSR or a NSERC scholarship. I had received feedback from several students that this is an unfair system. Scholarship holders don't necessarily have the financial means to pay their tuition in full at the beginning of the term as their scholarship payments are paid out, as for Graduate Assistants, in a biweekly manner. Therefore scholarship holders either have to pay late fees or interest when they pay tuition in instalments. I followed up with FGSR, and although there is no easy fix (they would have to change the HR system for tuition deductions for scholarship holders), we are looking at other solutions for current students to mediate this situation (e.g. waiving interest for paying in instalments).

That was July! Let me know if you have questions, and feel free to contact me at any time! I will answer my email in my absence with a slight delay, sorry for that in advance!

Thanks,

Sasha van der Klein, GSA Vice-President Labour

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between June 19, 2017 and July 17, 2017. The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

June 21	Dinner with the Executives of the Student's Union
June 22	Board of Governors (BoG) Recognition Dinner
June 22	Labour Consultation with a Graduate Student
June 22	Meeting with a Graduate Student
June 23	Meeting on Bill 7 with Alberta Advanced Education
June 26	Community Social Work Workshop
June 27	GSA Labour Relations Committee (GSA LRC)
June 27	Meeting with a Graduate Student
June 27	Meeting with Graduate Students
June 28	Labour Consultation with a Graduate Student
June 29	Meeting with Andre Costopoulos, Dean of Students
June 29	Edmonton Students' Association Mixer
July 5	Meeting with a Graduate Student
July 5	Meeting with a Graduate Student
July 6	Lunch meeting with Elizabeth Johannson, President of the Non-Academic Staff Association (NASA)
July 7	Labour consultation with a Graduate Student
July 7	Phone meeting with Naomi Krogman, Associate Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR)
July 10	Labour consultation with a Graduate Student
July 11	Meeting with a Graduate Student
July 11	Meeting with the Office of Safe Disclosure and Human Rights
July 13	Meeting with a Graduate Student



Dear Councillors,

In June the GSA management team and I met with one of our lawyers (who specializes in labour matters) to discuss the implications of Bill 7 for the GSA and the steps we need to take as an organization to ensure compliance. Below I summarize the information we have received.

- Effectively **the GSA now serves as the representative organization for two groups, and has different mandates associated with its representation of each group.** Under the existing provisions of the *Post-Secondary Learning Act (PSLA)*, the GSA continues to represent the interests of *all* 7,000+ graduate students at the U of A. However, as a result of the changes to the *PSLA* mandated by Bill 7, the GSA is now recognized as a “trade union” and the “bargaining agent” that represents/negotiates for a subsection of graduate students referred to in the *PSLA* as “academically employed graduate students.” Bill 7 includes Teaching Assistants (TAs) and Research Assistants (RAs) as “academically employed graduate students”; it is still unclear if Graduate Research Assistants Fellowships are included.
- As was the case with the existing *PSLA*, Bill 7 empowers the GSA to act with **exclusive authority to negotiate and enter into agreements with the University** regarding the academic employment of graduate students by the University and this will be the case for the next five years.
  - This means that, until 2022, the GSA is the “union” that represents academically employed graduate students.
- Before bargaining begins for a new collective agreement, **all AEGS i.e. TAs and RAs, as members of the bargaining unit represented by the GSA, must be given an opportunity to provide feedback to the GSA on our mandate for bargaining.** In addition to requesting feedback electronically we will host a town hall to hear from academically employed graduate students directly.
  - The membership of our unique bargaining unit is transitory. That is, you may have a TA position in August when we host the town hall and so get invited to that but then, come October when it is time to finalize the mandate or later, after negotiations, when the bargaining unit is asked to ratify the CA, you may not be a TA and so will not be asked to vote on the final version. This reality may pose some challenges in terms of the timing and the form our communications to the members of our bargaining unit may take.
  - The mandate will include all the major matters that the GSA aims to negotiate on (such as increases to compensation rates and areas of the Collective Agreement in need of revision) as well as information on



dispute resolution processes if negotiations break down. Bill 7 gives the GSA the right to engage in a strike action (and gives the University the right to lock out academically employed graduate students) but it is important to note that the GSA also has the option of pursuing binding arbitration and, in the unlikely event that there is an irreparable breakdown in negotiations, whether to strike or to seek arbitration is something which will be decided democratically by the members of the bargaining unit.

- **Ratification** of a new collective agreement *must* be done only by the members of the bargaining unit (ie, graduate students holding TA or RA appointments at the time the ratification vote is circulated).
  - This means the new collective agreement will no longer be ratified by GSA Council, as past agreements have been, but rather through a process in which all graduate students holding a TA or RA at the time of ratification will be able to vote. This will necessitate changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy (see below).
- We will be required to negotiate an **Essential Services Agreement** with the University.
  - Some duties associated with TA or RAs may be deemed “essential services,” meaning (as noted in Bill 7):
    - a) Their interruption could endanger the life, personal safety, or health of the public  
*or*
    - b) They are necessary to the maintenance and administration of the rule of law or public security.
- There is **no obligation for the GSA to build a strike fund**.
  - A strike fund would be built from a designated deduction made from TA and RA stipends. It’s important to be aware that, should the GSA decide to build such a fund, it would take several years to grow it to a size where it could offer at least even partial support to TAs or RAs engaged in a strike action and that, given that the landscape might dramatically change in 2022 (see above), attempting to build and manage such a fund now might be premature.
  - I have also heard, via the labour consultations that I have been engaging in with graduate students, that most are not interested in paying a percentage of their salary for a strike fund which they may never need to access and which, in the event of a strike, may provide limited relief.
  - That said, this remains very much an evolving issue that the GSA needs to engage with and ultimately TAs and RAs will need to decide how to proceed on this matter.



- The GSA needs a **bylaw that addresses the processes for seeking feedback from the bargaining unit with respect to a negotiating mandate, negotiations themselves, and the ratification of any collective agreement.**
  - Amendments to existing GSA Bylaw and Policy, including repealing GSA Council's role in ratifying collective agreements, modifying the role of the GSA Labour Relations Committee (GSA LRC), reviewing the GSA Negotiating Committee (GSA NC), reviewing the GSA Vice-President Labour portfolio, and adding a process to get feedback directly from the members of the bargaining unit (rather than through the limited membership of the GSA LRC). These proposed amendments will be brought forward to GSA Council.
  - Likewise, a new separate GSA Bylaw and GSA Policy governing collective bargaining will be brought forward to GSA Council.
  - Bill 7 mandates that these bylaws and policies be submitted for vetting to the Labour Relations Board by July 2018 and making these changes to the GSA's governing documents is necessary to ensure we are in compliance with this new legislation.

If you have questions, please contact me at [gsa.vplabour@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsa.vplabour@ualberta.ca). I look forward to discussing this very important matter.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sasha van der Klein'.

Sasha van der Klein

**GSA Labour Relations Committee (GSA LRC)  
Report to GSA Council for the July 17, 2017 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Sasha van der Klein  
Date: July 14, 2017

Dear Council Colleagues,

The GSA Labour Relations Committee (GSA LRC) met on June 27 to review Bill 7 and the steps needed to ensure GSA compliance and to review the 2017 bargaining work plan, and to consider elements to include in the GSA's first draft of the Opening Position for the upcoming round of collective bargaining, which will begin in the fall.

I am happy to answer any questions.

Respectfully,  
Sasha van der Klein, GSA Vice-President Labour and Chair, GSA LRC

**GSA Vice-President Student Services  
Report to GSA Council for the July 17, 2017 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Royle Feng  
Date: July 14, 2017

Dear Council Colleagues,

Time flies! I hope many of you have enjoyed, or will enjoy, nice trips with your family and friends this summer. I am impressed by the wonderful weather this month, especially with the hot weather these last two weeks. During such an impressive period, I was mainly involved in the below activities.

At the U-Pass Administrative meeting, I communicated that the GSA Board would continue to pursue the issue of Michener Park transit and that it was a key item of the 2017-2018 GSA Board Strategic Work Plan. The U-Pass Admin Committee agreed to maintain Michener Park transit as a standing item on future committee meeting agendas. At the U-Pass Advisory Committee meeting, there were no Smart Fare updates provided but Edmonton Transit Service provided an update on the signing of the 2017-2021 agreements. They noted that they have received final approval from the city's legal department and that the agreements would be distributed to post-secondary institutions and municipalities for signing shortly.

During a United Way Campaign committee meeting, I provided some feedback on their banners, signs, flags, and poster designs; since there are so many international students at the U of A, I recommended that multi-language advertising materials should be supplied as this will make the campaign more inclusive. Following the kick-off of this campaign in the fall, the United Way Campaign Committee will request to attend a GSA Council meeting to provide a brief presentation regarding its work.

During my monthly meeting with the Dean of Students, I raised a question from a graduate student who, based on her past experience at the University of Waterloo, asked whether the University could provide piano rooms for all students to use. The Dean of Students expressed interest in this proposal as it might be a possible mental wellness initiative and we plan to follow-up with him in future meetings. I have also communicated with Ilya, the Students' Union (SU) Vice-President Student Life, about this proposal and we are scheduled to discuss it further shortly.

As Masoud reported, this past month we also had a very enjoyable dinner with the SU executive, and I look forward to cooperating and coordinating on shared issues and projects.

Best regards,

Royle Feng, GSA Vice-President Student Services

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between June 19, 2017 and July 17, 2017. The meetings were accurate at the time of printing. Please note that I was away July 13-14.*

June 20	U-Pass Advisory Committee Meeting
June 21	Dinner with the Executives of the Students' Union
June 22	U-Pass Administrative Committee Meeting
June 22	United Way Campaign Committee Meeting
June 29	Meeting with André Costopoulos, Dean of Students
July 10	United Way Campaign Committee Meeting
July 15	Campus Food Bank Board Planning Session

**GSA Nominating Committee (GSA NoC)  
Report to GSA Council for the July 17, 2017 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Radim Barta  
Date: July 14, 2017

Dear Council Colleagues,

The report from the GSA NoC this month is a summary of discussions/decisions the GSA NoC 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

**GSA Council-Elected Officers**

**1) GSA Deputy Speaker and GSA DRO (2 Graduate Student Positions in Total)**

As per GSA Bylaw and Policy, nominations for these positions will open “on or about May 1 of every year” and will close “by May 30 or the next following working day” (Section D: GSA Officers, GSA Bylaw, GSA Officers, Section D.BYL.3.1.b and D.BYL.3.1.c). These positions were first advertised in the GSA newsletter of May 5, 2017 with a nomination deadline of May 29, 2017. A call for additional nominations was emailed to GSA Council on May 31, 2017 with a deadline of June 13, 2017. As no nominations were received, these positions were again advertised in the GSA newsletter of June 23, 2017 with a nomination deadline of July 5, 2017. No nominations were received. A call for additional nominations was emailed to GSA Council on July 6, 2017, with a nomination deadline of July 12, 2017. No nominations were received. These positions will be advertised again.

**GSA Standing Committees**

**1) GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC) (1 GSA Council Member)**

On June 29, 2017, GSA Council members were notified via email of one (1) vacancy on the GSA ERC for a member of GSA Council. The deadline to receive nominations was July 6, 2017 and no nominations were received. A call for additional nominations was emailed to GSA Council on July 6, 2017. The deadline to receive additional nominations was July 13, 2017 and no additional nominations were received. This position will be advertised again.

**2) GSA Governance Committee (GSA GC) (1 GSA Council Member)**

On June 23, 2017, GSA Council members were notified via email of one (1) vacancy on the GSA GC for a member of GSA Council. The deadline to receive nominations was July 5, 2017 and no nominations were received. A call for additional nominations was emailed to GSA Council on July 6, 2017. The deadline to receive additional nominations was July 12, 2017 and one (1) additional nomination was received. There will be a paper ballot vote. **See Item 9a – Nominees for GSA GC.**

**3) GSA Labour Relations Committee (GSA LRC) (1-5 Graduate Student Positions)**

These positions were advertised in the June 29, 2017 GSA newsletter with a nomination deadline of July 6, 2017. Two (2) nominations were received. A second call for nominations was circulated to GSA Council on July 11, 2017 with a

nomination deadline of July 13, 2017. No additional nominations were received. There will be a paper ballot vote. **See Item 9b – Nominees for GSA LRC.**

**4) GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC) (1 Graduate Student Position)**

This position was advertised in the June 29, 2017 GSA newsletter with a nomination deadline of July 6, 2017. No nominations were received. A second call for nominations was circulated to GSA Council on July 6, 2017 with a nomination deadline of July 13, 2017. One (1) additional nomination was received. There will be a paper ballot vote. **See Item 9 – Nominees for GSA BFC.**

**5) GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (GSA ACB) (1 Graduate Student Position)**

This position was advertised in the June 23, 2017 GSA newsletter with a nomination deadline of July 5, 2017. No nominations were received. A second call for nominations was circulated to GSA Council on July 6, 2017 with a nomination deadline of July 12, 2017. No additional nominations were received. This position will be advertised again.

**External Committees**

**1) Green and Gold Grant Adjudication Committee (2 Graduate Student Positions)**

These positions were advertised in the June 9, 2017 GSA newsletter with a nomination deadline of June 21, 2017. Three (3) nominations were received and **Mostafa Tawfeek (Civil and Environmental Engineering)** and **Ryan Chee (Electrical and Computer Engineering)** were elected by GSA NoC to serve on the Green and Gold Grant Adjudication Committee.

**Current Vacancies**

No items to report at this time.

**GSA Executive Director  
Report to GSA Council for the July 17, 2017 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Courtney Thomas and Julie Tanguay  
Date: July 14, 2017

Dear GSA Council Members,

As I am currently on maternity leave, Julie (who is serving as Acting Executive Director in my absence) and I collaborated on this month's report to GSA Council. There are a few updates that we would like to highlight for you.

Firstly, as reported last month, the GSA's annual external audit (as required by the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*) was conducted in June. The 2016-2017 Audited Financial Statements have been shared with you and, also as noted previously, the GSA is in excellent shape. After the GSA Council meeting the audit will be submitted to the University's Board of Governors (also required by the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*) and posted on the GSA's website. Additionally, this month the first report on budget and expenditures for 2017-2018 was circulated to GSA Council. The budget is on track and there are no issues or concerns.

Secondly, this summer the office is busy working on a number of things in preparation for the fall, including ongoing work on ensuring the GSA's compliance with the provisions of Bill 7 and holding town halls to inform graduate students and get their feedback on the important changes contained within this legislation, preparing for negotiations (in the fall) of the next Collective Agreement, designing the 2017-2018 GSA Planner, planning for fall and departmental orientations, and drafting proposed changes to a number of GSA Bylaws and Policies that will come forward to relevant GSA Standing Committees and, ultimately, to GSA Council in the upcoming months (including changes to the Nominating Policy and the Legal Defence Fund Policy).

Best,  
Courtney Thomas, Executive Director, and Julie Tanguay, Associate Director and Acting Executive Director

## Management Report to the GSA Board, June 21, 2017

The following issues have dominated management's attention in the two weeks since the last GSA Board meeting on June 7, 2017:

### Strategic

- **Main Issues Dealt With in the Past Two Weeks:** Forward planning for GSA events; GSA Council remuneration; design of the GSA Planner for 2017-2018; file clean up and associated document archiving and destruction; GSA Budget and Finance Committee meeting, GSA Council and associated post-meeting action; preparing for an upcoming meeting of the GSA Labour Relations Committee; annual GSA audit; Bill 7 discussions and a meeting with the GSA's legal counsel to review the opinion on the legislation that they provided; meeting with the VP Labour to discuss a communications plan associated with Bill 7; researching graduate student unions at other Canadian institutions; forward planning for the 2018 GSA General Election; and support for the drafting of the 2017-2018 GSA Board SWP (and associated release letters to stakeholders and partners).
- **Bylaw and Policy Review:** Follow up work associated with the GSA Nominating Committee's recent review of GSA Policy on Nominating (reviewing an eight draft of potential proposed changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy in advance of a meeting of the GSA NoC over the summer); reviewing a third draft of potential proposed changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy on the Legal Defense Fund; and reviewing a first draft of potential proposed changes to GSA Policy of Budget Principles, Practices, and Procedures.
- **Graduate Student Groups:** Ongoing strategizing related to residence associations; relationship building and maintenance with Student Group Services (revisiting an outdated MoU, etc); and review of various group constitutions.

### Grants and Office Operations

- Planning for fall events (including departmental orientations), selling ad space in/designing the GSA 2017-2018 Planner, and ordering GSA branded items.
- Cross-training on grants processing and participating in PeopleSoft training.
- Annual GSA Council remuneration.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Nominating Committee (filling vacancies on the GSA Labour Relations Committee and the Green and Gold Grant Adjudication Committee; forward planning for the 2018 GSA General Election; and election of the GSA Chief Returning Officer, GSA Deputy Returning Officer, GSA Speaker, and GSA Deputy Speaker).
- Transfer of content to Sitecore 3 (to be completed in June), associated internal review prior to sending to IST for final review, and finalizing the GSA's MoU with IST.
- Facebook = 970 likes (up 4 from June 21); Facebook posts reached 703 users this week and our "post engagement" count was 165. Twitter = 747 followers (up 0 from June 21); our tweets earned 1,200 "impressions" over the last week.

	Total Amount Available This Period	Total Amount Remaining This Period (Post-Processing)	Number of New Applications Since Last GSAB	Total Number of Applications This Period
<b>ATAs</b>	\$157,996.36	\$0 <b>CLOSED</b>	6	337 (11 pending processing)
<b>CCGs</b>	\$110,512.38	\$3,512.38 <b>CLOSED</b>	0	60 (0 pending processing)
<b>ASGAs</b>	\$5,668.15	\$0 <b>CLOSED</b>	0	5 (0 pending processing)
<b>EBs</b>	\$128,952.00 (no periods)	\$87,666.00	1	11 (1 pending processing)

## Management Report to the GSA Board, June 28, 2017

The following issues have dominated management's attention in the two weeks since the last GSA Board meeting on June 21, 2017:

### Strategic

- **Main Issues Dealt With in the Past Week:** Design of the GSA Planner for 2017-2018; GSA Labour Relations Committee meeting and Bill 7 discussions; meeting with the VP Labour to discuss a communications plan associated with Bill 7; researching graduate student unions at other Canadian institutions and their Collective Agreement; forward planning for the 2018 GSA General Election; and support for the drafting of the 2017-2018 GSA Board SWP (and associated release letters to stakeholders and partners).
- **Bylaw and Policy Review:** Follow up work associated with the GSA Nominating Committee's recent review of GSA Policy on Nominating (reviewing a ninth draft of potential proposed changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy in advance of a meeting of the GSA NoC in July); reviewing a third draft of potential proposed changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy on the Legal Defense Fund; and reviewing a first draft of potential proposed changes to GSA Policy of Budget Principles, Practices, and Procedures.
- **Graduate Student Groups:** Ongoing strategizing related to residence associations; relationship building and maintenance with Student Group Services (revisiting an outdated MoU, etc); and review of various group constitutions.

### Grants and Office Operations

- Designing the GSA 2017-2018 Planner and planning for fall events (including departmental orientations).
- Annual GSA Council remuneration.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Nominating Committee (filling vacancies on the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board, GSA Budget and Finance Committee, GSA Elections and Referenda Committee, GSA Governance Committee, and GSA Labour Relations Committee; and election of the GSA Deputy Returning Officer and GSA Deputy Speaker).
- Transfer of content to Sitecore 3, and filing the signed GSA's MoU with IST.
- Facebook = 966 likes (up 4 from June 14); Facebook posts reached 340 users this week and our "post engagement" count was 128. Twitter = 747 followers (up 1 from June 14); our tweets earned 1,800 "impressions" over the last week.

	Total Amount Available This Period	Total Amount Remaining This Period (Post-Processing)	Number of New Applications Since Last GSAB	Total Number of Applications This Period
<b>ATAs</b>	\$157,996.36	\$0 <b>CLOSED</b>	0	337 (0 pending processing)
<b>CCGs</b>	\$110,512.38	\$3,512.38 <b>CLOSED</b>	0	60 (0 pending processing)
<b>ASGAs</b>	\$5,668.15	\$0 <b>CLOSED</b>	0	5 (0 pending processing)
<b>EBs</b>	\$128,952.00 (no periods)	\$87,666.00	0	11 (0 pending processing)

### Management Report to the GSA Board, July 5, 2017

The following issues have dominated management's attention in the two weeks since the last GSA Board meeting on June 28, 2017:

#### Strategic

- **Main Issues Dealt With in the Past Week:** Design of the GSA Planner for 2017-2018; planning town halls on Bill 7 (first one is July 11); meeting with the VP Labour to discuss Bill 7; researching graduate student unions at other Canadian institutions and their Collective Agreement; forward planning for the 2018 GSA General Election; planning for Fall Orientation and Departmental Orientations; and support for the drafting of the 2017-2018 GSA Board SWP (and associated release letters to stakeholders and partners).
- **Bylaw and Policy Review:** Follow up work associated with the GSA Nominating Committee's recent review of GSA Policy on Nominating (reviewing an tenth draft of potential proposed changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy in advance of a meeting of the GSA NoC in July); reviewing a fourth draft of potential proposed changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy on the Legal Defense Fund; and reviewing a second draft of potential proposed changes to GSA Policy of Budget Principles, Practices, and Procedures.
- **Graduate Student Groups:** Ongoing strategizing related to residence associations; relationship building and maintenance with Student Group Services (revisiting an outdated MoU, etc); and review of various group constitutions.

#### Grants and Office Operations

- Designing the GSA 2017-2018 Planner and planning for fall events (including departmental orientations).
- Opening of a new granting period.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Nominating Committee (planning in person meeting, GSA Appeals and Complaints Board, GSA Budget and Finance Committee, GSA Elections and Referenda Committee, GSA Governance Committee, and GSA Labour Relations Committee; and election of the GSA Deputy Returning Officer and GSA Deputy Speaker).
- Transfer of content to Sitecore 3.
- Facebook = 972 likes (up 6 from June 28); Facebook posts reached 651 users this week and our "post engagement" count was 75. Twitter = 749 followers (up 2 from June 28); our tweets earned 754 "impressions" over the last week.

	Total Amount Available This Period	Total Amount Remaining This Period (Post-Processing)	Number of New Applications Since Last GSAB	Total Number of Applications This Period
<b>ATAs</b>	\$90,586.67	\$82,586.67	16	16 (16 pending processing)
<b>CCGs</b>	\$60,824.38	\$7,824.38 <b>CLOSED</b>	35	35 (35 pending processing)
<b>ASGAs</b>	\$5,937.50	\$5,307.07	1	1 (1 pending processing)
<b>EBs</b>	\$133,952.00 (no periods)	\$87,666.00	0	11 (0 pending processing)

### Management Report to the GSA Board, July 12, 2017

The following issues have dominated management's attention in the two weeks since the last GSA Board meeting on July 5, 2017:

#### Strategic

- **Main Issues Dealt With in the Past Week:** Design of the GSA Planner for 2017-2018; first town halls on Bill 7 (second one is July 24); researching graduate student unions at other Canadian institutions and their Collective Agreement; mailing of GSA Council material; forward planning for the 2018 GSA General Election; planning for Fall Orientation and Departmental Orientations; and preparing the release of the 2017-2018 GSA Board SWP to stakeholders and partners.
- **Bylaw and Policy Review:** Follow up work associated with the GSA Nominating Committee's recent review of GSA Policy on Nominating (reviewing an eleventh draft of potential proposed changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy in advance of a meeting of the GSA NoC in July); reviewing a fifth draft of potential proposed changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy on the Legal Defense Fund; and reviewing a third draft of potential proposed changes to GSA Policy of Budget Principles, Practices, and Procedures.
- **Graduate Student Groups:** Ongoing strategizing related to residence associations; relationship building and maintenance with Student Group Services (revisiting an outdated MoU, etc); and review of various group constitutions.

#### Grants and Office Operations

- Designing the GSA 2017-2018 Planner and planning for fall events (including departmental orientations).
- Supporting the work of the GSA Nominating Committee (planning in person meeting, updating the Bank of Names, GSA Appeals and Complaints Board, GSA Budget and Finance Committee, GSA Elections and Referenda Committee, GSA Governance Committee, and GSA Labour Relations Committee; and election of the GSA Deputy Returning Officer and GSA Deputy Speaker).
- Transfer of content to Sitecore 3.
- Facebook = 975 likes (up 3 from July 5); Facebook posts reached 879 users this week and our "post engagement" count was 119. Twitter = 750 followers (up 1 from July 5); our tweets earned 209 "impressions" over the last week.

	Total Amount Available This Period	Total Amount Remaining This Period (Post-Processing)	Number of New Applications Since Last GSAB	Total Number of Applications This Period
<b>ATAs</b>	\$90,586.67	\$64,629.86	40	56 (43 pending processing)
<b>CCGs</b>	\$60,824.38	\$7,824.38 <b>CLOSED</b>	0	35 (7 pending processing)
<b>ASGAs</b>	\$5,937.50	\$3,807.07	0	2 (2 pending processing)
<b>EBs</b>	\$133,952.00 (no periods)	\$83,266.00	0	12 (0 pending processing)