

**GSA Council Meeting AGENDA**  
Monday, 19 October 2020 at 6:00 pm  
Held online via Zoom

**The GSA respectfully acknowledges that the University of Alberta is located on Treaty 6 territory, traditional lands of First Nations and Métis people.**

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

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

**Speaker Pranidhi Baddam in the Chair**

**OPEN SESSION**

**Attached  
Numbered Pages**

1. Approval of the 19 October 2020 Agenda (*suggested time: 1 min*)
2. Approval of the Minutes from the 21 September 2020 GSA Council Meeting (*suggested time: 1 min*)  
*Attachment:*
  - i. Minutes from the 21 September 2020 GSA Council Meeting
3. Changes in GSA Council Membership (*suggested time: 1 min*)
  - i. Introduction of New GSA Council Members (*If you are new to GSA Council, please let us know it is your first meeting*)
  - ii. Farewell to Departing GSA Council Members (*If this is your last GSA Council meeting, or if your last GSA Council meeting is approaching, please let us know*)

**2.0 - 2.4**

**GSA Council Member Announcements**

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

**Discussion Items**

5. University of Alberta Academic Restructuring Initiative Update (*suggested time: 45 min*)  
**Marc Waddingham (President) will present the item and introduce the guest.**

**Guest:** Dr. Steven Dew (Provost and Vice-President Academic)

*GSA Council members are encouraged to visit the following to review materials associated with this item:*

[Service Excellence Transformation](#)  
[Academic Restructuring](#)  
[Academic Restructuring Interim Report](#)  
[UofA Tomorrow \(UAT\)](#)

6. GSA Board Strategic Work Plan 2020-2021: Update to GSA Council (*suggested time: 30 mins*)  
**Marc Waddingham (President) will present the item.**

*Attachment:*

- i. GSA Board Strategic Work Plan 2020-2021: Update to GSA Council

**6.0 - 6.4**

**Action Item**

7. Recommended Changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy Section O: GSA Recognition Awards (*suggested time: 5 min*)  
**Anas Fassih (Vice-President External) will present the item.**

*Attachment:*

- i. Outline of Issue 7.0
- ii. Proposed Changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy Section O: GSA Recognition Awards 7.1

**Elections** (*suggested time – to be determined*)

**8. GSA Council Elections** (*suggested time – to be determined*)  
**Kenzie Gordon (GSA Nominating Committee Chair) will present the item.**

GSA Council-Elected Officer Positions

a. Deputy Returning Officer (DRO)

*Attachments:*

- i. Nominees for DRO (1 vacancy) 8.0 - 8.5

GSA Standing Committees

b. GSA Awards Selection Committee (GSA ASC) (4 vacancies)

*Attachment:*

- i. Nominees for the GSA ASC – GSA Member Positions (4 vacancies) 8.6 - 8.9

**Reports** (*suggested time: 15 min*)

**9. President (Marc Waddingham, President)**

- i. President's Report 9.0 - 9.1
- ii. GSA Board Report 9.2
- iii. GSA Budget and Finance Committee Report (**no written report at this time**)
- iv. GSA Governance Committee Report 9.3

**10. Vice-President Academic (Sachiketha Reddy, Vice-President Academic)**

- i. Vice-President Academic's Report 10.0 - 10.1

**11. Vice-President External (Anas Fassih, Vice-President External)**

- i. Vice-President External's Report 11.0 - 11.1
- ii. GSA Awards Selection Committee Report (**no written report at this time**)
- iii. Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council Update to Member Organizations 11.2 - 11.3

**12. Vice-President Labour (Umesh Nimmathi, Vice-President Labour)**

- i. Vice-President Labour's Report 12.0
- ii. GSA Labour Relations Committee Report (**no written report at this time**)

**13. Vice-President Student Services (Sridhar Parasharamatham, Vice-President Student Services)**

- i. Vice-President Student Services' Report 13.0 - 13.1

**14. Senator (Marla Palakkamanil, Senator)**

- iii. Senator's Report (**no written report at this time**)

**15. Speaker (Pranidhi Baddam, Speaker)**

- i. Speaker's Report (**no written report at this time**)

**16. Chief Returning Officer (Michael Huang, Chief Returning Officer)**

- i. Chief Returning Officer's Report (**no written report at this time**)

**17. GSA Nominating Committee (Kenzie Gordon, GSA Nominating Committee Chair)**

- i. GSA Nominating Committee Report 17.0 - 17.1

**18. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (Jennifer Bertrand, GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Chair)**

- i. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Report 18.0

**19. GSA Management (Courtney Thomas, Executive Director)**

- i. Executive Director's Report

**19.0 - 19.4**

**Question Period**

**20.** Written Questions

**21.** Oral Questions

**Adjournment**

**GSA Council Meeting MINUTES**  
Monday, 21 September 2020 at 6:00 pm  
Held online via Zoom

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Marc Waddingham (President)	Allan Yarahmady (Biochemistry)	Yina Liu (Elementary Education)	Neha Jaswal (Occupational Therapy)
Sachiketha Reddy (VP Academic)	Jessica Grenke (Biological Science)	Samantha Blais (History, Classics, & Religious Studies)	Braden Chow; Shayla Mosley (Oncology)
Anas Fassih (VP External)	Kevin Solar; Ashmita De (Biomedical Engineering)	Jessica Kennedy (Human Ecology)	Matthew Benson (Ophthalmology)
Umesh Nimmathi (VP Labour)	Georgio Cheruvellil (Business MBA)	Evan Wong (Indigenous Graduate Students' Association)	Shubham Soni (Paediatrics)
Pranidhi Baddam (Speaker)	Maggie Cascadden (Business PhD)	Muhammad Idrees Afzal (Internetworking)	Erika Poitras (Pharmacology)
Priyanka Maripuri (Deputy Speaker)	Sophie Keegan (Cell Biology)	Matthew Ormandy (Kinesiology, Sport, & Recreation)	Hamdah Al Nebaihi (Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences)
Michael Huang (Chief Returning Officer)	Omnath Ekambaram (Chemical & Materials Engineering)	Janet Zhou (Laboratory Medicine & Pathology)	Spencer Hayden (Philosophy)
Marla Palakkamanil (Senator)	Arsh Hazrah (Chemistry)	Tim Nessim (Law)	Kimberly Dice (Physical Therapy)
Neslihan Akpinar (Councillor-at-Large)	Kalvin Eng (Computing Science)	Jenn Laskosky (Library & Information Studies)	Clinton Potts (Physics)
Dylan Ashley (Councillor-at-Large)	Harsimrat Kaur (Dentistry)	Scott Perry (Linguistics)	Robert Reklow (Physiology)
Paramita Chaudhuri Basu (Councillor-at-Large)	Jennifer McDevitt (Digital Humanities)	Nishant Agrawal (Mathematical & Statistical Sciences)	Maura Roberts (Political Science)
Nadia Daniel (Councillor-at-Large)	Collette Slevinsky (Drama)	Shahed Taghian Dehaghani (Mechanical Engineering)	Connor Lambert; Ruby Prinsen (Psychology)
Tejasai Kommanpalli (Councillor-at-Large)	Qi Chen (Earth & Atmospheric Sciences)	Adrienne Watson (Medical Genetics)	McKenzie Tilstra (Public Health)
Zeenat Ladak (Councillor-at-Large)	Alexandra San Diego (East Asian Studies)	Julia May; Quinten Kieser (Medical Microbiology & Immunology)	Noor Al-Zanoon (Rehabilitation Science)
Yashita Singh (Councillor-at-Large)	Jasen Aussant (Economics)	Aris Boukouris (Medicine)	Beckett Stark (Renewable Resources)
Md Solimul Chowdhury (Councillor-at-Large)	Banazeer Yaqoob (Educational Policy Studies)	Treesa Friesen (MLCS)	Michael Huang (REES)
Zhiying Wang (AFNS)	Lauren Trafford (Educational Psychology)	Charbel Baaklini; Noam Steinberg (Neuroscience)	Robert Piazza (Secondary Education)
Kyla Cangiano (Anthropology)	Md Monir Hossain (Electrical & Computer Engineering)	Laura Reifferscheid; Mary Olukotun (Nursing)	Manzah Yankey (Sociology)

**Guests:** Crys Vincent (Advocacy and Outreach Chair, ab-GPAC; Vice-President External, Athabasca University GSA); Brandon Simmons (Executive Director, ab-GPAC); Kenzie Gordon (GSA Nominating Committee Chair; GSA ACB nominee, Digital Humanities); Alexandra Oullette Zuk (GSA ACB nominee, Neuroscience); Nicholas Ruel (GSA ACB nominee, Pharmacology); Nathalia Fagundes (GSA ASC nominee, Dentistry); Matthias Lottmann (GSA ASC nominee, Mechanical Engineering); Simran Pherwani (GSA ERC nominee, Pediatrics); Shiyu Teng (GSA ERC nominee, Mechanical Engineering).

Speaker Pranidhi Baddam in the Chair.

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

### Approval of Agenda

#### **1. Approval of the 21 September 2020 Consolidated Agenda**

Members had before them the 21 September 2020 Consolidated Agenda, which had been previously distributed on 18 September 2020. D Ashley **MOVED**; J Kennedy **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

### Approval of Minutes

#### **2. Minutes from the 17 August 2020 GSA Council Meeting**

Members had before them the 17 August 2020 GSA Council meeting minutes, which had been previously distributed on 11 September 2020. J Kennedy **MOVED**; P Chaudhuri Basu **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

### Changes in GSA Council Membership

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

- i. **Introduction of New GSA Council Members:** it was the first meeting for T Friesen (Modern Languages and Cultural Studies), S Blais (History & Classics), M Roberts (Political Science), N Jaswal (Occupational Therapy), T Nessim (Law), S Hayden (Philosophy), L Reifferscheid and M Olukotun (Nursing), M Ormandy (Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation), J May (Medical Microbiology and Immunology), M Cascadden (Business PhD), B Yaqoob (Educational Policy Studies), A Watson (Medical Genetics), R Prinsen (Psychology), and M Yankey (Sociology).

- ii. **Farewell to Departing GSA Council Members**

This was the last meeting for Qi Chen (Earth and Atmospheric Sciences).

### GSA Council Member Announcements

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

M Waddingham encouraged members to come to the GSA's town hall on 29 September to gather feedback and address graduate students' questions regarding the University of Alberta Tomorrow project. Information would be circulated in the forthcoming GSA newsletter.

### Discussion Item

#### **5. Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Overview and Membership Fees Consultation**

Anas Fassih (Vice-President External) presented the item and introduced the guests, Crys Vincent (Advocacy and Outreach Chair, ab-GPAC, and Vice-President External, Athabasca University GSA) and Brandon Simmons (Executive Director, ab-GPAC).

C Vincent provided an overview of the establishment, history, and composition of ab-GPAC, including the group's four pillars: to promote the impact of graduate studies, the attainability of graduate education, the knowledge creation abilities of graduate students, and purposeful investment in a foundation for the future. A Fassih provided a description of the organization's focus and 2020-2021 priorities. These priorities included support for caregiving graduate students, professional development opportunities for graduate students, improved digital infrastructure, and mental health resources for graduate students. A Fassih also outlined the group's COVID-specific priorities.

Members raised a number of questions in the ensuing discussion, including, among others: the inclusion of MacEwan, NAIT, and Red Deer College in the group (not part of the group as they do not have GSAs established by the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*, as the member organizations do, and is a requirement for membership); regarding ab-GPAC's membership organizations and opportunities for the organization to hire graduate students for research (ab-GPAC will always hire Alberta graduate students wherever possible); and how ab-GPAC might advocate for graduate students' interests in relation to the U of A's current academic restructuring (as that is an internal institutional priority, the U of A GSA will be responsible for representation at that level; ab-GPAC is contributing at the provincial government level, where a parallel restructuring is also occurring).

B Simmons then discussed a potential increase to ab-GPAC's membership fees and shared his email ([ed@abgpac.ca](mailto:ed@abgpac.ca)) and welcomed members to send questions. B Simmons and C Vincent then left the meeting to allow members to ask questions and discuss the proposed fee increase internally. Members raised a number of questions including, among others: ab-GPAC's budgetary considerations and structural staffing changes, including but not limited to providing more information about what type of contract services were included in the 50% expenditure in the statement of operations and to elaborate on the increase in Executive Director's salary (MW explained that as ab-GPAC developed, the group contracted out that position on a part-time basis. This position has now transitioned into a full-time one, which is now reflected in the group's budget line for salaries rather than in the line for contract services; the hours and salary of the position were increased to keep the position competitive).

## **Elections**

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

Kenzie Gordon (GSA Nominating Committee Chair) presented items 6.b and 6.c; Speaker presented items 6.a and 6.d.

#### **Standing Committees**

- a. **GSA Appeals and Complaints Board** (3 positions)  
Kenzie Gordon (Digital Humanities)  
Nicholas Ruel (Pharmacology)  
Alexandra Ouellette Zuk (Neuroscience)

Speaker presented the item and asked the nominees the following question: "please tell us why you'd like to continue to serve on the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board." Each nominee was given 45 seconds to answer the question in front of GSA Council members.

- b. **GSA Awards Selection Committee** (6 vacancies)  
Breanne Aylward (Public Health)  
Nathalie Fagundes (Dentistry)  
Matthias Lottman (Mechanical Engineering)

K Gordon presented this item. As not all nominees were present; no oral statements were made.

- c. **GSA Elections and Referenda Committee** (3 vacancies)  
Simran Pherwani (Pediatrics)  
Fatemeh Razavi (Mechanical Engineering)  
Shiyu Teng (Mechanical Engineering)

K Gordon presented this item. As not all nominees were present; no oral statements were made.

- d. **GSA Board and GSA Nominating Committee** (1 vacancy)  
Nadia Daniel (Councillor-at-Large)

Speaker presented this item and asked the nominee the following question: "please tell us why you'd like to continue to serve as a GSA Board and GSA Nominating Committee Member." The nominee was given 45 seconds to answer the question in front of GSA Council members.

## **Reports**

### **7. President**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 September 2020. The report stood as submitted. In addition, M Waddingham highlighted that the Academic Restructuring Working Group (ARWG) released its Interim Report earlier that day, and that the GSA was hosting a Town Hall on Academic Restructuring to consult with graduate students on 29 September 2020; that the GSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (GSA EDIC) was in development and terms of reference had been drafted and consultation and feedback was being solicited from key stakeholders; and that executive team had begun pursuing means of promoting graduate students as essential

figures in economic development, innovation, and entrepreneurship within the province.

**ii. GSA Board**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 September 2020. The report stood as submitted.

**iii. GSA Budget and Finance Committee**

No written report at this time.

**iv. GSA Governance Committee**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 September 2020. The report stood as submitted.

**8. Vice-President Academic**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 September 2020. The report stood as submitted. In addition, S Reddy emphasized that the GSA Board Strategic Work Plan (SWP) would be presented at the upcoming meeting of Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Council.

**9. Vice-President External**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 September 2020. The report stood as submitted. In addition, A Fassih stated that , among other highlights, work was ongoing in the vein of ensuring good COVID-19 behaviours in residences, that he was a member of the search committee for the vacant Vice-President (External Relations) position, and that ab-GPAC had welcomed its new Executive Director, Brandon Simmons, and wished former Executive Director Christopher Bell all the best in his future endeavours.

**ii. GSA Awards Selection Committee**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 September 2020. The report stood as submitted.

**10. Vice-President Labour**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 September 2020. The report stood as submitted. In addition, U Nimmathi noted that an announcement from the University regarding the Winter 2021 term was expected soon and that negotiations were ongoing for the next GSA Collective Agreement. He noted that the GSA was hosting a Labour 101 session on 30 September 2020.

**ii. GSA Labour Relations Committee**

No written report at this time.

**11. Vice-President Student Services**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 September 2020. The report stood as submitted.

**12. Senator**

**i. Senator's Report**

No written report at this time.

**13. Speaker**

**i. Speaker's Report**

No written report at this time.

**14. Chief Returning Officer**

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

No written report at this time.

**15. GSA Nominating Committee**

**i. GSA Nominating Committee Report**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 September 2020. The report stood as submitted. In addition, K Gordon highlighted the importance of current vacancies, in particular those on the GSA Governance Committee which conducted the vast majority of its work electronically.

**16. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee**

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

No written report at this time.

**17. GSA Management**

**i. Executive Director's Report**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 September 2020. The report stood as submitted. In addition, C Thomas noted that the GSA was hosting a Virtual Game Chillout on 25 September, a Town Hall on Academic Restructuring on 29 September, and a Lunch and Learn session featuring members of administration from FGSR on 2 October 2020. Information about these and all future events could be found on [the GSA website](#).

**Question Period**

**18. Written Questions:** No written questions were submitted.

**19. Oral Questions**

B Chow (Oncology) raised a question about the recent news of the COVID-19 outbreak in the St. Joseph's College men's residence and inquired whether graduate students had been impacted, or whether graduate student activities in a broader sense would be impacted as a result. M Waddingham noted that no graduate students were impacted to the best of his knowledge and there was little indication that there would be broader impact, but that he would pass along any updates in this vein.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:49 pm.



## 2020-2021 GSA Board Strategic Work Plan (SWP) 19 October 2020 Update to GSA Council

Each spring the GSA Directly-Elected Officers (hereafter referred to, informally, as the student executive team) work with the GSA Board to produce a Strategic Work Plan (SWP). The SWP is the document that steers and prioritizes the work and initiatives of the GSA, and is subject to revision as opportunities arise, shifting directions as needed. The SWP reflects the GSA's vision and mission to advocate for all graduate students to the University of Alberta and the Alberta Government for a safe, supportive, respectful, accessible, and inclusive community that fosters the multi-faceted roles played by graduate students.

This year, in order to develop a set of strategic priorities that reflect the changing needs of graduate students, the student executive team invited graduate students to participate in a town hall event on 22 May 2020 and circulated a feedback survey to graduate students during the period of 14-29 May 2020. These consultation initiatives yielded a significant amount of feedback and helped shape the [2020-2021 GSA Board Strategic Work Plan](#).

As with last year, the priorities for this year have been grouped into three categories: connect, support, and advocate. The student executive team will continue to engage in ongoing conversation with the GSA Board and GSA Council, and other GSA standing committees, concerning the pursuit of the goals outlined in the SWP.

Updates will be provided to GSA Council in October, January, and April; this document is the first of these three updates. A selection of ongoing work and new initiatives pursued and undertaken by the 2020-2021 student executive team (GSA President, Marc Waddingham, GSA VP Academic, Sachiketha Reddy, GSA VP External, Anas Fassih, GSA VP Labour, Umesh Nimmathi, and GSA VP Student Services, Sridhar Parasharamatham), in accordance with the 2020-2021 SWP, have been organized thematically and can be found below.

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### Theme: Connect

- In pursuit of its goal to foster a culture of equity, diversity, and inclusion among its members, the GSA will—with the leadership of the President—establish a new GSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (GSA EDIC). The President has overseen the development of draft terms of reference for the committee and is currently consulting with various stakeholders on their content. The proposal to establish the GSA EDIC is expected to be brought before GSA Council for voting in November 2020. In this vein, the GSA is seeking to develop a collection of resources tailored to the unique needs of Indigenous graduate students and Black graduate students, respectively;
- The VP Student Services has continued building relationships with University units, in particular the Community Social Work Team (CSWT) and is a member of the Days of Action (DOA) Committee which seeks to increase awareness on a number of fronts related to mental wellbeing. These initiatives, which include the significant addition of Graduate-Specific Collective Tea Times, are supported by the GSA in terms of programming and communication;
- Academically-Employed Graduate Students (AEGSs), for whom the GSA serves as a union under the leadership of the VP Labour, are recipients of the "AEGS Newsletter" which provides, among others, updates on the currently-ongoing negotiation process for the next Graduate Student Assistantship



Collective Agreement, as well as vacancy postings on the GSA Labour Relations Committee (GSA LRC). Since May 2020, six editions of this newsletter have been circulated;

- The GSA website, with guidance from the President, has been undergoing a review and update process, with an upcoming complete redesign expected to launch in November 2020. These efforts seek to improve communication and provide clarity and accessibility for graduate students and all other visitors of the GSA website;
- In pursuit of increased engagement, as suggested by the President and VP Student Services, the student executive team will be featured in a number of social media and communications initiatives in the Fall term, including but not limited to, vlogs and social media “takeovers”;
- Under the leadership of the President, dedicated pandemic-related sections were added to the GSA newsletter and the GSA website to help keep graduate students informed;
- The student executive team has also placed significant value on the cultivation of existing relationships with other University stakeholder associations. These include each student executive’s relationship and collaboration with their respective counterpart at the Students’ Union (SU); the President’s relationship and collaboration with the Non-Academic Staff Association (NASA), the Association of Academic Staff of University of Alberta (AASUA), and the Post-Doctoral Fellows’ Association (PDFA); and the VP External’s relationship and collaboration with the Alumni Association, which includes membership on Alumni Council;
- In an effort to construct relationships with other Canadian student associations, the President and VP External attended the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) “Digital Foundations” virtual conference in May 2020, as observers; and
- The VP Student Services has been participating in the negotiations process for the next U-Pass agreement, to ensure graduate students’ access to affordable transit.

#### **Theme: Support**

- In response to the COVID-19 global pandemic, and under the leadership of the student executive team, an additional \$100,000 of GSA funding was redirected to the 2020-2021 fiscal year, with a significant portion allotted for the GSA Emergency Bursary. A sum of \$250,000 has also been directed to the Student Financial Services office for the support of the University’s Supplementary Bursary for graduate students.. Furthermore, the GSA office shifted all its operations to remote delivery so that (among others) front desk support and grants and bursaries, could continue to be accessed by graduate students. The student executive team undertook advocacy efforts that resulted in a decrease in the Athletics and Recreation fee, temporary suspension of the PAW Centre fee, alternatives to the U-Pass program following its temporary suspension, and an additional retroactive opt-out period for the GSA Health and Dental Plan for the use of international students not able to travel to Canada;
- In further response to the global pandemic, the GSA’s finances are continuing to be managed prudently, under the supervision of the President, and enrolment numbers and their subsequent



impact on the GSA budget are being closely monitored, should the need arise for a re-evaluation of the annual budget;

- The President worked to support and assist the Black Graduate Students' Association with their recent advocacy work to connect and make direct calls to action to central administration and the Office of the University President's. The initiative was a success with numerous commitments made by senior officials to better address issues of inequality and discrimination on campus, and the GSA appreciates the invitation to support this important endeavour.
- With the guidance of the student executive team, [a slate of virtual events](#) has been launched to replace the calendar of in-person events originally planned for Fall 2020. These include, among others, now-virtual Info Sessions, a number of virtual game nights, and a lunch and learn series. The Fall 2020 Orientation event was rebranded as the Graduate Student Orientation, an eClass course that offered new and returning graduate students the chance to win an iPad;
- Under the supervision of the VP Student Services grants and bursaries have been disbursed to GSA members in the following amounts: \$264,000 in the form of Child Care Grants (CCGs), \$15,000 in the form of Academic Travel Grants (ATGs), \$98,000 in the form of Emergency Bursaries (EBs), and \$550 in the form of Graduate Student Group Grants (GSGGs), totalling \$377,550. Also in this vein, the GSA has launched the Indigenous Graduate Student Award, to be granted annually following adjudication by First Peoples' House, and a new GSA recognition award;
- In accordance with the portfolio of the VP Student Services and VP Academic, support continues for campus units such as the Campus Food Bank, the Career Centre, and the Academic Success Centre;
- GSA Health and Dental Plan coverage was enhanced, with no added costs for graduate students, such that: coverage for major restorative dental services has increased from 0% to 30% per Plan member per policy year; coverage for vision care has increased from \$150 to \$200 per Plan member per every two policy years; an annual drug maximum of \$10,000 for drugs covered under the Alberta Health formulary and \$3,000 for drugs which require the Special Authorization or Drug Exception process, has been implemented; and, eligibility criteria for claims under the Psychology/Counselling benefit have been expanded to include additional designations of Master's in Social Work and/or Registered Clinical Social Worker;
- The Graduate Student Assistance Program (GSAP), under the purview of the VP Student Services, supported graduate students through approximately 480 new cases opened between September 2019 and June 2020. This number aligns with the growing trend of GSA members accessing this program since the inception of the GSAP program in 2008;
- Michener Park residence closed, as planned, in July 2020. This was preceded by months of extensive work on the part of the VP External to connect graduate student residents to resources and support during their move-out and securing of alternate residences;
- The VP Labour has frequently met one-on-one with graduate students to offer individualized support and guidance regarding the Graduate Student Assistantship Collective Agreement. The President and the VP Academic have also met with a number of graduate students one-on-one, to advise them on

topics relevant to their respective portfolios. Meetings with graduate students are expected to continue and increase in the Fall and Winter academic terms; and

- In fulfilling the mandate to serve as the union for AEGSs, and in addition to leading the negotiation process for the next Graduate Student Assistantship Collective Agreement, the VP Labour has cultivated province-wide relationships as part of a series of labour roundtables facilitated by the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC).

#### Theme: Advocate

- To lay the foundation for graduate student advocacy in the coming year, the student executive team dedicated much of the Spring/Summer 2020 term to establishing new and cultivating existing relationships with members of University Administration. These included, among others, President and Vice-Chancellor Bill Flanagan; Provost and Vice-President (Academic) Steve Dew; Vice-Provost and Dean of Students André Costopoulos; Vice-President (Facilities & Operations) Andrew Sharman; Interim Vice-President (Research and Innovation) Walter Dixon; Interim Vice-President (University Relations) Catherine Swindlehurst; Vice-President (Finance & Administration) Gitta Kulczycki; Vice-Provost and Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Dean Brooke Milne; Chancellor Peggy Garritty; as well as the Board of Governors (BoG) which underwent significant changes to its membership in recent months;
- The President has dedicated significant time to advocating for the betterment of the graduate student experience and, in this vein, serves as the sole graduate student representative on the [Academic Restructuring Working Group \(ARWG\)](#), the primary body tasked with fulfilling the vision of the “[University of Alberta for Tomorrow](#)” project to change the structure of the University in order to respond to budgetary challenges and focus resources on academic activities. The President’s efforts included an invitation to Steve Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic), to connect with graduate students by attending the August 2020 meeting of GSA Council to provide information and respond to questions regarding the academic restructuring. The GSA also hosted a town hall for graduate students on 29 September 2020;
- The President served on the University President Installation Committee, the work of which culminated in the installation of University President, Bill Flanagan, on 16 September 2020;
- The President and VP External both serve on the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Board of Directors and have contributed extensively to its ongoing work, which includes, but is not limited to, graduate student labour relations (both status quo and strategic priorities) as well as consultation with the Government of Alberta as part of its “[Alberta 2030](#)” initiative. While the President and VP External provide regular updates on this work, some additional updates issued by ab-GPAC can be found in the form of [media releases](#). They also meet regularly with other Edmonton-based student associations through the Edmonton Student Alliance; and
- As well as serving on the FGSR Council and the General Faculties Council (GFC), the VP Academic chairs both the GSA FGSR Council Caucus (comprised of up to 25 graduate student representatives) and the GSA GFC Caucus (comprised of 14 graduate student representatives). This work involves the provision of important context and information to graduate student representatives so that the University

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governance process can benefit from a diverse range of graduate student voices, as is reflective of the graduate student body. The VP Labour also serves on the FGSR Council Caucus and plays an important role to that end.

- The President and VP Academic have begun a new advocacy route investigating avenues to connect graduate students to internships in the local start-up/entrepreneurial community. While still an early stage project, meetings with the Graduate Student Internship Program Office, the Interim Vice-President (Research & Innovation) Walter Dixon and AVP Innovation Deborah James, Alumni Council's Venture Mentoring Service, and Edmonton Innovation Authority Board member Ashlyn Bernier, have already taken place with foundational conversations positive that the GSA will have a role to play in these various projects.
- The President and VP Academic continue to work with Dean Brooke Milne of FGSR to further and support the Graduate Supervisory Excellence Initiative, which is on schedule to complete its Phase 1 rollout for Winter 2021. The current program implements mandatory reporting structures for supervisors of graduate students at the beginning of their studies, in addition to an annual report to monitor the progress of graduate students in their programs. We applaud FGSR for their efforts and successful start to the project, and plan to continue offering our support and input as it matures towards its second stage.

The student executive team will continue to move these initiatives forward, as well as pursue other, new initiatives for the fulfilment of the goals outlined in the 2020-2021 SWP. The next update on the SWP will be brought forward to GSA Council in January 2021.

## Outline of Issue

### **Recommended Addition to GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section O: GSA Recognition Awards**

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

That GSA Council, on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Awards Selection Committee, **APPROVE** recommended changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section O: GSA Recognition Awards, as shown in the attached document and effective upon approval by GSA Council.

#### **Background:**

Following ongoing discussions by the GSA Awards Selection Committee (GSA ASC) concerning the establishment of a new GSA Recognition Award, the Spirit Award (funding for which was approved by GSA Council in February 2020), the committee voted, via email on 14 September 2020, to recommend a proposed addition to GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section O, that encompasses the description and eligibility criteria of this new award.

#### **Jurisdiction:**

##### Section A: Authority, GSA Bylaw, Authority, Section A.BYL.2.2

*"GSA Policy is under the jurisdiction of GSA Council and may be amended by a simple majority vote of GSA Council at any meeting of GSA Council."*

##### Section O: GSA Recognition Awards, GSA Policy, GSA Standing Committees, GSA Awards Selection Committee, Section O.POL.5.2

*"The GSA ASC will review GSA Bylaw and Policy on GSA Recognition Awards annually and make any recommendations to GSA Council."*

**Proposed Addition to Section O: GSA Recognition Awards****O.POL.2.13 GSA Graduate Student Spirit Award**

O.POL.2.13.a The purpose of this award is to recognize GSA members who go above and beyond to create a positive graduate experience for their peers. Nominees must be nominated by a fellow graduate student. Self-nominations are not accepted; group nominations are not accepted.

O.POL.2.13.b The GSA Graduate Student Spirit Award will be adjudicated on the basis of three (3) criteria: commitment to a collegial atmosphere through peer connection; leadership in creating a positive experience or environment for others; and evidence of meaningful support for their peers. Each criterion will be ranked on a scale of 1-5 (5 being high) and then added to determine the total rank for the nominee.

O.POL.2.13.c Two (2) awards valued at \$750 may be conferred annually.

**GSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE (GSA NoC)  
AND DEPUTY RETURNING OFFICER (DRO) (1 POSITION)  
NOMINEES**

As per GSA Bylaw and Policy, the GSA NoC will open nominations for DRO “on or about 1 May of every year” and nominations will be submitted in writing to the GSA NoC “by 30 May or the next working day” (Section D: GSA Officers, GSA Bylaw, GSA Officers, Council-Elected Officers, Section D.BYL.3.1.b and Section D.BYL.3.1.c). This position was first advertised in the GSA newsletters of 8, 15, and 22 May 2020 with a nomination deadline of 27 May 2020, As no nominations were received, this vacancy were advertised again in the GSA newsletters of 19 and 26 June, and 3 and 10 July 2020 with a nomination deadline of 15 July 2020. As no nominations were received, it was advertised again in the GSA newsletters of 25 September, and 2 and 9 October 2020 with a nomination deadline of 14 October 2020. Two (2) nominations were received.

**There will be an electronic ballot votes held at the 19 October 2020 GSA Council meeting to elect the DRO for 2020-2021.**

*If you and your alternate are unable to attend the 19 October 2020 meeting of GSA Council and would like to cast an electronic vote for this position, you must contact the GSA Nominating Committee Coordinator ([gsanomco@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsanomco@ualberta.ca)) BEFORE 3:00 PM on Monday 19 October 2020 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. Sophie Shi (Materials Engineering)
2. Julianna Stern (Public Health)

**Jurisdiction:**

Section D: GSA Officers, GSA Bylaw, GSA Officers, Section D.BYL.3.1.d

*“The GSA NoC will follow its legislated process in forwarding one or more nominations to GSA Council except that the GSA NoC may not waive advertising. Note that the legislated GSA NoC process specifies that all vacancies will be advertised at least twice in advance of the nomination deadline.”*

Section E: Nominating, GSA Policy, Nominating, Section E.POL.3.2.a

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

**Biographies and brief resumes of the nominees fare ATTACHED on pages 8.5 and 8.4. Biographies and brief resumes have been attached as received (ie not edited).**

**Qualifications as set out in Section D: GSA Officers, GSA Policy, GSA Officer Portfolios, D.POL.10.4**

- D.POL.10.4.a “The CRO and DRO should ideally have previous experience with the administration of student elections.
- D.POL.10.4.b The CRO and DRO are expected to be neutral and to act impartially, including declaring any conflicts of interest and rising above individual or departmental interests.
- D.POL.10.4.c The CRO and the DRO should have a thorough understanding of GSA Bylaw and Policy, especially with sections pertaining to elections and referenda.
- D.POL.10.4.d The CRO and the DRO should have schedules that allow for the bulk of election or referenda work to take place in a compressed time-frame (a few weeks).
- D.POL.10.4.e The CRO and the DRO should be able to adopt a collaborative approach with others and are required to consult with the GSA ERC on many aspects of GSA General Elections, by-elections, and referenda.”

**Duties as set out in Section D: GSA Officers, GSA Bylaw, GSA Officers, D.BYL.3**

- D.BYL.3.3.a “The CRO is responsible for running all GSA elections and referenda.”
- D.BYL.3.3.d “Duties of the Deputy Speaker and DRO are to assist the Speaker and CRO as needed.”

**Duties as set out in Section D: GSA Officers, GSA Policy, GSA Officer Portfolios, D.POL.10****D.POL.10.1 “Duties**

- D.POL.10.1.a The Chief Returning Officer (CRO), with advice from the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC), oversees the GSA General Election, by-elections, and referenda processes, observing the guiding principle “that they are to be fair, respect the wishes of voters, and conducted in a manner that reflects the excellent, positive reputation of the GSA” (Section I: Elections, GSA Bylaw, Elections, Section I.BYL.1.1 and Section J: Referenda, GSA Bylaw, Referenda, Section J.BYL.1.1).
- D.POL.10.1.b The CRO monitors candidate and Campaign Representative activities and disciplines candidates and Campaign Representatives for alleged breaches of GSA Bylaw and Policy on elections and referenda.
- D.POL.10.1.c The CRO serves as a non-voting member of the GSA ERC.
- D.POL.10.1.d The CRO oversees the GSA General Election, by-elections, and referenda:
- D.POL.10.1.d.i On the recommendation of the GSA ERC, the CRO approves timelines for the GSA General Election, by-elections, and referenda in accordance with GSA Bylaw and Policy on elections and referenda, and communicates these timelines to GSA members.
  - D.POL.10.1.d.ii With advice from the GSA ERC, the CRO advertises the nomination period for any GSA General Election or by-election, the registration period for any referendum, and the voting periods for the GSA General Election, by-elections, and referenda.
  - D.POL.10.1.d.iii On the recommendation of the GSA ERC, the CRO approves nomination forms for the GSA General Election and by-elections and registration forms for referenda, in accordance with GSA Bylaw and Policy on elections and referenda.
  - D.POL.10.1.d.iv On the recommendation of the GSA ERC and with advice from the ED (or delegate) and the Financial Manager, the CRO approves the electronic software or applications used to run the GSA General Election, by-elections, or referenda.

D.POL.10.1.d.v	On the recommendation of the GSA ERC, the CRO approves the layout of the ballots for the GSA General Election, by-elections, and referenda.
D.POL.10.1.d.vi	The CRO holds at least one (1) All-Candidates Meeting during a GSA General Election or by-election, and at least one (1) Meeting of the Campaign Representatives in a referendum, to communicate bylaws and policies to all candidates and/or referendum Campaign Representatives and answer questions about campaigning rules and regulations in a GSA General Election, by-election, or referendum.
D.POL.10.1.d.vii	With advice from the GSA ERC, the CRO plans a GSA General Election or by-election forum for GSA members to ask candidates questions.
D.POL.10.1.d.viii	The CRO reviews and approves campaign materials as per GSA Bylaw and Policy on elections and referenda.
D.POL.10.1.d.ix	With advice from the GSA ERC, the CRO issues interpretations of GSA Bylaw and Policy on elections and referenda to be shared equally amongst all candidates and Campaign Representatives during the course of a GSA General Election, by-election, or referendum.
D.POL.10.1.d.x	With advice from the GSA ERC, the CRO receives, manages, and rules on complaints regarding alleged breaches of GSA Bylaw or Policy, in accordance with Section I: Elections, GSA Bylaw, Elections, Section I.POL.12 and Section J: Referenda, GSA Bylaw, Referenda, Section J.POL.13.
D.POL.10.1.d.xi	The CRO observes procedural fairness when dealing with complaints and consults with the ED (or delegate) on procedural fairness.
D.POL.10.1.d.xii	The CRO keeps a written record.
D.POL.10.1.e	Reporting
D.POL.10.1.e.i	The CRO communicates the results of all GSA General Elections, by-elections, and referenda to GSA members.
D.POL.10.1.e.ii	The CRO submits a written report to GSA Council following any GSA General Election, by-elections, or referenda.
D.POL.10.1.e.iii	The CRO reports to GSA Council, in writing, the names of all elected GSA DEOs, following the release of the official results for a GSA General Election or by-election, for the purposes of transferring bank signing authority (see GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section K: Finances, GSA Policy, Budget Principles and Procedures).
D.POL.10.2	Duties of the Deputy Returning Officer
D. POL.10.2.a	The Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) reports directly to the CRO.
D.POL.10.2.b	The duties of the DRO are to assist the CRO as needed and to assume all of the roles and responsibilities of CRO if the CRO is absent, or unable to complete their duties for any reason, including conflict of interest.
D.POL.10.2.c	The DRO serves as a non-voting member of the GSA ERC.
D.POL.10.3	Restrictions for CRO and DRO
D.POL.10.3.a	The CRO and DRO may not hold any other representative position in the GSA.
D.POL.10.3.b	“The Chief Returning Officer (CRO), Deputy Returning Officer, Speaker, Deputy Speaker, members of the GSA Nominating Committee, members of the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board, and members of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee will remain neutral and not campaign for or endorse any candidate whatsoever” in an election (Section I: Elections, GSA Bylaw, Elections, Section I.BYL.5.4) and “not campaign for or endorse any ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ campaign whatsoever” in a referendum (Section J: Referenda, GSA Bylaw, Referenda, Section J.BYL.6.1).

D.POL.10.3.c The CRO and DRO must be fully willing and able to carry out the position and must be physically present in Edmonton or surrounding areas for the duration of any GSA General Election, by-election, and/or referendum.”

[...]

D.POL.5 Training of the CRO and DRO

D.POL.5.a The CRO and DRO will receive a broad range of training, as needed, as determined by the ED (or delegate).

D.POL.10.6 Honarium

D.POL.10.6.a The CRO is awarded a modest honorarium for overseeing all GSA General Elections, by-elections, and referenda.”

**Biographies and Resumes of Nominees**

**DEPUTY RETURNING OFFICER**

**Sophie Shi**

<p><b>Statement of Interest</b></p> <p>The experience and skills I gained through many positions during my undergraduate degree will allow me to succeed in this position. I have always been and continue to be very involved and passionate about being a part of the campus community. This has been demonstrated in both my volunteer and work experiences.</p> <p>During my undergraduate degree, I volunteered for the Faculty of Engineering's outreach team, organizing events for high school students to introduce them to engineering. I was also involved in several student groups, including Let's Talk Science, WISEST, and TeamUP Science, participating in events promoting science to young students. I held executive positions and am very familiar with election processes.</p> <p>I worked at InfoLink as a Peer Advisor, which gave me a thorough understanding of general information about the University of Alberta's campus, student services, and academic processes, as well as a deeper understanding of the Students' Union, including their services, procedures, and Student Group Services. I currently volunteer at WISEST's annual events (SET Conference, CHOICES Conference, Summer Research Program) in a variety of roles including Campus Ambassador, lab activity leader, and as a role model in networking sessions. I'm also participating in WISER's Mentorship Program.</p>
<p><b>Bio</b></p> <p>I was born in China but moved to Canada when I was 5 years old and have lived in Edmonton ever since. I attended the University of Alberta from 2016-2020 and completed a BSc in Materials Engineering with a Mathematics Minor.</p> <p>Throughout my undergraduate degree, I volunteered for several student groups, mostly groups promoting science and technology to young students, as a general volunteer as well as in an executive role.</p> <p>Outside of campus, I also volunteered at the Hope Mission doing food service for homeless people, and at the Cross Cancer Institute.</p>
<p><b>Summary Resume</b></p> <p>I'm currently a first year MSc student in Materials Engineering and am working on a project involving electrochemical sensors using nanoparticles and enzymes. I also work as a Teaching Assistant at the Faculty of Engineering Dean's Office's Engineering Student Success Centre.</p> <p>I have a position within Residence Services as the Engineering Academic Cohort Leader, and work as a private tutor in my spare time. Currently I am participating in the WISER Mentorship Program as an Early Career Professional, in a group with one undergraduate student mentee and an experienced mentor.</p> <p>I have been involved in research since high school and throughout my entire undergraduate degree. My current supervisor is someone I worked with in the second year of my undergrad. My schedule is very flexible and I will be available for all required meetings.</p>

**Julianna Stern**

<p><b>Statement of Interest</b></p> <p>I believe the experience I gained as a campaign manager in the 2019 and 2020 University of Alberta Students' Union (UASU) executive elections would be a significant asset to my position as the DRO. Campaign managing has given me experience planning and executing a campaign within the regulations and timelines set by the UASU and the CRO. This honed my time management, organizational, and communication skills. I also witnessed the logistics and procedures of student elections, and I learned how</p>
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the CRO and the DRO function to facilitate the elections process for candidates and volunteers. I have first-hand experience with the stress that comes with the responsibility of managing a successful campaign, and I have developed strategies to maintain positive mental health in this environment. In January 2020, I facilitated a workshop at Student Leaders Week with the UASU called “How to Manage a Campaign and Stay Sane” that focused on tips to maintaining mental wellness while campaigning. As DRO, I hope to use the aforementioned skills and experience to make the elections process as smooth as possible and to promote mental wellness for candidates and volunteers.

### **Bio**

I was born in Edmonton, Alberta, and grew up in nearby Beaumont, Alberta. I received a French Immersion High School Diploma and later completed my undergraduate education at Campus Saint-Jean at the University of Alberta. I graduated in Spring 2020 with a BSc majoring in Biological Sciences and a Certificate in Interdisciplinary Leadership Studies from the Peter Lougheed Leadership College. I am now in my first year of the Master of Public Health program specializing in Health Policy and Management, and I hope to pursue a career in medicine. My volunteer experience includes service-learning trips to Honduras and Kenya and campaign managing in the UASU executive elections. Currently, I volunteer for the Evan Ty Jenkins Pediatric Research Foundation.

### **Summary Resume**

As a scholar in the Certificate of Interdisciplinary Leadership Studies program, I learned to work effectively on an interdisciplinary team and delegate tasks. Participating in this program has also helped increase awareness of my personal biases, recognize privilege in society, and think critically, which are skills I continue to develop in the Master of Public Health program. As a campaign manager in the 2019 and 2020 UASU executive elections, I developed my time management, organizational, and communication skills. I also developed strategies to manage stress and maintain balance during the elections process. My schedule is flexible to accommodate the demands of the DRO position, and I am prepared for the increased workload between December 2020 and March 2021.

## GSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE (GSA NoC)

**GSA AWARDS SELECTION COMMITTEE (GSA ASC) (FOUR (4) POSITIONS FOR GSA MEMBERS): THREE (3) NOMINEES**

Information regarding what were, initially, three (3) vacancies for GSA members was advertised in the GSA newsletter of 25 September, and 2 and 8 October 2020 with a nomination deadline of 14 October 2020. Since circulation of that initial advertisement, another vacancy on the GSA ASC has opened up and five (5) nominations were received. In place of having to run this ad once again, the GSA NoC agreed to move all five (5) names forward to GSA Council for the now four (4) vacant positions. There are thus now five (5) nominees for four (4) vacancies, although only three (3) vacancies were previously advertised (earlier vacancies were also run over the summer).

The GSA ASC is “responsible for selecting the recipients of the GSA Council approved GSA Recognition Awards” (GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section O: GSA Recognition Awards, GSA Policy, GSA Standing Committees, GSA Awards Selection Committee, Section O.POL.5.1).

**There will be an electronic vote held at the 19 October 2020 GSA Council meeting.**

*If you and your alternate are unable to attend the Monday, 19 October 2020 meeting of GSA Council and would like to cast an electronic vote for this position, you must contact the GSA Nominating Committee Coordinator ([gsanomco@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsanomco@ualberta.ca)) BEFORE 3:00 PM on Monday, 19 October 2020 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. Amber Ali (Pediatrics)**
- 2. Donny Cheng (Electrical and Computer Engineering)**
- 3. Charan Jirra (Mechanical Engineering)**
- 4. Priscilla Luu (Education and Policy)**
- 5. Drew Richards (Education and Policy)**

Current GSA ASC membership can be found [here](#).

**Jurisdiction:**

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section O: GSA Recognition Awards, GSA Policy, GSA Standing Committees, GSA Awards Selection Committee, Section O.POL.3.3

The GSA ASC is composed of “a minimum of eight (8) and up to twelve (12) GSA members elected by GSA Council as voting members. The GSA ASC Chair, in consultation with the GSA ASC Vice-Chair and the Chair of the GSA Nominating Committee, can decide to increase the number of GSA members on the GSA ASC.”

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

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

**The names and biographies received for the five (5) nominees is BELOW on pages 8.7-8.9. The biographies and resumes are presented as received (ie not edited).**

**NOMINATIONS FOR GSA AWARDS AND SELECTION COMMITTEE (GSA ASC)  
(FOUR (4) VACANCIES FOR GSA MEMBERS)  
Four (4) Nominees**

**Amber Ali (Pediatrics)**

**Statement of Interest:**

I am an active volunteer in the local Edmonton community, and have worked with individuals with various types of disabilities through organizations such as Special Olympics Edmonton, Vision Mate, and Study Buddy. I believe my experience with meeting so many different individuals will be an asset to this committee as it will allow me to make informed decisions while thinking holistically. I also have experience in making leadership decisions, as I have been the VP of communications for the Unicef Canada club on campus for the past two years. As part of the executive team, I have also been involved in selecting new executives using a holistic approach and this experience will be helpful when selecting award recipients along with the fellow committee members. As I have been part of executive teams before, I know the work and commitment that is required and am fully committed to this opportunity and working with the other individuals on this committee.

**Bio:**

I was born and raised in Edmonton and recently graduated this summer with a BSc in Biological Sciences and Psychology. I am a hardworking and ambitious student, currently in the first year of my MSc in the department of Pediatrics. Although I was born and raised in Edmonton, I really hate winter and I love to travel a lot. I always try to keep busy and in my free time I am very actively involved in volunteering for my local community. I really enjoy meeting new people and trying new activities out, especially outdoors. I hope to meet new people on this committee and look forward to working alongside them to achieve our goals.

**Summary Resume:**

I am currently in the first year of my MSc studies in the Department of Pediatrics, conducting clinical research that is focused on improving the mental health of adolescents. I also have previous research experience from my undergraduate degree, as I worked under two different supervisors on independent research projects which challenged me and improved my critical thinking abilities. I have been involved with Unicef Canada on Campus for the past 4 years, and am currently the VP of communications. I also volunteer with Vision Mate to help individuals that have lost their eyesight, and teach mini study groups at the University of Alberta. I recently started my position as a graduate research assistant, in which I am constantly communicating with patients and families to address issues in health care. Although I am a busy person, I always prioritize my work and commitments and will no doubt be an active and engaged member in this committee.

**Donny Cheng (Electrical and Computer Engineering)**

**Statement of Interest:**

Some of the experience I gained while working at Enbridge Pipelines Inc. is closely aligned with both the selection and review process for which the committee is responsible. At Enbridge, I was heavily involved with the selection of a new co-op student for the company, which included evaluating hundreds of resumes and cover letters as well as participating in two rounds of interviews. I also examined many of my department's outdated maintenance policies and guidance documents in consultation with the professional engineers. I understand how important it is to recognize outstanding members of our graduate student community and would be honored to participate in the selection of these individuals. That is why I am interested in getting involved with the GSA ASC.

**Bio:**

I was born in Beijing, China, and moved to Edmonton with my parents when I was four years old. Because of my Chinese heritage, I am fluent in both English and Mandarin Chinese. Some of my hobbies include playing the violin, playing badminton, and swimming. Previously, I have played for the Singing Strings orchestra and was involved in competitive swimming. Throughout my life, I have been fascinated with mathematics and physics, which prompted me to pursue engineering at the University of Alberta. During my Bachelor's degree, I was a member of the Badminton Club and Chinese Students Club at the U of A. In addition, I was a member of the electrical team in the EcoCar student design team and helped contribute to our first place finish in the Shell Eco-Marathon 2016 Americas competition in the UrbanConcept hydrogen vehicle category.

**Summary Resume:**

I am currently a first-year M. Sc. student under the supervision of Dr. Tongwen Chen in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering specializing in the cyber-security of control systems. I have had numerous experiences working in the realm of education, including working as a private tutor, teaching assistant at Kumon, and senior instructor at DiscoverE in the Faculty of Engineering. Furthermore, I worked as an Engineer-in-Training at Enbridge Pipelines, Inc. for a year in the Leak Detection Department. I completed by B. Sc. earlier this year (2020) with the top graduating GPA of my department and earned the APEGA Past President's Medal in Electrical Engineering. Additionally, I was awarded a Canada Graduate Scholarship from NSERC during the summer of 2020. Starting later in the year, I will be volunteering for Tutors for Affordable Education at the University of Alberta. My schedule will be adaptable enough to attend all four ASC meetings throughout the year.

**Charan Jirra (Mechanical Engineering)****Statement of Interest:**

I was a member of the 'student selection team' for the 3rd Dimension club of my undergraduate institute. I was involved in managing the process of shortlisting the candidates, taking interviews and inducting the right candidates into the team. I'm also responsible for closely working with the treasurer and arranging students' transport for participating in the national-wide competitions. I hope my experience and this skill of mine would be a great asset to the committee. I'm a recipient and involved in various award selections (Mitacs GRI, Mitacs Fellowship award..) which makes me a suitable candidate for this position.

**Bio:**

I was born and raised in the southern part of Indian Peninsula. After completing high school, I moved to the southernmost state of India where I pursued my Bachelors in Production Engineering at NIT Trichy (2020). Being a part of the diverse culture at NIT Trichy, I have developed many skills like organizing events, management and publicity. I worked as an international undergraduate summer intern at the University of Windsor after my junior year. I liked travelling the country and communicating with people in Canada and decided to pursue my graduate studies in it. Currently, I'm doing my studies remotely from India.

**Summary Resume:**

I'm a first-year MSc student at the Department of Mechanical Engineering. I work as a graduate assistant in the 'Energy and Environment Systems Laboratory' under the supervision of Dr Amit Kumar. Since my study schedule is very flexible, I will be able to involve in meetings and work of GSA around the year without any hindrance. In my undergraduate, I worked at the University of Windsor as an International research Intern and have been to different places engaging in volunteering work with diverse student backgrounds at conferences and meetings.

**Priscilla Luu (Education and Policy)****Statement of Interest:**

I believe that my experience as a teacher and graduate student will help me be organized and resilient with the workload demands of the GSA Awards Committee. My graduate studies have helped me conceptualize and organize large amounts of information and make the information understandable to the public. I also have some experience in running clubs in schools with a goal or a final product in mind. I would love to contribute and learn more about the Awards Selection Committee.

**Bio:**

I am in my second year in my masters in the Education Policy Department specializing in Social Justice and International Studies. Currently, I am a full time student in a course-based program but I am thinking of switching to a thesis. My experience as a teacher, research student, and graduate student has helped me to understand more about leadership and connect with different people.

**Summary Resume:**

I graduated from the Bachelor of Education and I was a substitute teacher for Edmonton Public Schools and the Calgary Board of Education. During my time at CBE, I also directed and organized the Spring Concert with Handbells, Jr. and Sr. Choir and I organized corresponding lunch clubs. This past summer, I also worked as a summer research student for Act2endracism. At the university, I did not participate in any student council positions but I was a part of the University Band for two years and I was a part of an intramural volleyball team at the University of Alberta last year. I currently reside in Calgary.

**Drew Richards (Education and Policy)**

<p><b>Statement of Interest:</b> I have developed excellent communication skills from various positions in a myriad of employment fields. I have also developed the capacity to make decisive and informed decisions in fast paced environments. Although I lack comprehensive committee experience, I am extremely passionate about learning to augment my skillset and am eager for diverse challenges.</p>
<p><b>Bio:</b> I was born in Salmonarm BC and raised in Lacombe AB. I received my BA in Political Science from MacEwan University (2020). During my time there I was involved in intramural sports. I am currently a member of the innagural cohort of the MA in Policy Studies program here at the U of A.</p>
<p><b>Summary Resume:</b> I served on the Student Advisory Committee while at MacEwan. This committee's purpose was to engage in dialogue with administrators around the content and delivery of specific components of courses within the various arts and sciences programs. I have volunteered for the Central Alberta Pride Society. My roles involved assisting in the rollout of several events that took place during Pride Week. I will be volunteering over the holiday season with the Red Deer Regional Health Foundation.</p>

**President**  
**Report to GSA Council for the 19 October 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Marc Waddingham  
Date: 19 October 2020

To my colleagues in Council,

I am glad to share a selection of updates on my work over the previous month:

**Professional Development & Work Experience**

We continue to pursue leads related to experiential learning opportunities for graduate students, with a few notable updates. We have completed our first consultation circuit of internal and external stakeholders related to the innovation/entrepreneurial space, identified challenges, and established a number of contacts to collaborate with moving forward. As a result of these efforts, I have been afforded a seat on the University of Alberta Innovation Network (UAIN), a committee lead by Deborah James, Associate Vice-President Innovation. The UAIN's membership comprises of various interested parties including the Graduate Student Internship Program Office, Venture Mentoring Service, TEC Edmonton, University of Alberta Health Accelerator, DiscoveryLab, and other key players in the academia-industry crossover space. My first meeting with the group was encouraging, and I look forward to future discussions regarding the role of graduate students in these various initiatives.

**University of Alberta for Tomorrow**

As the case with our August council meeting, by this stage we will already have received an update presentation on UAT from Central Administration, part of ongoing efforts to keep graduate student leaders informed during critical stages of the project. As part of the GSA's own due diligence in these proceedings, we are looking to follow-up on our first graduate student townhall/roundtable with another similar event, alongside planning roundtables with our member GSAs who would like the opportunity to discuss UAT, have their questions answered directly, and provide input for me to consider at the Academic Restructuring Working Group. My understanding has been that graduate students have been well-represented at the faculty roundtables that have taken place thus far, and I applaud our members who have stepped up to be heard and involved in the proceedings.

Furthermore, I am aware of concerns raised about the role of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) after the restructuring project, and have been diligently advocating for the preservation of the unit as the pan-institutional academic administration for graduate studies. Of course, our signature project of the Graduate Supervisory Excellence Initiative is of paramount concern, but there are many other graduate-specific functions that would likely degrade in quality without the dedicated focus of FGSR. Signals from Central Administration have been positive on this front, but we will continue to advocate for our own graduate-specific academic entity on campus, preferably in the form of FGSR.

Naturally, this is not an exhaustive account of my current activities, but two representative, high-level items of importance to raise to Council. I am glad to speak on any of the meetings or events I have attended over the last month, and appreciate your continued guidance and support.

Kind regards,  
Marc

## 9.1

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 21 September 2020 and 19 October 2020 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

18 August	Meeting with Alumni Association
19 August	Meeting with International Students' Association (ISA)
20 August	General Faculties Council Academic Planning Committee (GFC APC)
21 August	GSA DEOs Team-Building Activity
21 August	Meeting with R Ley, Students' Union (SU) VP External
24 August	GSA DEOs Team-Building Activity
24 August	President's Installation Committee
26 August	University Associations' Meeting
27 August	Meeting with B Flanagan, President
27 August	University Town Hall for Equity-Seeking Communities
27 August	Academic Restructuring Working Group (ARWG)
27 August	Edmonton Students' Alliance (ESA)
28 August	Meeting with C Swindlehurst, Interim Vice-President (University Relations)
28 August	Meeting with P Garritty, Chancellor
28 August	Monthly Meeting with A Costopoulos, Dean of Students
31 August	President's Installation Committee
1 September	Meeting with B Milne, Vice-Provost and Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Dean
2 September	Meeting re Graduate Student Assistance Program (GSAP)
2 September	Meeting with the Office of the Vice-President (University Relations)
2 September	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Board Meeting
3 September	GSA DEOs Team-Building Workshop
3 September	Board of Governors (BoG) Retreat and Social
4 September	Board of Governors (BoG) Retreat
8 September	Meeting re Academic Integrity Project
9 September	General Faculties Council Academic Planning Committee (GFC APC)
10 September	Meeting with B Flanagan, President
11 September	President's Installation Committee
11 September	Academic Restructuring Working Group (ARWG)
11 September	Meeting with Non-Academic Staff Association (NASA) re: Postdoctoral Fellows
11 September	Meeting re Graduate Student Internship Program (GSIP)
15 September	Meeting with B Milne, Vice-Provost and Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Dean
15 September	Meeting with K Peters, General Faculties Council (GFC) Secretary
15 September	Meeting with UAlberta International
16 September	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Media Training
16 September	B Flanagan Presidential Installation
16 September	Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Council
17 September	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Advocacy and Outreach committee
17 September	Residence Advisory Council (RAC)
18 September	Special Board of Governors (BoG) Meeting
18 September	Meeting with W Dixon, Interim Vice-President (Research and Innovation)

**GSA Board  
Report to GSA Council for the 19 October 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Marc Waddingham, GSA President  
Date: 16 October 2020

The GSA Board (GSAB) reports regularly to GSA Council by listing its agenda items, Motions/agreements, and main items of discussion (meeting reports are also offered at each meeting). Motions of Agenda approval and approval of the Minutes are not included unless there were amendments made. Closed session items are not minuted. GSA Council members are always able to ask questions about items that were discussed in closed session. Open session Minutes are available upon request. The President, Vice-Presidents, and the administrative team will be happy to answer any questions or provide more information at the GSA Council meeting. Also see the weekly Management Reports to the GSAB in Item 19 (Executive Director's Report to GSA Council) on pages 19.1-19.4

**23 September 2020 GSA Board Meeting:**

Main Agenda Items:

COVID-19 Update; GSA Council Debrief; and Meeting Reports.

Motions and Agreements:

None to report.

**30 September 2020 GSA Board Meeting:**

Main Agenda Items:

COVID-19 Update; Recommended Addition to GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section O: GSA Recognition Awards; and Meeting Reports.

Motions and Agreements:

None to report.

**7 October 2020 GSA Board Meeting:**

Main Agenda Items:

GSA Board Strategic Work Plan: Update to GSA Council; GSA Response to ab-GPAC Fees Consultation Letter; COVID-19 Update; and Meeting Reports.

Motions and Agreements:

Board Members **AGREED** to add an executive summary to future SWP updates to GSA Council.

**14 October 2020 GSA Board Meeting:**

Main Agenda Items:

Campus Food Bank; COVID-19 Update; Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council Update to Member Organizations; Public Interest Alberta Post-Secondary Education Campaign: Request for an External Grant; and Meeting Reports.

Motions and Agreements:

That the GSA Board **APPROVE** an external grant in an amount to be determined by the GSA Board for a campaign related to the importance of post-secondary education, as requested in the attached letter from Public Interest Alberta. **TABLED**.

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

Board Members discussed the **Academic Restructuring Working Group (ARWG)** and the **Meeting with the International Students' Association (ISA)**.

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



**GSA Governance Committee  
Report to GSA Council for the 19 October 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Marc Waddingham  
Date: 16 October 2020

Dear Council Colleagues,

As of 1 September 2020, the GFC Academic Standards Committee (GFC ASC) and the GFC Academic Standards Committee Subcommittee on Standards (GFC ASC SoS) have been disbanded and replaced with the GFC Programs Committee (GFC PC). Consequently, the GSA Governance Committee (GSA GC) voted in favour, via email on 21 September 2020, to editorially amend GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section D (where it indicates the Vice-President Academic serves on GFC ASC and GFC ASC SoS, but makes no mention of GFC PC) to reflect the dissolution of the first two named committees and the addition of the third. This constituted an editorial change as, essentially, there was a factual error in GSA Bylaw and Policy occasioned by this disbanding/creating of GFC standing committees.

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

**Vice-President Academic  
Report to GSA Council for the 19 October 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Sachiketha Reddy Paspula  
Date: 16 October 2020

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope you all are doing great these days. I have attended several meetings in the past month and a lot has happened in this period, but here are a few highlights from those:

- We had a couple of social engagement events in August and September and have several more planned for the upcoming months. Bryan Hogeveen, Vice Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) and Victoria Ruetalo, Associate Dean of FGSR joined us for a lunch and learn session on Tips for Navigating Remote Supervision.
- In the FGSR Council meeting, B Milne, Dean of FGSR spoke about services including FGSR's virtual help desk, the Graduate Student Internship Program (GSIP), Innovation Bridge, the Academic Integrity and Ethics Training Series, Virtual Writing Bootcamp, etc. On 24 September the U of A's administration announced that "instruction in the 2021 winter term will continue to be delivered with a blend of face-to-face and online modalities." As per recent Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) updates, new international students with a valid study permit may start travelling to Canada on or after October 20, 2020. IRCC will allow students from institutions that have a COVID-19 readiness plan approved by their province to enter Canada. The U of A has an approved readiness plan.
- I took part in the General Faculties' Council Committee on the Learning Environment (GFC CLE), the first meeting of this committee this academic year. In the early weeks of September, 58,000 people visited e-class, which is the highest volume recorded to date and they resolved the e-class issues so now everything is in proper shape. Libraries are functioning with limitations and students are allowed to enter by appointment. The U of A Bookstore is receiving a higher volume of wait requests for the books than usual.
- I presented the GSA monthly report to the FGSR Council. In my presentation, I highlighted the topics related to our advancement regarding the our Strategic Work Plan (SWP). As a part of our ongoing initiatives outlined in the GSA Board SWP, we are exploring partnerships with FGSR regarding graduate student internships and entrepreneurship opportunities.
- I attended the Council on Student Affairs (COSA) meeting. The purpose of the committee is to proactively provide students with accurate information about various academic matters impacting students, including the U of A for Tomorrow (UAT), Service Excellence Transformation (SET), and the Academic Restructuring Working Group (ARWG), and to hear questions, concerns and ideas from student membership.
- I attended the GFC meeting where there was a discussion regarding the proposal to extend the acceptance of the Duolingo English test (DET) for all applicants to undergraduate and graduate programs as an additional option to demonstrate the English Language Proficiency for Spring 2021, Summer 2021, Fall 2021, and Winter 2022 admissions because of the closure of many traditional English Language Proficiency test centers due to the COVID-19 pandemic. GFC approved the proposed temporary change.

Dr. Dew, U of A Provost, presented an overview of the Interim report of the ARWG and spoke about the importance of the ARWG and the SET initiative.

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

Regards,  
Sachiketha Reddy Paspula,  
GSA Vice-President Academic.

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 21 September 2020 and 19 October 2020 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

22 September	Barriers to Indigenous Achievement in Institutions and Organizations
23 September	Meeting with the Office of Advancement
25 September	GSA General Faculties Council (GFC) Caucus
25 September	GSA Virtual Game Chillout
28 September	General Faculties Council (GFC) New Members' Orientation
28 September	General Faculties Council (GFC)
29 September	Meeting with B Milne, Vice-Provost and Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Dean
29 September	GSA Town Hall on Academic Restructuring
30 September	GSA General Faculties Council Committee on the Learning Environment (GFC CLE)
2 October	University Research Policy Committee (URPC)
2 October	GSA Lunch and Learn Series
5 October	General Faculties Council Executive Committee (GFC EXEC)
8 October	Council on Student Affairs (COSA)
13 October	GSA Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Council Caucus
14 October	Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Council
15 October	General Faculties Council Programs Committee (GFC PC)
16 October	GSA General Faculties Council (GFC) Caucus
19 October	General Faculties Council (GFC)

**Vice-President External  
Report to GSA Council for the 19 October 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Anas Fassih  
Date: 16 October 2020

Colleagues,

I hope you are doing great, and the fall is treating you well. My efforts to advocate for the interests of graduate students in external advocacy and representation, government relations, residence, and alumni relations continue through the fall. Here are the main takeaways from the meetings I attended this month.

- On 24 September, I had a meeting with Rowan Ley, UAlberta Students' Union Vice-President External and Chair of the Council of Alberta University Students (CAUS), to discuss some common areas for advocacy, including student housing research and campus sexual violence. Rowan expressed his willingness to support our initiative to run a large research survey for graduate students in Alberta to evaluate their housing situation. I drafted a proposal to pitch to other major student societies in the province to adopt the survey and administer it to their members. I garnered feedback from the GSA staff, and the proposal is ready to go, pending approval from the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC).
- On 28 September, I had a meeting with the UAlberta Brand Platform Advisory Committee regarding how to promote the UAlberta Brand and increase outreach.
- On 29 September, the GSA hosted its first town hall on Academic Restructuring. It was quite productive as we benefited from the questions raised about the impact of academic restructuring on graduate students. We will continue holding town halls to discuss the impact of restructuring on graduate students and we encourage members of our council and all other graduate students to attend and share. Your feedback is important to us.
- On 9 October, we had our board meeting with ab-GPAC. We are preparing for our advocacy week during which we plan to reach out to many MLAs in the city to foreground our advocacy priorities and gauge their interest in funding for post-secondary institutions and what they are doing about it. Prior research about the MLAs is necessary, which was also a main hallmark of the meeting.
- The second major update from ab-GPAC is that I was elected as chair of the Advocacy & Outreach Committee. I look forward to doing some great work in this advanced leadership role through which, I hope, I'll be able to further consolidate ab-GPAC's outreach to the government, civil society, and other major stakeholders in the province.
- On 5 October, I had a meeting with the Search Committee for the U of A Vice-President (External Relations). This was our third meeting, which centered on reviewing applications and selecting candidates for interviews.
- On 8 October, I met with the Residence Advisory Council. Janice Johnson, Assistant Dean (Residence), talked about what the university is planning to do if COVID-19 continues. The University is contemplating moving to a single-room policy next year if no vaccine is found. There are 102 graduate students living in University residence as of now.
- On 13 October, I met with Katherine Husing, Associate Vice-President (Ancillary Services), where we discussed the major challenges facing graduate students in regards to renting in University residences. I tried to lobby her to decrease the rent or at least not increase the rent in the future. While her unit, like others, is obviously facing a lot of financial pressure, Katherine has been very receptive to our concerns and promised to involve us in consultation about housing issues, as she has always done.
- On 13 October, I had a meeting with the Students Transitions Committee. We discussed having an alumni touch point and what both the University and student groups, including the GSA, can do to create events and spaces for current students to meet alumni. Major discussion also involved promoting the alumni brand on campus.

- On 14 October, I attended the Student Leaders' Orientation with the Ministry of Advanced Education. The meeting started with a talk by Demetrios Nicolaidis, Alberta Minister of Advanced Education. He talked about the institutional responses to COVID-19 and how he is satisfied with what has been done thus far. He commended the work of the Ministry of Health, particularly the Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH), with whom he is in touch. He mentioned he talked to the CMOH about the course of action for the Winter semester, and he anticipates that post-secondary institutions will start opening slowly. The second part of his presentation was on post-COVID-19 economic recovery, which he envisages to rely not only on the oil and gas industry, but also on innovative industries such as artificial intelligence. Film and television industries can also contribute a lot to the economy in the province. This presentation was followed by a question period, where I asked the Minister about post-COVID-19 economic recovery and the importance of international graduate students in that recovery. In line with his ideas and the concept of "internationalization" as a key variable in Alberta 2030, I asked if there is any discussion about a new immigration stream for international students to stay in the province. He said that international students play a major role in Alberta's economy and his staff would follow up with me with some documents.

This concludes my monthly report. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask in our Council meeting or contact me directly at: [gsa.vpexternal@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsa.vpexternal@ualberta.ca). Please reach out!

Thank you!

Anas Fassih, Vice-President External 2020-2021

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 21 September 2020 and 19 October 2020 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

22 September	Barriers to Indigenous Achievement in Institutions and Organizations
23 September	Public Interest Alberta (PIA) Post-Secondary Education Meeting
24 September	Meeting with R Ley, Students' Union (SU) VP External
28 September	UAlberta Brand Platform Advisory Committee
28 September	International Students' Association (ISA) Council Meeting
29 September	GSA Town Hall on Academic Restructuring
1 October	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Advocacy and Outreach Committee
2 October	GSA Lunch and Learn Series
5 October	Vice-President (External Relations) Search Advisory Committee
7 October	Alumni Council Meeting
8 October	Residence Advisory Council (RAC)
9 October	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Board Meeting
13 October	Meeting re National Graduate Student Alliance
13 October	Meeting with K Zwicker, Vice-President (Ancillary Services)
13 October	Student Transitions Committee
13 October	Meeting with International Students' Association (ISA)
14 October	Student Leaders Orientation with Ministry of Advanced Education
16 October	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Advocacy and Outreach Committee
16 October	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) U-Pass Roundtable

Dear Member Organizations,

The purpose of this letter is to highlight the work ab-GPAC has done, and will continue to do, in the Alberta 2030: Building Skills for Jobs Post-Secondary System Review (henceforth referred to as “AB2030”). AB2030 is a comprehensive, system-wide review of Alberta’s post-secondary system. The project is helmed by the private consulting firm McKinsey&Co, with a \$3.7 Million contract awarded on June 12th, 2020. The goal of AB2030 is to transform the post-secondary sector in Alberta to provide high quality education, meet current and future labour market demands, and drive innovation to make Alberta competitive in the 21st century global economy.

The engagement timeline for the AB2030 process is proceeding rapidly. Initial planning and research from McKinsey&Co have been underway since early August. As of late August, consultation with various stakeholders are well underway. By the end of September, key decisions around post-secondary system archetypes will be framed, where these decisions will inform the overall AB2030 strategy. The end of October will present the first integrated view of the AB2030 strategy, outcomes framework, and roadmap. The review will conclude mid-December, with the presentation of the final strategy, business case, governance framework, and execution roadmap.

As a stakeholder, ab-GPAC’s Chair Evan Wong was interviewed on graduate students, and will also be interviewed on diversity and indigenous participation. In the upcoming weeks, ab-GPAC will also be actively participating in roundtable discussions on creating a more efficient system by bringing costs down and removing duplication, and strengthening PSIs’ role in the development of an innovation ecosystem and the commercialization of research.

In addition to the above engagement, a guiding coalition of 17 individuals from various stakeholder groups was established to oversee the AB2030 process, and to ensure it remains focused on key priorities. **Graduate students are the only student group without representation on the guiding coalition**, as seats were offered to both the Chair of the Council of Alberta Undergraduate Students (CAUS) and the Executive Director of Alberta Student Executive Council (ASEC), representing undergraduate students and college / polytechnic students respectively. ab-GPAC has directly pushed for a representative seat on the guiding coalition for graduate students, but was denied by the Ministry of Advanced Education. Currently, ab-GPAC is working closely with other student leaders in the province to ensure the graduate perspective is well-reflected at the guiding coalition table.

The current stakeholder engagement plan entails:

- 140+ interviews to gather initial hypotheses, perspectives, and concerns
- 25+ roundtables to review and react to issues analysis; discuss and debate options and provide input
- Online public survey <https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-2030-building-skills-for-jobs.aspx>
- 6 - 8 townhalls to playback input and perspectives, share strategic themes and options, provide facts and benchmarks and invite new input
- 1 summit to frame the Alberta 2030 declaration

Moving forward, ab-GPAC will continue to push for graduate representation at all stakeholder engagement events, especially at the upcoming townhalls and summit. ab-GPAC will also be creating a white paper submission to McKinsey&Co., concerning the following high-impact advocacy priorities:

1. Internationalization and recruitment
2. Diversify the economy, skills for jobs, and innovation
3. Experiential learning and funding for professional development
4. Post-secondary funding and indigeneity
5. Post-secondary structure and governance

ab-GPAC will continue to seek vital feedback from member GSAs, as we continue along into the AB2030 process. We will ensure the voices of graduate students are heard at every possible opportunity, and that we contribute to transforming the Alberta post-secondary system in benefit of our members. We also encourage you at this time to share the links to the recently launched surveys to ensure the government hears from as many Albertans as possible.

Sincerely,



Evan Wong  
Chair



Christine Cao  
Vice-Chair



Brandon Simmons  
Executive Director

Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council

**Vice-President Labour  
Report to GSA Council for the 19 October 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Umesh Nimmathi  
Date: 16 October 2020

Dear Council Colleagues,

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

- I attended the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council's (ab-GPAC) Labour Relations Roundtable meeting on 28 September. Brandon Simmons is the new Executive Director of ab-GPAC and chair of this roundtable. GSAs from across Alberta updated on their labour related activities, how they are teaching in winter (mostly blended learning), and the new initiatives related to emergency bursaries that they are undertaking in this COVID-19 situation. Brandon will review ab-GPAC's Labour Relations research proposal and will allocate resources to complete the research by April 2021.
- I attended a Media Training Session (through ab-GPAC) on 21 September hosted by Catherine Keill. This session helped me to know about different kinds of media interviews and how to prepare for them. C Keill also went through some good and bad examples of media interviews.
- Negotiations for the next Collective Agreement are still ongoing; we have scheduled the next meeting dates and hope to wrap up the process by the end of Fall 2020. We are sharing updates on this process with all current Academically-Employed Graduate Students (AEGSs). If you are a non-AEGS and have any questions regarding this, please feel free to contact me.
- I attended a couple of meetings with graduate students with one of our GSA staff to guide on the issues that they are facing (labour related and non-labour related).
- We hosted a Labour 101 session on 30 September via Zoom. I presented about the rights and benefits of AEGSs. This session went really well and questions were asked related to collective agreement. If you have any questions or concerns related to Collective Agreement, please feel to contact me. Also, you can always request for one-on-one Labour 101 sessions or Labour 101 sessions for your department.

If any graduate student comes to you regarding CA issues, harassment, or safety and security issues, please email me at [gsa.vplabour@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsa.vplabour@ualberta.ca)

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

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 21 September 2020 and 19 October 2020 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

21 September	Media Training Session (ab-GPAC)
22 September	Barriers to Indigenous Achievement in Institutions and Organizations
25 September	GSA Virtual Game Chillout
28 September	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Labour Relations Roundtable
28 September	Monthly Meeting with A Costopoulos, Dean of Students
29 September	GSA Town Hall on Academic Restructuring
30 September	GSA Labour 101
5 October	Meeting with a Graduate Student
6 October	GSA Collective Agreement Negotiations
8 October	Meeting with a Graduate Student
13 October	GSA Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Council Caucus
14 October	Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Council

**Vice-President Student Services  
Report to GSA Council for the 19 October 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Sridhar Parasharamatham  
Date: 16 October 2020

Dear Council Colleagues,

Hope all of you are staying safe and healthy and that you have all had a wonderful start to the fall semester. I will be giving highlights on some of the important meetings I attended:

- Firstly, I attended the Infrastructure and Operations Planning Team every week. University of Alberta Protective Services (UAPS) has been doing targeted patrols in the Faculty of Science and has imposed compliance. Communication has become challenging as there is a saturation of messaging and this runs the risk of passive and ignored messaging. 11,238 people have completed the Return to Campus E-learning. Computer lab usage has increased and is expecting to continue to increase closer to end of the term. Two positive COVID cases were reported from the basketball intramural league – resulting in a two-week cancellation of the league.
- Secondly, I attended the Graduate Collective Teatime planning meeting. We discussed the topics for this semester and prepared a workplan document.
- Also, I attended a PAW Centre Strategic Operating Committee (PAWSOC) meeting, which was held for the first time since April. A brief overview of the agreement and the statistics of the usage of these facilities was given. PAW does not include the whole Van Vliet complex, but the Hansen Fitness & Lifestyle Centre, Wilson Climbing Centre, Social Street, 3-205 and 3-209 (located above Social Street and the Main Gym), and Student Lounges 1-605 and 1-610 (located next to the North entrance). There was also a discussion on the booking system and how can it be further be improved in terms of transparency and fairness.
- I attended the Campus Food Bank Board meeting where there were discussions around the impact of COVID on the receipt of deliveries and donations. Also, there were discussions on events to be conducted (like Trick or Treat), which will be promoted through different social media platforms and I encourage you to check them out.
- I attended the Dean of Students' Advisory Committee meeting where students from all over the campus provide feedback on student services being offered. It will be held regularly to get input from the student side.
- Finally, I attended several U-Pass meetings. The GSA and other student associations tried for a post-secondary regional pass as an alternative for the winter semester (to assist with a successful U-pass referendum in March), but ETS stated that it would not be feasible logistically. ETS confirmed that the Ride Transit Program would be extended to students until April 2021 as a U-Pass alternative.

Feel free to reach me out for any comments/concerns regarding this report or any other specific issue you want to discuss regarding services to students at [gsavpsse@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsavpsse@ualberta.ca).

Regards,

Sridhar Parasharamatham, Vice-President Academic 2020-2021

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 21 September 2020 and 19 October 2020 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

22 September	Barriers to Indigenous Achievement in Institutions and Organizations
23 September	Days of Action Committee Meeting
24 September	Infrastructure and Operations Fall Planning Team
24 September	Meeting re Graduate Collective Tea Time
25 September	GSA Virtual Game Chillout
28 September	Monthly Meeting with A Costopoulos, Dean of Students
29 September	Meeting re U-Pass Negotiations
29 September	Public Health Response Team (PHRT) Action Team #4
30 September	Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Policy Review Committee (FGSR PRC)
30 September	Dean of Students Advisory Committee
1 October	Infrastructure and Operations Fall Planning Team
5 October	Joint Advisory Committee on Sexual Violence
5 October	PAW Centre Strategic Operating Committee (PAWSOC)
6 October	U-Pass Winter 2020 Options Meeting
8 October	Infrastructure and Operations Fall Planning Team
8 October	Campus Food Bank Board Meeting
15 October	U-Pass Administrative Committee
15 October	Edmonton Regional Post-secondary Student Mental Health Committee (ERPSMHC) Meeting
16 October	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) U-Pass Roundtable

**GSA Nominating Committee  
Report to GSA Council for the 19 October 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Kenzie Gordon  
Date: 16 October 2020

Dear Council Colleagues,

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

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

Sincerely,

Kenzie Gordon, Chair of the GSA NoC

**Memorandum to GSA Councillors**

**As reported previously, there are a number of vacancies on GSA Standing Committees for GSA Council Members (Departmental Councillors and Councillors-at-Large).** These positions play a pivotal role in the GSA's ongoing efforts to keep its processes transparent and itself accountable and long-term vacancies adversely impact these efforts. GSA Council members are strongly encouraged to consider serving on these committees.

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

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

On behalf of the GSA NoC, GSA NoC Chair Kenzie Gordon strongly encourages GSA Councillors to consider the next round of vacancies, which will be circulated to GSA Council electronically and which are listed below. Questions can be directed to GSA NoC Chair Kenzie Gordon at [mlgordon@ualberta.ca](mailto:mlgordon@ualberta.ca) or GSA Elections Coordinator Monica Brzak at [gsanomco@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsanomco@ualberta.ca).

**GSA Standing Committees**

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

Information regarding the position for one (1) GSA Councillor was circulated via email to GSA Council on 25 September, and 2 and 8 October with a nomination deadline of 13 October 2020. **No nominations were received; this vacancy will be advertised again.**

**2) GSA Appeals and Complaints Committee (GSA ACB) (One (1) GSA Member Position)**

Information regarding the position for one (1) GSA member was circulated via the GSA Newsletter on 25 September, and 2 and 8 October with a nomination deadline of 13 October 2020. **No nominations were received; this vacancy will be advertised again.**

**3) GSA Awards Selection Committee (GSA ASC) (Four (4) GSA Member Positions)**

Information regarding the position for, initially, three (3) GSA members was circulated via the GSA newsletter on 25 September, and 2 and 8 October with a nomination deadline of 14 October 2020. Since circulation of those advertisements, another vacancy on the GSA ASC opened up. In place of having to run this ad once again, to the GSA NoC agreed to move all five (5) names forward to GSA Council for the now four (4) vacant positions **There are thus now five (5) nominees for four (4) vacancies, although only three (3) vacancies were initially advertised (earlier vacancies were also advertised over the summer). As noted, five (5) nominations were received; there will be an electronic vote (see Item 8 – Nominees for the GSA Awards Selection Committee).**

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

Information regarding the position for one (1) GSA Councillor was circulated via email to GSA Council on 25 September, and 2 and 8 October with a nomination deadline of 14 October 2020. **No nominations were received; this vacancy will be advertised again.**

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

Information regarding the position for one (1) GSA Member was circulated via the GSA Newsletter on 25 September, and 2 and 8 October with a nomination deadline of 14 October 2020. **No nominations were received; this vacancy will be advertised again.**

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

Information regarding the position for three (3) GSA Councillors was circulated via email to GSA Council on 25 September, and 2 and 8 October with a nomination deadline of 14 October 2020. **No nominations were received; these vacancies will be advertised again.**

**7) GSA Board (GSAB) (One (1) GSA Councillor Position)**

Information regarding the position for one (1) GSA Councillor was circulated via email to GSA Council on 25 September, and 2 and 8 October with a nomination deadline of 14 October 2020. **No nominations were received; this vacancy will be advertised again.**

**GSA Officers**

**2) GSA Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) (One (1) GSA Member Position)**

Information regarding this position for one (1) GSA member was first advertised in the GSA newsletters of 25 September, and 2 and 8 October 2020 with a nomination deadline of 14 October 2020. **Two (2) nominations were received; there will be an electronic vote (see Item 8 - Nominees for Deputy Returning Officer).**

**External Committees: Vacancies Filled**

**1) Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Council (Up to 25 Graduate Student Positions)**

Information regarding one (1) Councillor positions and four (4) Alternate positions was circulated in the GSA newsletters of 18 and 25 September with a deadline of 30 September 2020. **Yasser Tabana** and alternates **Meghan Lim, Alleson Mason, Andrew Locke, and Amir Adel** were elected to serve as FGSR Councillors.

**GSA Elections and Referenda Committee  
Report to GSA Council for the 19 October 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Jennifer Bertrand  
Date: 16 October 2020

Dear GSA Council Colleagues,

The GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC) met informally on 2 October 2020 to review a 2021 GSA ERC General Election and Referenda work plan. Additional meetings of the GSA ERC have been scheduled throughout the fall.

Finally, following this informal meeting, members of the GSA ERC were invited to put their names forward to serve as vice-chair of the committee (as per GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section I.POL.16.4, “two (2) members from amongst the six (6) voting members of the GSA ERC will be elected by the GSA ERC to serve as Chair and Vice-Chair for the duration of their time on the GSA ERC or until they resign their positions”). Subsequently, the committee elected Ramin Fathian to serve as vice-chair.

Sincerely,  
Jennifer Bertrand, Chair of the GSA ERC

**Executive Director  
Report to GSA Council for the 19 October 2020 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Courtney Thomas  
Date: 16 October 2020

Dear GSA Council Members,

The office team is working on preparing the Winter Term Financial Report for the GSA Budget and Finance Committee, as well as finalizing the GSA's annual audit and beginning to develop the 2021-2022 operating budget. With respect to finances, as you may recall, over the summer you may recall that the financial team prepared a forecast predicted on a potential 9% decrease in enrollment. I am happy to report that enrollment did not decrease to the extent that we conservatively forecast, which is great news for the organization's finances (although it will be prudent for us to still proceed with caution, from a budgetary standpoint). The Winter Term Financial Report will come before you at the November meeting, alongside the audit. In advance of the audit coming forward, I encourage you to re-visit my report for the June meeting of GSA Council, wherein I provided a list of all of the documents that define us as a corporate entity and which are constantly monitored by the staff team.

In addition to this financial work, the staff remain engaged with online engagement work, including the GSA's virtual front desk, planning social events and a Halloween photo contest, and working with a variety of campus offices and other service providers to provide information sessions for graduate students. We have also begun the process of forward planning for the 2021 GSA General Election and the two referenda (for the U-Pass and the Graduate Student Assistance Program that will also occur – the questions related to both of these referenda will come before GSA Council for approval shortly).

On the note of the GSA General Election, the GSA Nominating Committee will be hosting a Discover Governance event on 22 October. This event is an opportunity for those thinking about running for elected office, or just wanting to get more involved with the GSA and its governance, to meet casually with the President and the Vice-Presidents to learn more about the work they do and their roles within the GSA and the campus community more broadly. I hope some of you will consider attending this event, and sharing information about it with your friends and colleagues. The GSA's success as an organization, measured by its ability to serve graduate students and better their graduate school experience, depends on student involvement.

My weekly reports to the GSA Board are attached (pages 19.1-19.4) and, as always, I am happy to answer any questions.

Best,

Courtney Thomas, Executive Director

### Management Report to the GSA Board, 23 September 2020

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 16 September 2020:

#### Strategic

- Preparing the GSA Board Strategic Work Plan update to GSA Council.
- Ongoing monitoring of the GSA's financial position (enrollment numbers are anticipated shortly), preparing to send the GSA's annual audit forward to the GSA Budget and Finance Committee, the GSA Board and GSA Council, and working to arrange for the GSA Budget and Finance Committee to receive an update from our investment advisor.
- Forward planning for the 2021 GSA General Election (drafting a timeline and a work plan for the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and setting meetings for the committee in the fall) and associated referenda (on the Graduate Student Assistance Program (GSAP) and the U-Pass) that will also occur.
- Planning a GSA town hall (29 September) to hear from graduate students on the University's academic/administrative restructuring initiative.
- Reviewing the composition of GSA Council following the move of some graduate programs from the Faculty of Extension to the Faculty of Arts and the amalgamation of Religious Studies with History and Classics – waiting to hear how the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Council will address the matter as the composition of GSA Council is loosely based on that of FGSR.
- Analyzing the recent changes to the *Labour Relations Code* and the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* enacted by Bill 32, and how they will impact the GSA's work as a labour union for academically-employed graduate students – awaiting a legal opinion.
- Supporting the current U-Pass negotiations processes.
- Work associated with the Collective Agreement, including supporting negotiations processes and researching best practices with respect to strike fund establishment, maintenance, and utilization, assessing strategies to build engagement and a steward network, and forward planning for a ratification vote associated with the current negotiating process.

#### Operations

- Planning further online engagement events for the fall (both social events and lunch and learn style sessions – next one is scheduled for 2 October with the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research and will hopefully see a higher turnout than the 18 September session with Studentcare (which will likely be repeated next term) and staffing the virtual front desk.
- Planning for the 25 September social engagement event.
- Action arising from Monday's GSA Council meeting and completing the annual GSA Council remuneration process.
- Mailing out some 200 GSA Planners to those who have expressed interest in receiving them.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Nominating Committee: vacancies on the GSA Awards Selection Committee (advertised via the newsletter), the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (advertised directly to GSA Council), the GSA Governance Committee (advertised directly to GSA Council), the GSA Board (advertised directly to GSA Council), a vacancy in the DRO position, and replenishment of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Council, the Faculty of Science Council, and Medical Sciences Library Committee.
- Facebook = 1,537 likes (up 5 from 16 September) and 1,647 followers (up 26 from 16 September); Facebook posts reached 273 users last week and our "post engagement" count was 16. Twitter = 1,080 followers (up 0 from 16 September); our tweets earned 786 "impressions" over the past week. Instagram = 524 followers (up 0 from 16 September); our posts earned 582 "impressions" over the past week.
- GSA Academic Travel Grants = new funding period started 1 July (not accepting applications for travel outside the province; online costs accepted); GSA Child Care Grants = new funding period started 1 July and closed 25 August (61 applications funded and \$103,000 disbursed); GSA Emergency Bursaries = no funding periods for GSA EBs; GSA Graduate Student Group Grants = new funding period started 1 July. Next funding periods opens 1 October 2020. All funding is being closely monitored so we can direct it to where the most need is.

### Management Report to the GSA Board, 30 September 2020

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 23 September 2020:

#### Strategic

- Preparing the GSA Board Strategic Work Plan update to GSA Council (will come to the GSA Board next week).
- Ongoing monitoring of the GSA's financial position (enrollment numbers are anticipated shortly), preparing to send the GSA's annual audit forward to the GSA Budget and Finance Committee, the GSA Board and GSA Council, and working to arrange for the GSA Budget and Finance Committee to receive an update from our investment advisor. Also beginning to plan the 2021-2022 GSA operating budget.
- Forward planning for the 2021 GSA General Election (the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee will be meeting on Friday) and associated referenda (on the Graduate Student Assistance Program (GSAP) and the U-Pass) that will also occur.
- Preparing for the GSA town hall (29 September) to hear from graduate students on the University's academic/administrative restructuring initiative.
- Proposing changes to the composition of GSA Council following the move of some graduate programs from the Faculty of Extension to the Faculty of Arts and the amalgamation of Religious Studies with History and Classics – have contacted the Speaker and are preparing to move forward under their direction.
- Analyzing the recent changes to the *Labour Relations Code* and the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* enacted by Bill 32, and how they will impact the GSA's work as a labour union for academically-employed graduate students – awaiting a legal opinion.
- Supporting the current U-Pass negotiations processes.
- Reviewing meeting materials associated with various University governance bodies.
- Work associated with the Collective Agreement, including supporting negotiations processes and researching best practices with respect to strike fund establishment (an internal GSA process to run alongside that begun by ab-GPAC has been launched), maintenance, and utilization, assessing strategies to build engagement and a steward network, and forward planning for a ratification vote associated with the current negotiating process.

#### Operations

- Planning further online engagement events for the fall (next lunch and learn session is scheduled for 2 October with the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research) and staffing the virtual front desk.
- Organizing a Halloween photo contest.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Nominating Committee: vacancies on the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (advertised via the newsletter and directly to GSA Council), the GSA Awards Selection Committee (advertised via the newsletter), the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (advertised directly to GSA Council), the GSA Governance Committee (advertised directly to GSA Council), the GSA Board (advertised directly to GSA Council), a vacancy in the DRO position, and replenishment of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Council and the Faculty of Science Council.
- Facebook = 1,546 likes (up 9 from 23 September) and 1,657 followers (up 10 from 23 September); Facebook posts reached 675 users last week and our "post engagement" count was 45. Twitter = 1,082 followers (up 2 from 23 September); our tweets earned 878 "impressions" over the past week. Instagram = 531 followers (up 0 from 23 September).
- GSA Academic Travel Grants = new funding period started 1 July (not accepting applications for travel outside the province; online costs accepted); GSA Child Care Grants = new funding period started 1 July and closed 25 August (61 applications funded and \$103,000 disbursed); GSA Emergency Bursaries = no funding periods for GSA EBs; GSA Graduate Student Group Grants = new funding period started 1 July. Next funding periods opens 1 October 2020. All funding is being closely monitored so we can direct it to where the most need is and funds not projected to be spent are being transferred to the University to dispense in the form of COVID-related supplementary bursaries for graduate students.

### Management Report to the GSA Board, 7 October 2020

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 30 September 2020:

#### Strategic

- Preparing to send the GSA's annual audit forward to the GSA Budget and Finance Committee, the GSA Board and GSA Council, preparing the Winter Term Financial Report, and working to arrange for the GSA Budget and Finance Committee to receive an update from our investment advisor (the committee will be meeting at the end of October). Also beginning to plan the 2021-2022 GSA operating budget.
- Forward planning for the 2021 GSA General Election (the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee has begun its annual cycle of election and referenda planning) and associated referenda on the Graduate Student Assistance Program (GSAP) and the U-Pass that will also occur (working to draft questions).
- Proposing changes to the composition of GSA Council following the move of some graduate programs from the Faculty of Extension to the Faculty of Arts and the amalgamation of Religious Studies with History and Classics – have contacted the Speaker and are preparing to move forward under their direction.
- Analyzing the recent changes to the *Labour Relations Code* and the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* enacted by Bill 32, and how they will impact the GSA's work as a labour union for academically-employed graduate students – awaiting a legal opinion.
- Supporting the current U-Pass negotiations processes.
- Preparing an electronic vote for the GSA Governance Committee concerning the creation of a GSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (following a recommendation from the GSA Governance Committee, the proposal will be brought to the GSA Board and then GSA Council for final approval).
- Work associated with the Collective Agreement, including supporting negotiations processes and researching best practices with respect to strike fund establishment, maintenance, and utilization (an internal GSA process to run alongside that begun by ab-GPAC has been launched), assessing strategies to build engagement and a steward network, and planning an upcoming meeting of the GSA Labour Relations Committee.

#### Operations

- Planning further online engagement events for the fall, staffing the virtual front desk, and organizing a Halloween photo contest.
- Developing materials for the Discover Governance program.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Nominating Committee: vacancies on the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (advertised via the newsletter and directly to GSA Council), the GSA Awards Selection Committee (advertised via the newsletter), the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (advertised via the newsletter and directly to GSA Council), the GSA Governance Committee (advertised directly to GSA Council), the GSA Board (advertised directly to GSA Council), a vacancy in the DRO position, and replenishment of the Faculty of Science Council.
- Facebook = 1,552 likes (up 6 from 30 September) and 1,663 followers (up 6 from 30 September); Facebook posts reached 993 users last week and our "post engagement" count was 142. Twitter = 1,083 followers (up 1 from 30 September); our tweets earned 1,900 "impressions" over the past week. Instagram = 533 followers (up 2 from 30 September); our posts earned 444 "impressions" over the past week.
- GSA Academic Travel Grants = new funding period started 1 October (not accepting applications for travel outside the province; online costs accepted); GSA Child Care Grants = new funding period started 1 October; GSA Emergency Bursaries = no funding periods for GSA EBs; GSA Graduate Student Group Grants = new funding period started 1 October. Next funding periods opens 1 January 2021. All funding is being closely monitored so we can direct it to where the most need is and funds not projected to be spent are being transferred to the University to dispense in the form of COVID-related supplementary bursaries for graduate students.

### Management Report to the GSA Board, 14 October 2020

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 7 October 2020:

#### Strategic

- Preparing to send the GSA's annual audit forward to the GSA Budget and Finance Committee, the GSA Board and GSA Council, preparing the Winter Term Financial Report, and working to arrange for the GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC) to receive an update from our investment advisor (the committee will be meeting on 30 October). Also beginning to plan the 2021-2022 GSA operating budget, which the GSA BFC will begin discussing on 30 November. Enrollment looks to be much better than the 9% decrease we had forecasted over the summer and this will inform the development of the upcoming Term Financial Report.
- Forward planning for the 2021 GSA General Election and associated referenda on the Graduate Student Assistance Program (GSAP) and the U-Pass that will also occur (the GSAP question has been drafted and the U-Pass question is in progress pending the outcome of ongoing negotiations).
- Analyzing the recent changes to the *Labour Relations Code* and the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* enacted by Bill 32, and how they will impact the GSA's work as a labour union for academically-employed graduate students – awaiting a legal opinion. Also developing a proposal for the GSA Labour Relations Committee concerning the creation of a steward network.
- Supporting the current U-Pass negotiations processes.
- Preparing an electronic vote for the GSA Governance Committee concerning the creation of a GSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (following a recommendation from the GSA Governance Committee, the proposal will be brought to the GSA Board and then GSA Council for final approval).
- Work associated with the Collective Agreement, including supporting negotiations processes and researching best practices with respect to strike fund establishment, maintenance, and utilization (an internal GSA process to run alongside that begun by ab-GPAC has been launched), assessing strategies to build engagement through a steward network (as noted above), and planning an upcoming meeting of the GSA Labour Relations Committee.

#### Operations

- Planning further online engagement events for the fall (reformatting the Lunch and Learn sessions as Brunch and Learns, to be scheduled on Tuesday mornings), staffing the virtual front desk, and organizing a Halloween photo contest.
- Preparing GSA Council meeting material.
- Developing materials for the Discover Governance program (first event planned for 22 October).
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Nominating Committee: vacancies on the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (advertised via the newsletter and directly to GSA Council), the GSA Awards Selection Committee (advertised via the newsletter), the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (advertised via the newsletter and directly to GSA Council), the GSA Governance Committee (advertised directly to GSA Council), the GSA Board (advertised directly to GSA Council), a vacancy in the DRO position, and replenishment of the Faculty of Science Council.
- Facebook = 1,552 likes (up 6 from 30 September) and 1,663 followers (up 6 from 30 September); Facebook posts reached 993 users last week and our "post engagement" count was 142. Twitter = 1,083 followers (up 1 from 30 September); our tweets earned 1,900 "impressions" over the past week. Instagram = 533 followers (up 2 from 30 September); our posts earned 444 "impressions" over the past week.
- GSA Academic Travel Grants = new funding period started 1 October (not accepting applications for travel outside the province; online costs accepted); GSA Child Care Grants = new funding period started 1 October; GSA Emergency Bursaries = no funding periods for GSA EBs; GSA Graduate Student Group Grants = new funding period started 1 October. Next funding periods opens 1 January 2021. All funding is being closely monitored so we can direct it to where the most need is and funds not projected to be spent are being transferred to the University to dispense in the form of COVID-related supplementary bursaries for graduate students.