![The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta](logo)

The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta

GSA Council Handbook

Updated May 2022

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

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GSA Council Meeting Dates

GSA Council Meetings are held on the following dates:

16 May 2022	15 August 2022	21 November 2022	27 February 2023
20 June 2022	19 September 2022	12 December 2022	20 March 2023
18 July 2022	24 October 2022	23 January 2023	17 April 2023

Meetings start promptly at 6:00 pm and typically last 2 to 2.5 hours.
Meeting dates are subject to change; visit the GSA website for up-to-date information. Meetings are currently hosted Zoom until further notice.

Introduction

The University of Alberta Graduate Students' Association (GSA) is a not-for-profit body with the responsibility under the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* to represent graduate students, collectively, to the University and to government. All graduate students are members of the GSA (with the exception of some exchange students), and pay fees for their membership.

The GSA administers a budget of over $1 million, as well as close to $1 million in negotiated funds in grants, awards, and bursaries. The GSA negotiates numerous services including the GSA Health and Dental Plan, the Graduate Student Assistance Program, and the U-Pass. The GSA also negotiates the collective agreement governing academically-employed graduate students.

As a graduate student, you not only benefit from the advocacy, accountability, and accessibility of the GSA, but you can play an important role in its vision to enhance the graduate school experience by participating in GSA Council.

Your Role as a Councillor or Alternate

As Departmental Councillor (including the Indigenous Graduate Students' Association Councillor) or Alternate, you are the representative of the graduate students in your program or group. As Councillor-at-Large, you are an at-large representative and provide an additional voice on GSA Council. In both positions, your role is to be informed about the matters GSA Council is discussing and/or deciding on and, in the case of Departmental Councillors, representing the views of your constituents, bringing their feedback to GSA Council, and taking information resulting from conversations and decisions at GSA Council back to your constituents. You also play a role in elections that happen at GSA Council by reviewing information about candidates and participating in voting.

New Councillors/Alternates

New Councillors/Alternates will be asked to sign a confidentiality form as well as an Information Form. If you have been newly elected or appointed to serve as Councillor/Alternate, please contact the GSA office at gsa.grants@ualberta.ca to request these forms.

Attendance at Meetings

Any GSA member may attend a meeting, but it is the duty of Councillors to attend every meeting. The GSA has an attendance Policy for all members of GSA Council. Please familiarize yourself with this Policy.

As an added bonus, some Councillors may be eligible for GSA Council remuneration as provided by the GSA for the benefit of the graduate students they represent. You can learn more about this in GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section C: GSA Council.

Attendance is taken electronically before the meeting starts. Should you need to leave GSA Council early, you are encouraged to note your departure time via the in-meeting chat feature to a member of GSA staff or the Speaker. Be sure your attendance is noted and confirm this by checking the minutes of the previous meeting when you receive them.

Dinner

The dinner traditionally provided at meetings of GSA Council is suspended for all remote meetings.

How to Prepare for GSA Council Meetings

The meeting Agenda, Minutes, and substantial items are circulated two Fridays in advance of GSA Council meetings. A second mailing, containing the reports of GSA Officers and GSA Standing Committees is circulated the Friday before meetings. As a Councillor you will be notified by email with a link to the material on the GSA website, as well as instructions for registering for the Zoom meeting.

Read the circulated material in advance! Remember, you are representing other graduate students in GSA Council in decisions that can have an important impact on your fellow students' graduate experience. Read the material in advance and discuss relevant issues with colleagues in advance of meetings. This will help you be prepared with questions you may want to have addressed at the meeting. If there are elections to standing committees or other positions, reading the biographies of candidates will help increase your confidence in your voting decisions and your work representing your colleagues.

GSA Council Handbook

Identification at Meetings

The Speaker will provide instructions on how to change your name as it appears to other attendees at each meeting of Council. For the purposes of GSA Council minutes, it is important for Departmental Councillors or Alternates to identify themselves by their name *and* department.

During GSA Council Meetings

GSA Policy

The rules by which GSA Council operates are set out in GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section C: GSA Council and as a Councillor you should review and understand these rules. They are outlined below and are available on the GSA website. They are also included on pages 4-7 of this handbook.

Meetings are led by the Speaker, and follow specific procedures with respect to the agenda, minutes, discussion, Motions (notices of Motion, referring and deferring, tabling, adjournment), and voting.

The Speaker is responsible for presiding over GSA Council meetings and regulating the flow of discussion using the following ground rules based on GSA Bylaw and Policy and GSA Council practice:

- Quorum (30 voting members) must be present to do business (this prevents an unreasonably small subset of GSA Council from making decisions),
- Majority rules when voting (in most instances),
- Keeping a speaker's list,
- Moderating the time for which Councillors may have the floor,
- Only one topic at a time is addressed (brief, on-point follow-up questions are often permitted when time allows),
- Only one person at a time may speak,
- Once a question is decided, raising the same or similar question at the same meeting is out of order, and
- Personal remarks are out of order.

Motions

Before items reach GSA Council they have been carefully developed, reviewed, and recommended by the GSA Board and/or GSA Standing Committees.

Motions brought before GSA Council are considered in the following manner:

- The suggested Motion appears on the Outline of Issue,
- The Speaker will ask for the Motion to be "moved" in order to bring the issue to the floor,
- The Speaker will then ask for someone to "second" the Motion,
- Items are presented to GSA Council along with background information,
- Any discussion or debate of the issue takes place next. Councillors are encouraged to actively participate,
- Following discussion/debate, the Motion goes to a vote, and
- A majority vote is needed for a Motion to pass; in the event of a tie a Motion is considered to have failed.

Conduct

As a general rule, if you do not know what is going on, you cannot adequately hear the discussion, there is another issue with the meeting (eg, audio failure), or you feel your rights as a Councillor have been violated, you may use the in-meeting chat function or "raise hand" function to get the attention of the Speaker to make a Point of Information, a Point of Order, or a Point of Personal Privilege (please see page 7 for definitions of these terms). The Speaker will immediately advise on next steps.

Unless otherwise indicated (as above), to speak in GSA Council, use the in-meeting chat function or "raise hand" function to get the attention of the Speaker, who will acknowledge you and add you to the Speaker's list. The Speaker will let you know - "give you the floor" - when it is your turn to speak. Please note your department along with your name prior to speaking.

In debate, address the Speaker and refer to other people using the title of their position; eg, "the Councillor for < >" or "the Vice-President Labour." Nothing that happens in GSA Council is personal, and your remarks must reflect this.

Voting

Directly-Elected Officers and Councillors are voting members of GSA Council. Council-Elected Officers, GSA Directors, and Alternates are non-voting members of GSA Council. Voting members have one

vote; Alternates may only vote when they are attending in place of the Councillor.

Voting will be conducted via the polling feature (however elections of individuals to GSA Standing Committees, etc will be done via Google Form). Those "opposed" or "abstaining" will be invited to indicate, if they choose, their reasons for doing so in the in-meeting chat function.

Guests at GSA Council

Any member of the public is welcome to attend GSA Council meetings. They may neither vote nor ask questions, unless questions are raised via their Councillor or GSA Council agrees to extend them privilege to speak. Also, at times, GSA Council must go into closed session to discuss sensitive or confidential matters. During such times, any guests will be asked to leave the meeting until the session is re-opened.

Your Responsibilities After GSA Council Meetings

A summary of the meeting is distributed to Councillors shortly after each meeting. This is a convenient way for Departmental Councillors (including the Indigenous Graduate Students' Association Councillor) to share information with their constituents. After they add a few words of introduction (where necessary) they may either send the summary as written or with additions of specific interest to their constituents. It is important to know that this is a summary, and full details will be available in the Minutes for the meeting which are circulated with the next meeting's first mailing. Departmental Councillors are asked to please let the GSA staff know if you do not have access to an email circulation list for graduate students in your department and we will work with you to gain access*.*

Rules Governing GSA Council

Authority of GSA Council, *Post-Secondary Learning Act:*
95(2)d: "The council of a student organization may make bylaws governing … the calling of meetings of the council and the quorum and conduct of business at those meetings."

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section C: GSA Council:

C.POL.3 GSA Council Composition	C.POL.3.1 GSA Council is comprised of:
	C.POL.3.1.a All Directly-Elected Officers (DEOs) as voting members,
	C.POL.3.1.b All GSA Council-Elected Officers and Deputies as non-voting members,
	C.POL.3.1.c One (1) graduate student elected from each department, faculty, or extra-departmental unit at the University that offers a graduate program (Departmental Councillors) as voting members,
	C.POL.3.1.d One (1) Councillor elected by the Indigenous Graduate Students' Association (IGSA) as a voting member,
	C.POL.3.1.e Ten (10) Councillors-at-Large (CALs) as voting members, and
	C.POL.3.1.f The GSA Directors as non-voting members.
	C.POL.3.2 Departmental Councillors and the IGSA Councillor, and their alternates, will be elected (or, in the case of alternates, appointed) annually for a one (1) year term by graduate students from their department ('constituents') or from the membership of the IGSA according to their own procedures or their group Constitution.
	C.POL.3.2.a The duties of Departmental Councillors and the IGSA Councillor will be:

	C.POL.3.2.a.i To act as the primary liaison between the GSA and their constituents, including sending their constituents a brief report on GSA Council meetings and soliciting feedback,
	C.POL.3.2.a.ii To attend all meetings of GSA Council or, if they are unable to attend, to ensure their alternate can attend in their place, and
	C.POL.3.2.a.iii To ensure that the Speaker and GSA office are kept up to date with their names, departmental addresses, and contact information.
	C.POL.3.2.b For the benefit of graduate students in each department, faculty, or extra-departmental unit at the University, as represented by their Departmental Councillors or alternates that meet the attendance requirements, GSA Council remuneration will be provided, as specified in GSA Policy, GSA Council Attendance.
	C.POL.3.2.b.i The IGSA will be provided with GSA Council remuneration, as specified in GSA Policy, GSA Council Attendance.
	C.POL.3.3 CALs will be members of the GSA, excluding associate members, elected annually, with their terms to run from 1 May until 30 April of the following year.
	C.POL.3.3.a The duties of CALs will be:
	C.POL.3.3.a.i To attend all meetings of GSA Council,
	C.POL.3.3.a.ii To ensure that the Speaker and GSA office are kept up to date with their names, departmental addresses, and contact information, and
	C.POL.3.3.a.iii To provide additional voices on GSA Council from those offered by DEOs, Departmental Councillors, and the IGSA Councillor.
	C.POL.3.4 Members of the public are required to sign in with the Speaker and will be given a placard. They may not vote and do not have speaking privileges unless extended them by GSA Council following a vote on the matter.
C.POL.4 GSA Council Meetings	C.POL.4.1 The Speaker sets GSA Council meeting dates annually. If lacking sufficient agenda items, up to two (2) meetings may be cancelled at the discretion of the Speaker and President, but never two (2) sequential meetings.
	C.POL.4.2 Quorum for any GSA Council meeting will consist of thirty (30) voting members of GSA Council.
	C.POL.4.3 Agendas for GSA Council meetings will normally include time for: receiving the names of new GSA Council members, presentations, announcements from GSA Council members, action items, elections, reports from DEOs, GSA Standing Committees, and Management, and question period.
	C.POL.4.3.a Agenda items normally come to GSA Council from the GSA Board (GSAB) or other GSA Standing Committees. Members of GSA Council who wish to place an item on the agenda should contact the Speaker.
	C.POL.4.3.b Substantive agenda items are circulated to GSA Council members at least one (1) week prior to the date of the meeting on instruction of the Speaker. Substantive items received after this will be added to the agenda at the discretion of the Speaker. Reports for information

	are circulated the Friday (or Thursday, in the event of a holiday related closure of the GSA office) before a Monday meeting.
	C.POL.4.3.c Changes to the agenda made at meetings require a two-thirds simple majority vote.
	C.POL.4.4 Special Meetings of GSA Council
	C.POL.4.4.a Special meetings of GSA Council will have specific and limited agendas and may be called when important matters arise for decision either between regular meetings or at a time when pressure of business would not allow them to be adequately disposed of at a scheduled meeting. Procedures governing scheduled meetings will apply to special meetings.
	C.POL.4.4.b With reasonable notice (when possible five (5) working days), special meetings will be called by the Speaker following receipt of any of the following:
	C.POL.4.4.b.i A Motion of GSA Council at any GSA Council meeting,
	C.POL.4.4.b.ii A Motion of the GSAB, or
	C.POL.4.4.b.iii A request to the GSAB made by ten (10) or more members of GSA Council.
	C.POL.4.4.c Any request for a special meeting of GSA Council as noted above will specify the intended purpose of that meeting, and all business at the meeting must, unless otherwise mandated, be restricted to the specified purpose of the meeting.
C.POL.5 Procedure at GSA Council Meetings	C.POL.5.1 The duties of the Speaker are outlined in Section D: GSA Officers, GSA Policy, GSA Officer Portfolios.
	C.POL.5.1.a If the Speaker is unable to perform any of his/her duties, the Deputy Speaker will act. If neither is available, the President and the Executive Director (ED) (or delegate) will consult on the action(s) to be taken.
	C.POL.5.2 Motions (formal proposals that GSA Council take certain actions), are normally accompanied by a Notice of Motion (advance written notice that a Motion will be presented and debated at an upcoming meeting of GSA Council). Notices of Motion must be presented in time to be circulated with the first mailing of the GSA Council material, as described above.
	C.POL.5.2.a To move a Motion, voting members of GSA Council must first be recognized by the Speaker. A Motion must be seconded; a second simply indicates that the seconder agrees that the Motion should be debated and not that the seconder necessarily favours the Motion.
	C.POL.5.2.b During discussion and debate, voting members of GSA Council may:
	C.POL.5.2.b.i Move an amendment to a Motion. Amendments to a Motion must be germane; that is, they must be closely related to the subject of the Motion,
	C.POL.5.2.b.ii Move a Motion to Defer, which enables the discussion of a substantive issue to be put off to a later, specified time.
	C.POL.5.2.b.iii Move a Motion to Table, which allows GSA Council to lay aside a Motion until some future time. This Motion is not debatable,

	except with respect to when the Motion will return to GSA Council.

C.POL.5.2.c   Following discussion and debate, a Motion goes to a vote.

C.POL.5.2.c.i   Unless otherwise noted, a simple majority vote is needed for a Motion to pass; in the event of a tie a Motion is considered to have failed.

C.POL.5.2.d   Voting members of GSA Council may also:

C.POL.5.2.d.i   Move a Motion to Refer, which allows GSA Council to refer an issue to another body, usually a GSA Standing Committee.

C.POL.5.2.d.ii Move a Motion to Rescind, which allows GSA Council to cancel or stop an entire Motion that had already been adopted.

C.POL.5.2.d.iii Move a Motion to Reconsider, which allows GSA Council to return to a Motion that has been voted on at the meeting, in an instance where new information emerges or the situation changes, allowing GSA Council to consider and vote anew, as if GSA Council had not previously voted on the Motion.

C.POL.5.2.e   GSA Council may vote to close meetings, in which case only GSA Council members and GSA staff may attend; others wishing to attend must have permission extended by GSA Council following a vote.

C.POL.5.2.e.i   Open session minutes of GSA Council will be posted on the GSA website. Closed session minutes are confidential. Motions may only be considered in open session.

C.POL.5.3   Prerogatives of GSA Council Members

C.POL.5.3.a   After being recognized by the Speaker, any member of GSA Council may:

C.POL.5.3.a.i Ask a question for information,

C.POL.5.3.a.ii   Provide a Point of Information (request or provide information),

C.POL.5.3.a.iii Provide a Point of Order (ask that the Speaker enforce procedures governing GSA Council),

C.POL.5.3.a.iv Provide a Point of Personal Privilege (protest a personal remark),

C.POL.5.3.a.v Call the Question (call for a vote on an associated Motion if it is felt that there has been a fulsome discussion and it is time to move to a vote), or

C.POL.5.3.a.vi Motion for adjournment (separate from the adjournment as listed on the meeting agenda). This Motion is not debatable.

C.POL.5.4   If a member of GSA Council considers that a ruling made by the Speaker is not in order, they may appeal the Speaker's ruling. If this happens, the Speaker will give a brief explanation of their ruling. After questions and debate, the Speaker then asks voting members to vote on whether their ruling is upheld. If the ruling of the Speaker is overturned, the Speaker is bound to take the necessary remedial action to correct the situation.

Additional Information Based on GSA Council Practice

You may use the in-meeting chat to do the following:	*What you say:*
Request or provide information	"Point of Information"
Enforce the rules	"Point of Order"
Protest a personal remark	"Point of Personal Privilege"
Call the question (if you feel there has been a fulsome discussion and it is time to move on)	"Call the Question"

Mission, Vision, and Strategic Work Plan of the GSA

WHAT IS THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION?
The GSA, as established by the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*, represents graduate students at the University of Alberta and provides a wealth of services to its members to enrich the graduate student experience. A separate corporate entity, the GSA is a collegial organization which co-exists alongside the University of Alberta to fully empower, represent, and advocate for graduate students.

The GSA Board places utmost value on the cultivation and preservation of effective relationships with all stakeholders in order to sustain the organization's long-term health and protect its excellent reputation. The GSA Board recognizes that it exists in a society with a long history of systemic inequities which remain embedded in the fabric of our culture and which continue to adversely affect the work and legacy of the organization. To this end, the GSA deliberately undertakes the work of engaging with these systemic inequities with the goal of deconstructing them in order to advance the spirit of equity, diversity, and inclusion within the community. The GSA also works diligently to foster a culture of respect and professionalism among staff and graduate student leaders. Lastly, the GSA engages in regular review of governance processes, is committed to transparency and accountability, and ensures an annual transition process that facilitates the ongoing training of elected graduate student leaders.

WHAT IS A GRADUATE STUDENT?
A graduate student is an emerging colleague who contributes to their field of study in pursuit of an advanced degree through collaborative work with the professoriate in research, teaching, and the cultivation of University learning environments. These contributions are accomplished through, among others: extensive coursework and the development of capstone projects, theses, or dissertations (in pursuit of which graduate students are charged tuition and fees); academic employment (for which graduate students are paid); the co-creation and writing of scholarly work; contribution to the securing of academic funding; participation in the academic community via presentations, conferences, and other engagement initiatives; as well as economic contributions in the form of innovation and entrepreneurship.

The multi-faceted role of the graduate student is to take place in an environment of mutual respect and fairness—one aimed at developing skills and knowledge with lifelong benefits. This role therefore merits appropriate remuneration for labour in service of the enhancement of the institution.

WHAT IS THE GSA BOARD'S STRATEGIC WORK PLAN?
The GSA Board's Strategic Work Plan is the document that steers and prioritizes the work and initiatives of the GSA in accordance with the tenets of the graduate student experience. The GSA sees this plan as a living document, shifting focus and direction as the landscape changes within the University community and beyond, often at the provincial and federal levels. It is developed annually following extensive consultation with the graduate student community and with reference to the Strategic Work Plans of previous GSA Boards, and as such provides a planning document for this and future years.

OUR MISSION AND VISION: To advocate for all graduate students to the University of Alberta and all levels of government in pursuit of a safe, supportive, respectful, accessible, and inclusive community that fosters the multi-faceted roles played by graduate students.

The complete GSA Board's Strategic Work Plan is available on the GSA webpage.

The GSA: An Overview
Governance

As a Member of GSA Council, you will have a good understanding of GSA governance, which will help you answer questions you may receive from your fellow graduate students or identify issues within your department with which the GSA may be able to assist.

GSA Bylaw and Policy outline the composition, activities, responsibilities, and authority of the GSA. These documents are available online, so no need to memorize them, but seeing what they include is helpful.

GSA governing documents, including GSA Bylaw and Policy, can be found on the GSA website.

GSA Info Sessions

All graduate students are invited to participate in our info sessions on governance and other matters, but Councillors will find these particularly helpful in understanding and participating in discussions about the GSA Health and Dental Plan, the GSA budget, and other matters. We strongly recommend these sessions as a means to improve your confidence when you need to vote on items!

Who is on GSA Council?

GSA Council is made up of: Directly-Elected Officers, one Councillor (and their alternate(s)) from each department, faculty, or extra-departmental unit at the University that offers a graduate program, a Councillor elected by the Indigenous Graduate Students' Association, and ten Councillors-at-Large as voting members; and Council-Elected Officers and the GSA Directors as non-voting members.

Who are the Directly-Elected Officers?

Directly-Elected Officers, informally referred to as the student executive team, are elected by their fellow graduate students during the annual GSA General Elections. Their duties are outlined in GSA Bylaw and Policy, and profiles for each Officer are available on the GSA website.

The 2022-2023 Directly-Elected Officers are:

GSA President: Anas Fassih
gsa.president@ualberta.ca

GSA VP Academic: Bishoi Aziz
gsa.vpacademic@ualberta.ca

GSA VP External: Janmejay Rao
gsa.vpexternal@ualberta.ca

GSA VP Labour: Hiren Kaklotar
gsa.vplabour@ualberta.ca

GSA VP Student Services: Monica Vinod
gsa.vpstudentservices@ualberta.ca

Who are the Council-Elected Officers?

Council-Elected Officers are elected by GSA Council to hold the offices of Speaker and Deputy Speaker, Chief Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer, and Senator. Their duties are outlined in GSA Bylaw and Policy, and profiles for each Officer are available on the GSA website.

The 2021-2022 Council-Elected Officers are (2022-2023 Officers to be elected in June 2022):

Speaker: Lauren Hill
gsa.speaker@ualberta.ca

Chief Returning Officer: Muneeb Mohiuddin
gsa.elections@ualberta.ca

Senator: Peter Isesele
gsa.senator@ualberta.ca

Deputy Speaker: Sana Amjad
gsa.speaker@ualberta.ca (shared with the Speaker)

Deputy Returning Officer: Sophie Shi

Who are the GSA Directors?

The GSA Directors work to support the Directly-Elected Officers and the GSA Board Strategic Work Plan.

Executive Director: Courtney Thomas
gsaed@ualberta.ca

Associate Director: Erika Heiberg
gsaad@ualberta.ca

GSA Board (GSAB)

The GSA Board is the senior administrative authority of the GSA, a power that has been delegated to it by GSA Council. The GSA Board membership consists of: the Directly-Elected Officers as the voting members; the Senator, Speaker, and Chief Returning Officer; three members of GSA Council elected by GSA Council; and the GSA Directors.

GSA Standing Committees

The work of the GSA is supported by the efforts of GSA Standing Committees. Each GSA Standing Committee has its own mandate, carried out by GSA members elected by GSA Council.

You can get involved! Service on GSA Standing Committees or representing graduate students on University bodies offers great opportunities to meet other students, expand your knowledge of relevant issues, and play an active role in shaping the experience of graduate students. Current opportunities are circulated in the GSA Newsletter and posted on the GSA website.

Details about GSA Standing Committees, including mandates and compositions, are available in GSA Policy. A register of GSA Standing Committees and their current memberships can be found on the GSA website.

Services, Benefits, and Supports

As a member of GSA Council, you will have a good understanding of GSA services and supports, and can assist your fellow students with this information. Ensuring your fellow graduate students are aware of these services and events can help them make the most of their graduate school experience. Posters and other materials regarding services are distributed at GSA Council meetings for you to take back to your department.

Questions about GSA Council can be addressed to the GSA Speaker at gsa.speaker@ualberta.ca
Questions about the GSA can be addressed to the GSA at gsa.frontdesk@ualberta.ca

The GSA newsletter contains updates about resources, services, upcoming events, and other opportunities, and is circulated to all graduate students. We also encourage graduate students to follow @ualbertagsa on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook.

GSA Services and negotiated/subsidized programs include:

- GSA Health and Dental Plan,
- Graduate Student Assistance Program,
- U-Pass,
- Dedicated lounge space and meeting rooms,
- Career Centre (UofA),
- Writing Resources (UofA), and
- Group-rate home and auto insurance through TDIMM.

[Learn more about these services and programs on the GSA website.](#)

GSA Funding

Finances are often a concern for graduate students, and the GSA offers a number of possible funding sources, open to all GSA members who are eligible:

- **Child Care Grants** (income-based program to help offset financial demands of child care),

- **Academic Travel Grants** (funding to assist students in attending events that are directly related to their academic program),

- **Graduate Student Group Grants** (funding to assist graduate student groups with costs of seminars, guest lecturers, colloquia, and other academic events), and

- **Emergency Bursaries** (funding for students who need help due to an unforeseen emergency).

[Learn about the specific criteria, deadlines, and application procedures on the GSA website](#).

GSA Recognition Awards

Each year the GSA confers awards on GSA members who have distinguished themselves in the areas of research, teaching, academic achievement, leadership, and service to the University and to the wider community. The GSA also recognizes University faculty and staff members for their outstanding contribution to graduate education and acknowledges those alumni and benefactors who continue to support and champion graduate students at the University.

[A listing of the individual awards—many of which are self-nominated—as well as eligibility criteria and application information can be found on the GSA website.](#)

GSA Events

The GSA hosts events for graduate students at various times of the year, and GSA Councillors are always welcome to attend and to volunteer to help at events such as:

- Social engagement events,
- Candidates' forum near the time of the General Election,
- Orientations at the start of Fall and Winter term, and
- GSA Awards Night (each Spring).

GSA events will take place virtually until further notice.

Abbreviations Commonly Used at GSA Council Meetings

AASUA	Association of Academic Staff: University of Alberta		GSAP	Graduate Student Assistance Program (GSA)
Ab-GPAC	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council		GSGG	Graduate Student Group Grant (GSA)
ACB	Appeals and Complaints Board (GSA)		GSSF	Graduate Student Support Fund
AEGS	Academically-Employed Graduate Student		GTA	Graduate Teaching Assistant
ASC	Awards Selection Committee (GSA)		HDPRF	Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund (GSA)
ATG	Academic Travel Grant (GSA)		HIAR	Helping Individuals at Risk
BFC	Budget and Finance Committee (GSA)		IDF	International Differential Fee
BoG […]	Board of Governors (Associated standing committees may also be referenced)		IGSA	Indigenous Graduate Students' Association
CA	Graduate Student Assistantship Collective Agreement		LDF	Legal Defence Fund (GSA)
CAGS	Canadian Association for Graduate Studies		LRC	Labour Relations Committee (GSA)
CAL	Councillor-at-Large (GSA)		MINFs	Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees
CASA	Canadian Alliance of Student Associations		MOA	Memorandum of Agreement
CAUS	Council of Alberta University Students		MOS	Memorandum of Settlement
CCG	Child Care Grant (GSA)		MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
CFB	Campus Food Bank		NASA	Non-Academic Staff Association
COSB	Code of Student Behaviour		NoC	Nominating Committee (GSA)
CPI	Consumer Price Index		NT	Negotiating Team (GSA)
CRO	Chief Returning Officer (GSA)		PAW	Physical Activity and Wellness Centre
DEO	Directly-Elected Officer (GSA)		PGME	Post-Graduate Medical Education
DoS	Dean of Students		PI	Principal Instructor
DRO	Deputy Returning Officer (GSA)		PIPA	Personal Information Protection Act
EB	Emergency Bursary (GSA)		PSLA	Post-Secondary Learning Act
ED	Executive Director (GSA)		SFS	Student Financial Services
EDIC	Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (GSA)		SGS	Student Group Services
ERC	Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA)		SU	Students' Union
ETS	Edmonton Transit Service		SUB	Students' Union Building
FGSR	Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research		TDIMM	TD Insurance Meloche Monnex (GSA)
FOIPP	Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act		UAPPOL	University of Alberta Policies and Procedures On-Line
GFC […]	General Faculties Council (associated standing committees may also be referenced)		UHC	University Health Centre
GC	Governance Committee (GSA)		U-PASS	Universal bus/transit pass
GPAC	Graduate Program Administrators Committee		VPA	Vice-President Academic (GSA)
GRA	Graduate Research Assistant		VPE	Vice-President External (GSA)
GRAF	Graduate Research Assistant Fellowship		VPL	Vice-President Labour (GSA)
GSAB	Graduate Students' Association Board (GSA)		VPSS	Vice-President Student Services (GSA)

Questions about GSA Council can be addressed to the GSA Speaker at gsa.speaker@ualberta.ca
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