

Monday, September 23, 2024

Held in-person in 2-100 Council Chambers

6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

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, Anishinaabe, Dene, Ojibway, Saulteaux, 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 SPEAKER:

Farhan Khalid in the Chair

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

None at this time

CLOSED SESSION:

Discussion of matters pertaining to the business interests of the GSA will occur in Closed Session

Time	Item #	Title	Presenter(s)
6:00	-	Land Acknowledgement	F. Khalid, GSA Speaker
1 min	1	Approval of the Agenda for September 23, 2024 GSA Council	F. Khalid, GSA Speaker
1 min	2.0-2.12	Approval of the GSA Council Minutes of August 19, 2024	F. Khalid, GSA Speaker
2 min	3	Changes in GSA Council Membership	F. Khalid, GSA Speaker
10 min	4	Announcements	

15 min	5	<u>PRESENTATION ITEMS</u>	
		A. Micro-Grants Process Presentation Presented by Vice-Provost (EDI) Carrie Smith	C. Smith, Vice-Provost EDI
20 min		B. SEAP Heatmap Presentation Presented by VP Student Life Benjamin Kucher	B. Kucher, VP Student Life
20 min		C. Savver AI Pilot (Financial Management App) Presented by Dillon Kearn	D. Kearn, CEO Brightlearning Labs
15 min	6	<u>ACTION ITEMS</u>	
	6.0 6.1-6.6	A. GSA Governance Committee-Recommended Bylaw Changes - August 19 Second Reading a. Outline of Issue b. Recommended Bylaw Changes	H. Arshad, President
	6.7 6.8-6.10	B. GSA Governance Committee-Recommended Bylaw Changes - September 23 First Reading a. Outline of Issue b. Recommended Bylaw Changes	H. Arshad, President
	6.11	C. 2024-2025 GSA Spring/Summer Term Budget and Expenditure Report a. Cover Letter to the President and Chair of the GSA Budget and Finance Committee From the Executive Director	H. Arshad, President
	6.12 6.13	b. Outline of Issue c. Cover Letter to GSA Council from GSA President	
	6.14	d. Spring Summer Term 2024-2025 Budget and Expenditure Report	
	6.15-6.27	e. Spring Summer Term 2024-2025 Operating Budget Narrative	
	6.28-6.30	f. Spring Summer Term 2024-2025 Restricted and Other Funding Report	
	6.31-6.32	g. Spring Summer Term 2024-2025 Restricted and Other Funding Narrative	
	6.33-6.34	h. Spring Summer Term 2024-2025 Labour Union Fund Dues Budget Narrative	
15 min	7	<u>DISCUSSION ITEMS</u>	

30 min	8	<p><u>ELECTIONS</u></p> <p>A. GSA Deputy Speaker: a. One GSA Member Position</p> <p>B. Appeals & Complaints Board: a. Two Councillor Positions</p> <p>C. NoC: a. One GSA Member Position</p> <p>D. Budget & Finance Committee: a. One GSA Member Position</p> <p>E. Elections & Referenda Committee: a. Two GSA Member Positions</p> <p>F. Governance Committee: a. One Councillor Position</p> <p>G. Awards Selection Committee: a. Four GSA Member Positions</p>	<p>T. Wang, NoC Vice-Chair</p> <p>No nominations received</p> <p>No nominations received</p> <p>Two nominations approved</p> <p>Five nominations received</p> <p>Three nominations approved</p> <p>No nominations received</p> <p>Thirteen nominations received</p>
30 min	9	<p><u>INFORMATION PIECES</u></p> <p>Reports:</p> <p>A. GSA President: Haseeb Arshad</p> <p>B. Vice-President Academic: Rija Kamran</p> <p>C. Vice-President Student Life: Benjamin Kucher</p> <p>D. Vice-President Student Services: Saad Iqbal</p> <p>E. Vice-President External</p> <p>F. Associate Vice-President Labour: Muneeb Raja</p> <p>G. GSA Senator: Ola Mabrouk</p> <p>H. GSA Speaker</p> <p>I. Chief and Deputy Returning Officers: Sophie Shi and Zain Patel</p> <p>J. GSA Nominating Committee Chair: Arseniy Belosokhov</p> <p>K. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Chair</p> <p>L. GSA Management, Executive Director: Lewie Moodley</p>	<p>9a</p> <p>9b</p> <p>9c</p> <p>9d</p> <p>None at this time</p> <p>9f</p> <p>None at this time</p> <p>None at this time</p> <p>9i</p> <p>9j</p> <p>None at this time</p> <p>9L</p>
	10	<p>Question Period</p> <p>A. Written Questions (May be submitted to the GSA Speaker before 4:00PM on Thursday, August 15, 2024)</p> <p>B. Oral Questions</p>	
		Adjournment	

Monday, August 19, 2024

Held online and in-person in L1-490 ECHA

6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

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, Anishinaabe, Dene, Ojibway, Saulteaux, 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 SPEAKER:

Farhan Khalid in the Chair

DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Sumaira Niazi

CLOSED SESSION:

Discussion of matters pertaining to the business interests of the GSA will occur in Closed Session

IN ATTENDANCE:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Haseeb Arshad, GSA President | 30. Iain Smith, Computing Sciences Councillor |
| 2. Rija Kamran, VP Academic | 31. Michelle Bey, Dentistry Councillor |
| 3. Benjamin Kucher, VP Student Life | 32. Andy Zhang, Digital Humanities Councillor |
| 4. Muneeb Raja, AVP Labour | 33. Shaun Woudstra, Earth & Atmospheric Sciences Councillor |
| 5. Saad Arslan Iqbal, VP Student Services | 34. Guadalupe Montserrat Cornejo Rodriguez, Educational Policy Studies Councillor |
| 6. Zain Patel, Deputy Returning Officer | 35. Jennie Burton, Elementary Education Councillor |
| 7. Arseniy Belosokhov, Councillor-At-Large & NoC Chair | 36. Zoe Wagner, Human Ecology Councillor |
| 8. Margaret DeCoste, Councillor-At-Large | 37. Amber Smith, IGSA Councillor |
| 9. Christine Hymanyk, Councillor-At-Large | |
| 10. Abdul Hadi Syed, Councillor-At-Large | |
| 11. Andres Dorado, Councillor-At-Large | |

<p>12. Ibrahim Khodabocus, Councillor-At-Large 13. Allyson Brinston, Councillor-At-Large 14. Destiny Otoadese, Councillor-At-Large 15. Georga Boffen Yordanov, Councillor-At-Large 16. Constantin Mouzaaber, Guest 17. Ajibola (Jibs) Adigun, Guest 18. Kaylee Craplewe, Guest 19. Lisa van Lierop, Guest 20. Nafisa Sadaf Hriti, Guest 21. Zijia Yu, Guest 22. Ning Dai, Biochemistry Councillor 23. Samantha Tan, Biological Sciences Councillor 24. Gurparkash Singh, Biomedical Engineering Councillor 25. Andy Cheng, Cell Biology Councillor 26. Hadi Afsaneh, Chemical & Materials Engineering Councillor 27. Yousef Haidar, Chemistry Councillor 28. Kiera Greenaway, Civil & Environmental Engineering Councillor 29. Cassandra Baragar, Communication Science & Disorders Councillor</p>	<p>38. Pouneh Mohammadi Nejad, Mathematical & Statistical Sciences Councillor 39. Connor Oborn, Medical Genetics Councillor 40. Emma Heidebrecht, Neuroscience Councillor 41. Nancy Hammer, Nursing Councillor 42. Rebecca Reif, Obstetrics & Gynecology Councillor 43. Fateema Muzaffar, Oncology Councillor 44. Toqa Abdelwahab, Ophthalmology Councillor 45. Fulin Wang, Pharmacology Councillor 46. Abhinab Mukhopadhyay, Physics Councillor 47. Emilie Desnoyers, Psychiatry Councillor 48. Cheryl Pan, Psychology Councillor 49. Kathryn Short, Public Health Councillor 50. Matt Ball, Renewable Resources Councillor 51. Akil Mangra-Bala, Alternate: Pharmacy 52. Baiyu Su, Alternate: Sociology</p>
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Time	Item #	Title	Presenter(s)
6:02	-	Land Acknowledgement	F. Khalid, Speaker
1 min	1	Approval of the Agenda for August 19, 2024 GSA Council HA MOVED. BK SECONDED. Motion PASSED.	F. Khalid, Speaker
1 min	2.0-2.6	Approval of the GSA Council Minutes of June 24, 2024 SI MOVED. BK SECONDED. Motion PASSED.	F. Khalid, Speaker
2 min	3	Changes in GSA Council Membership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● New Neuroscience Councillor: Emma Heidebrecht ● New Ophthalmology Councillor: Toqa Abdelwahab ● New Physics Councillor: Abhinab Mukhopadhyay ● Outgoing Councillors: Constantin Mouzaaber 	F. Khalid, Speaker

		(Ophthalmology) and Guadalupe Montserrat Cornejo Rodriguez (Educational Policy Studies)	
10 min	4	<p>Announcements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VP External By-Election: <p>The GSA VP External has resigned, citing personal and academic reasons, thus we will be running a by-election for the position starting on August 20th, 2024. Nominations close on September 3rd at 4:00pm. The announcement was made in last Friday's newsletter and will continue to be advertised there. Please come by 1-49 Triffo Hall, the GSA Office, to pick up a nomination form.</p>	
15 min	5	<p><u>PRESENTATION ITEMS</u></p> <p>A. Shape the Future Campaign Presentation</p> <p>Lynn Hruczkowski (Senior Consultant, Alumni and Development), Sarah Wolgemuth (Director, Student Experience Strategy Office of the Deputy Provost Students and Enrolment), and Kelly Spencer (AVP Development and Alumni Relations) presented the confidential item.</p>	L. Hruczkowski, S. Wolgemuth, K. Spencer
30 min	5.0-5.9 5.10-5.29	<p>B. GSA Health & Dental Plan Survey Report</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Questionnaire Report <p>H. Arshad presented the item, detailing that the Health and Dental Plan is up for renewal next August. A recent survey was conducted among students to evaluate the current plan, identify desired new benefits, and address any issues. The survey, which had 850 responses predominantly from second-year PhD students, revealed that while 90% of graduate students are enrolled in the plan, 17.5% opt out. Respondents rated the current Student Care plan as neutral, citing areas for improvement in claims processing and customer service. Key student priorities include increased dental coverage and enhanced wellness support. 70% were unaware of Homewood Health, a wellness provider linked with the GSAP plan.</p> <p>Students recommended a comprehensive plan combining wellness, health, and dental coverage, faster claim processing, and a more streamlined user experience. Preferences showed that 65.4% favor a comprehensive plan, 73.5% would like financial support from the provider, 75.1% want quicker claim processing, and 42.8% desire a parental plan.</p> <p>Based on these recommendations, the board has been</p>	H. Arshad, President

25 min	5.30-5.31	<p>working with management for over 18 months to select a new health provider. After a thorough evaluation, Ellement has been chosen to replace the current provider.</p> <p>C. Ellement Health & Dental Presentation</p> <p>Corey Wright, Joshua Sankarlal and Tim Adams, Ellement representatives, presented the StudyWell Benefits website and app presentation.</p> <p>Corey Wright, Senior Vice President at Ellement Consulting Group, presented the item. Ellement is a new entrant in the post-secondary student benefits market. C. Wright provided an overview of the organization and the services they plan to offer to the GSA. Unlike many competitors, Ellement is committed to remaining Canadian-focused, with equity investments from local pension plans. This structure supports ongoing investment in IT systems and ensures service quality. Ellement offers a streamlined claims process through a user-friendly app and website. Claims are handled directly by Ellement with real-time tracking and personalized support. They will provide a custom, accessible website that will provide vital information and enhance user experience, including features for those with visual impairments. Ellement provides various support options, including live chat, call-back features, and dedicated phone lines to ensure efficient service. They demonstrated their commitment to enhancing the student experience, simplify the claims process, and continuously improve through technology and member feedback. They will refine services based on graduate student needs and ensure the benefits package meets expectations through the contract negotiation process that will begin in the coming weeks.</p>	C. Wright, J. Sankarlal
15 min	6 6.0	<p><u>ACTION ITEMS</u></p> <p>A. GSA Health & Dental Provider Vote</p> <p>a. Outline of Issue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions centered around the cost of the other plans. Blue Cross was determined to be too expensive. StudentCare was eliminated due to 	

	<p>6.1 6.2-6.7</p> <p>6.8 6.9-6.20</p>	<p>the lack of technology advancements. Priority to improve coverage and reduce premiums.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> H. Arshad clarified that this vote is to choose a provider and negotiate the exact rates afterward. Priority was to move away from StudentCare to achieve better transparency and customer service. <p style="text-align: right;">Motion PASSED.</p> <p>B. GSA Governance Committee-Recommended Bylaw and Policy Changes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Outline of Issue Recommended Bylaw & Policy Changes to Sections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Belosokhov asked after an avenue to provide further suggestions for changes. H. Arshad recommended reaching out to him and discussing or using the new website, once it is live, to provide feedback. HA will bring any recommendations to the Governance Committee. HA summarized the changes in the document. This vote is for the policy - only one reading. Bylaw gets two readings. <p style="text-align: right;">Motion PASSED.</p> <p>C. GSA ERC-Recommended Policy Changes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Outline of Issue Recommended Policy Changes to Sections D & I <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Z. Patel summarized the changes in the document, particularly the Acting DRO position. <p style="text-align: right;">Motion PASSED.</p>	
15 min	7	<p><u>DISCUSSION ITEMS</u></p> <p>A. Council Ad-Hoc Committee to Improve Council Efficiency</p> <p>H. Arshad, GSA President, introduced the item and detailed that as part of the GSA’s ongoing efforts to enhance engagement, accessibility, transparency, and accountability, we are exploring ways to improve the</p>	H. Arshad, President

		<p>effectiveness of our Council. Feedback suggests that our Council could benefit from restructuring to become more efficient, akin to other councils, such as the UC GSA.</p> <p>To address this, a proposal of the formation of an ad hoc committee consisting solely of councillors, who would have voting rights, while Farhan, as Chair of the Council, would chair the committee in a non-voting capacity. The ad hoc committee would be responsible for reviewing our current bylaws and policies and comparing them with other student governance bodies to identify improvements. The committee would then present recommendations to the council.</p> <p>The Governance Committee, while having the authority to revise bylaws, would not lead this initiative. Instead, the councillors would drive the process, ensuring that the council's perspective is central to any changes. This approach aligns with the principle that the council, as the supreme authority, should lead decisions affecting its own structure.</p> <p>We need to discuss and decide on the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Formation of the Ad Hoc Committee: Determine the number of members required, the election process, and the committee's mandate. 2. Mandate and Goals: Define what constitutes an "effective council" to guide the ad hoc committee in its review and recommendations. <p>The Governance Committee will assist by drafting the mandate and recommending it to the council. If the council agrees to proceed with this route, a formal action item will be prepared for the next council meeting, where members will vote on the proposal and subsequent elections for the ad hoc committee will be organized.</p> <p>The key decision now is whether we prefer an ad hoc committee led by councillors to handle these revisions or</p>	
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		<p>if we want the Governance Committee to undertake this responsibility.</p> <p>Concerns were raised around burning out GSA Councillors and current issues filling vacancies on Standing Committees, let alone adding another Committee to fill. Discussion centered around the trust that the Governance Committee already has and what body should have the mandate to change Council consistency. The idea would be to have a committee of five councillors, down from 80, who would volunteer to work on bylaw and policy changes for the Council itself, as well as be able to shorten Council meetings by having them biweekly. The onboarding of Councillors will also help the issue of engagement. H. Arshad raised concerns about the Governance Committee making changes to the larger body that is meant to have executive power over the committee - Councillors agreed that the procedure of GC bringing up items to Council to approve dissuades any concerns on this part. Councillors agreed that the GC should continue its mandate of forwarding bylaw and policy recommendations to Council.</p>	
30 min	8	<p><u>ELECTIONS</u></p> <p>A. Appeals & Complaints Board:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Two Councillor Positions b. Three GSA Member Positions (Five Nominees): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Lisa van Lierop ii. Nafisa Sadaf Hriti iii. Malik Awan <p>B. GSAB/NoC:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. One Councillor Position (One Nominee): Ibrahim Khodabocus <p>C. Budget & Finance Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. One Councillor Position (Three Nominees): Andres Dorado b. One GSA Member Position <p>D. Elections & Referenda Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Three GSA Member Positions (One Nominee): Kaylee Craplewe <p>E. Governance Committee:</p>	<p>A. Belosokhov, NoC Chair</p> <p>No nominations received</p> <p>No nominations received</p>

		a. Two Councillor Positions (One Nominee): Ibrahim Khodabocus	
30 min	9	<p><u>INFORMATION PIECES</u></p> <p>Reports:</p> <p>A. GSA President: Haseeb Arshad</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. H. Arshad highlighted that the Coursework-based Master's Scholarship program will begin its advertisement in mid-September, with the adjudication process occurring in December and awards being distributed to graduate students by January. b. Additionally, efforts are underway to finalize the Graduate Peer Support Framework, with the goal of completing it before the next council meeting. c. Regarding the Graduate Student Support Fund (GSSF), a proposal has been submitted requesting \$1.2 million to enhance support for Coursework-based Master's Scholarships and the Graduate Peer Support Program. d. The Board's interview with the third-party lead investigator went well, and several recommendations were made, including the establishment of an advisory board for CMT, compassion training for UAPS officers, support for individuals affected by the forced encampment sweep, and the creation of a comprehensive protest policy. e. It was noted with concern that the lead investigator was unaware of the recent resignation of the Arts Faculty EDI Council, highlighting a significant information gap. <p>B. Vice-President Academic: Rija Kamran</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. As submitted b. R. Kamran highlighted the Learning Management System platform on Canvas, which will be launched this fall. 	

		<p>R. Kamran encouraged students to contact her with any issues or concerns.</p> <p>c. Additionally, the implementation of the PhD minimum funding is underway, with partial implementation starting this fall. By fall 2025, all PhD students in their first to fourth years will receive a minimum of \$25,000 upon admission. We will seek your input and feedback throughout the rollout process.</p> <p>C. Vice-President Student Life: Benjamin Kucher</p> <p>a. As submitted.</p> <p>b. B. Kucher updated the Council on his ongoing work with the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA). As the chair of the National Indigenous Advocacy Committee and a board member of CASA, the GSA has enhanced its influence in advocating for graduate student issues. This year, our focus has been on securing sustainable financial support, improving mental health resources, and increasing Indigenous student access to post-secondary education. Our collaboration with CASA is yielding significant advocacy results.</p> <p>c. B. Kucher will provide further updates after CASA's E-plenary next month and during CASA's Advocacy Week in Ottawa this November. B. Kucher encouraged students to reach out with any questions or to learn more about CASA's work, as your feedback will help shape our advocacy priorities.</p> <p>d. CASA is advocating for a permanent \$1.07 billion investment in the Canadian Student Grants Program, raising the maximum grant to \$4,200 annually and maintaining loan maximums at \$300 per week. We are also involved in shaping the Youth Mental Health Fund and advocating for increased funding for</p>	
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		<p>Indigenous post-secondary education, specifically a \$750 million annual increase for the Post-Secondary Student Support Program and Inuit programs. Additionally, CASA is pushing for a \$207.6 million annual investment in the Student Workplace Placement Program to enhance work-integrated learning opportunities for students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. Our collaboration with CASA is yielding significant advocacy results, impacting our graduate student community. I will provide further updates after CASA's E-plenary next month and during CASA's Advocacy Week in Ottawa this November. Please feel free to reach out with any questions or to learn more about CASA's work, as your feedback will help shape our advocacy priorities. <p>D. Vice-President Student Services: Saad Iqbal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. S. Iqbal detailed the significant efforts that have been directed toward negotiating the U-Pass contract with the City of Edmonton, as the current agreement with the University of Alberta is nearing its end. Despite a negotiation session in mid-July that did not reach a consensus, further discussions are scheduled to start soon. Both the GSA and UASU are working diligently to secure a favourable deal for students. b. Additionally, outreach is underway to engage graduate students at Augustana Campus with social events, and input is welcomed via email. c. For World Mental Health Day on October 10th, two events—a nature walk and a creative workshop—are being organized in collaboration with the SU. 	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. The Campus Food Bank is also focusing on developing sustainable solutions to address rising food insecurity, such as their partnership with the Urban Prairie Farm, and suggestions are encouraged. e. Lastly, a recent workshop aimed at improving the graduate and postdoctoral student experience provided valuable insights across various student categories. E. Vice-President External: Position Vacant F. Associate Vice-President Labour: Muneeb Raja <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. M. Raja detailed that since our last Council meeting, we have initiated bargaining negotiations with the University, having sent the notice on June 26. He has since met with our negotiating team to review our mandate and prepare our initial proposal. Negotiation dates have been set, with proposal exchanges planned for early October and at least three negotiation sessions scheduled before the Christmas break, with the possibility of a fourth. We will keep members updated on the progress. Additionally, we are seeking nominations for three voting members for the LRC and two alternate members for the GSA negotiating team. Interested individuals should refer to the call for nominations sent in last week's newsletter. G. GSA Senator: Ola Mabrouk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. None at this time H. GSA Speaker: Farhan Khalid <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. As F. Khalid prepares to graduate and conclude his term as Speaker, he took the time to express his gratitude to all the councillors who supported him over the past 18 months and three election periods. He had two final thoughts to share: First, remember that the 	
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		<p>Graduate Student Association's primary goal is for every student to successfully complete their degree. Second, while some individuals may hold more formal roles, no one is above the collective authority of the GSA; we all have equal standing within this organization. He wishes the best for those stepping into new roles after the upcoming by-election and hopes for improvements in university tuition and inflation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Chief and Deputy Returning Officers: Sophie Shi and Zain Patel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Z. Patel advertised the By-Election nomination call opening on August 20th - nomination forms to be picked up from 1-49 Triffo Hall. J. GSA Nominating Committee Chair: Arseniy Belosokhov <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. As submitted K. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Chair: Andrew Pohlka <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. As submitted b. A. Pohlka encouraged volunteers to nominate themselves for ERC vacancies L. GSA Management, Executive Director: Lewie Moodley <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. As submitted 	
	10	<p>Question Period</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Written Questions (May be submitted to the GSA Speaker before 4:00PM on Thursday, August 15, 2024) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. By-Election Dates were detailed (and can be found on the GSA website) b. Anticipated fees to the U-Pass program: confidential negotiations ongoing, but we are working to not let inflation raise the price of the U-Pass c. Current advocacy initiatives taken by VP External: abGPAC has been dissolved, so we are working with the UC GSA to create an advocacy group to the provincial government. We are currently working with the mayor to create affordable, off-campus housing and on 	

		transit safety in U-Pass negotiations. B. Oral Questions: None at this time	
		Adjournment 8:46 PM	

Outline of Issue

General bylaw and policy updates: Recommended Changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy

Suggested Motion:

That **GSA Council** approve the recommendations of the GSA Board and GSA Governance Committee regarding changes to GSA Bylaws and Policy, as noted in the attached proposal, effective following two readings by GSA Council (in the case of GSA Bylaw) and one approval by GSA Council (in the case of GSA Policy). Policy changes are effective and binding from August 20 2024 and Bylaw changes are effective binding September 24 2024.

Note: This is the second reading of changes to GSA Bylaw. The second reading will occur on September 23, 2024.

Background:

Over the course of the past 2 months, the GSA Summer Intern has reviewed the Integrated GSA Bylaw and Policy document with the intention to highlight any changes needed, as identified by GSA Board members and staff. These changes will provide more clarity and consistency for GSA governance and operations. The Bylaw changes will be reviewed at two (2) successive GSA Council meetings while the Policy changes will be reviewed at one (1) GSA Council meeting.

Jurisdiction:

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section A.BYL.1.2

"These Bylaws ... may be amended by two two-thirds majority votes of Council held on seven calendar days' notice of motion and no less than one week apart."

GSA Bylaw and Policy, 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."

Current Bylaws (deletions are noted as strikes and changes/additions are noted in red font)	Rationale
<p><i>(Throughout the Integrated Bylaw and Policy document)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) <p>Becomes: Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research and Postdoctoral Studies (FGSRPS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GSA Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Council Caucus. <p>Becomes: GSA Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research and Postdoctoral Studies Council Caucus.</p>	<p>Rationale: update any references to FGPS</p>
<p><i>Amendments to GSA Bylaw</i></p> <p>All changes to GSA Bylaw are approved by a two-thirds simple majority vote in favour at two (2) meetings of GSA Council no less than one (1) week two (2) months apart.</p>	<p>Rationale: if it is a two-thirds majority vote, it is not a simple majority vote. Further, the Council does not meet every week so it has to be monthly.</p>
<p><i>A.BYL.1.2</i></p> <p>These Bylaws constitute bylaws for the purpose of Section 95(2) of the Post-Secondary Learning Act, and may be amended by two (2) two-thirds simple majority votes of GSA Council held on seven (7) calendar days' notice of Motion and no less than one (1) week two (2) months apart.</p>	<p>Rationale: if it is a two-thirds majority vote, it is not a simple majority vote. Further, the council does not meet every week, so it has to be monthly.</p>
<p><i>B.BYL.2.2</i></p> <p>Membership fees will be may be indexed annually to inflation as measured by the Alberta Consumer Price Index.</p>	<p>Rationale: to provide some flexibility as it used to read as a requirement.</p>
<p><i>B.BYL.3.1</i></p> <p>All GSA members, except associate members, are eligible to vote and run in all GSA elections (excluding the election of the Associate Vice-President Labour, in which voting and nominations are is restricted to academically-employed graduate students) and referenda.</p>	<p>Rationale: to provide more clarity to eligibility criteria for office.</p>

<p><i>B.BYL.3.3</i></p> <p>Subject to the provisions of contractual agreements, all GSA members (except associate members) have access to services provided by the GSA, including the GSA Health and Dental Plan, GSA Recognition Awards, Graduate Student Assistance Program, GSA grants and bursaries, and the U-Pass service. Associate members, exempt from membership fees, shall have limited access to organizational resources and privileges.</p>	
<p><i>B.BYL.3.4</i></p> <p>All GSA members have the privilege of booking meeting rooms in accordance with GSA Board Policy except during the general election campaign period.</p>	<p>Rationale: to ensure GSA spaces remain neutral during elections.</p>
<p><i>B.BYL.5</i></p> <p>Filling Vacancies Following the GSA General Election and Election of the Associate Vice-President Labour</p> <p>Addition: In the event that a Vice President Directly Elected Officer position remains unfilled by the end of the GSA By-Election, either due to no candidates running for the position or “None of the Candidates” is elected, the position shall be considered dormant for a period of one (1) year.</p>	

Current Policy (deletions are noted as strikerthroughs and changes/additions are noted in red font)	Rationale
<p><i>Amendments to GSA Policy</i></p> <p>As per GSA Bylaw, GSA Policy is under the jurisdiction of GSA Council and may be amended by a simple majority vote (50% + 1) of GSA Council at any meeting of GSA Council. As per GSA Policy, the GSA Governance Committee may make any editorial changes (such as factual inaccuracies and other editorial issues) to the GSA governing documents as deemed necessary by the committee.</p>	
<p><i>C.POL.3.2</i></p> <p>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. If a department has no student group, a council seat will still be provided on an interim basis until they are able to get their group registered with Student Group Services (SGS).</p>	
<p><i>C.POL.3.2.a.ii (Councilors duties)</i></p> <p>To attend all meetings of GSA Council or, if they are unable to attend, to ensure their alternate can attend in their place (Alternate councilors are required to sign the proxy form is they wish to vote) and</p>	
<p><i>C.POL.4.3.c</i></p> <p>Changes to the agenda made at meetings require a two-thirds simple majority vote.</p>	Rationale: if it is a two-thirds majority vote, it is not a simple majority.
<p><i>D.POL.4.12</i></p> <p>(DEOs) will report monthly to GSA Council in writing; these reports will be shared publicly. Reports will include a list of all meetings attended, as well as highlights of work done, initiatives involved with, etc. since previous reports. DEOs will also report orally to GSA Council at each meeting attended. Likewise, the AVPL will report regularly monthly to academically-employed graduate students in writing through the newsletter.</p>	

<p><i>D.POL.4</i> General Information and Qualifications</p> <p>Addition: Elected Officers and candidates for elected office must maintain official student status throughout their term of office, which spans from May to April.</p>	<p>Rationale: all elected officers must hold official student status and be current GSA members.</p>
<p><i>D.POL.4</i> General Information and Qualifications</p> <p>Addition: Elected officers cannot concurrently serve as executives in any other student group, student club, board, student association, departmental association, or any organization that may present a real or perceived conflict of interest. This ensures that elected officers can fully dedicate their time and efforts to the GSA without divided loyalties or potential biases. By preventing conflicts of interest, the GSA aims to maintain the highest standards of integrity, transparency, and fairness in its governance, thereby safeguarding the trust and confidence of its members. Any officer found in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in the GSA bylaws.</p>	<p>Rationale: to avoid any real or perceived conflicts of interest.</p>
<p>President Duties</p> <p><i>D.POL.5.1.m</i></p> <p>Delete: The President maintains the relationship with TD Insurance Meloche Monnex.</p>	<p>Note: the TD Insurance Meloche Monnex is one of the annual awards we give out</p>
<p><i>D.POL.5.2.b</i></p> <p>The President (or delegate) chairs any GSA bodies associated with provincial and federal lobbying.</p>	
<p><i>F.POL.3.3 Meetings</i></p> <p>Addition: Any Elected Officers who miss two (2) GSA Board meetings without excuse shall be subject to discipline.</p>	
<p><i>F.POL.5.1.b</i></p> <p>The President Vice-President Indigenous Relations (VPIR), as Vice-Chair.</p>	

<p><i>I.POL.15</i> Filling Vacancies Following the GSA General Election and Election of the Associate Vice-President Labour</p> <p>Addition: In the event that a Directly Elected Officer position remains unfilled by the end of the GSA By-Election, either due to no candidates running for the position or “None of the Candidates” is elected, the position shall be considered dormant for a period of one (1) year.</p>	
<p><i>I.POL.6</i> General Principles and Rules of Conduct for Elections</p> <p>Addition: Elected Officers and candidates for elected office must maintain GSA membership and official student status throughout their term of office, which spans from May to April.</p>	
<p><i>O.POL.3.3</i> A minimum of eight (8) seven (7) and up to twelve (12) eleven (11) GSA members elected by GSA Council as voting members. The GSA Awards Selection Committee (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.</p>	
<p><i>P.POL.1.2.a</i></p> <p>Applicants must be GSA members as per GSA Bylaw and Policy, including students who have graduated within six months of the application submission date, Sections B.BYL.1.a and B.BYL.1.1.b.</p>	
<p><i>P.POL.4 GSA Emergency Bursaries</i></p> <p><i>P.POL.4.6 Appeals</i></p> <p>Please be advised that all decisions related to GSA Emergency Bursaries are final and binding. Once a decision has been made, it cannot be appealed further.</p>	

<p>P.POL.4.6.a Any appeals of denied applications must be received by the VPSS, with a copy to the Executive Director (or delegate) within ten (10) working days from the date on which the denial of the application was issued.</p> <p>P.POL.4.6.b Appeals must state the grounds for the appeal in writing.</p> <p>P.POL.4.6.c Appeals will be heard based on the material submitted by the applicant and any associated response concerning the denial of the application.</p> <p>P.POL.4.6.d Appeals will be heard by a Directly-Elected Officer (DEO), excluding the VPSS, and two (2) GSA Councillors or GSA Council-Elected Officers selected by the President (or other DEO if there is a conflict of interest).</p> <p>P.POL.4.6.e Appeal decisions will normally be made within twenty (20) working days of the receipt of an appeal. P.POL.4.6.f All decisions concerning appeals are final and binding.</p>	
<p>H.POL.4.2</p> <p>All GSA Standing Committee, GSA ad hoc committee, and GSA subcommittee members are expected to attend all meetings. If a GSA Standing Committee, GSA ad hoc committee, or GSA subcommittee member cannot attend a meeting, they will provide an advance written reason to the Chair. Lack of attendance and/or the submission of written reasons may result in the Chair declaring the position vacant. Should a member fail to fulfill their committee duties, miss two (2) consecutive meetings, or miss more than three (3) meetings, for any reason, the GSA representative to that committee may be replaced, or action may otherwise be taken in compliance with the terms of reference of the committee in question.</p>	

Outline of Issue

General bylaw and policy updates: Recommended Changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy

Suggested Motion:

That **GSA Council** approve the recommendations of the GSA Board and GSA Governance Committee regarding changes to GSA Bylaws and Policy, as noted in the attached proposal, effective following two readings by GSA Council (in the case of GSA Bylaw) and one approval by GSA Council (in the case of GSA Policy). Policy changes are effective and binding from September 24 2024 and Bylaw changes are effective binding October 22 2024.

Note: This is the first reading of changes to GSA Bylaw. The second reading will occur on October 21, 2024. The recommended changes to GSA Policy are currently presented for information and will be presented for approval on September 23, 2024.

Background:

Over the course of the past 2 months, the GSA Summer Intern has reviewed the Integrated GSA Bylaw and Policy document with the intention to highlight any changes needed, as identified by GSA Board members and staff. These changes will provide more clarity and consistency for GSA governance and operations. The Bylaw changes will be reviewed at two (2) successive GSA Council meetings while the Policy changes will be reviewed at one (1) GSA Council meeting.

Jurisdiction:

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section A.BYL.1.2

"These Bylaws ... may be amended by two two-thirds majority votes of Council held on seven calendar days' notice of motion and no less than one week apart."

GSA Bylaw and Policy, 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."

Current Bylaws (deletions are noted as strikethroughs and changes/additions are noted in red font)	Rationale
<p>D.BYL.4 Restrictions on Multiple Positions</p> <p>D.BYL.4.1 The Speaker, Deputy Speaker, Chief Returning Officer (CRO), and Deputy Returning Officer (DRO) shall not concurrently hold any other GSA position that reports directly to GSA Council.</p>	<p>Holding multiple positions, especially those that are accountable to the GSA Council, could create conflicts of interest. For example, a CRO who is also a DEO might face challenges in maintaining impartiality during elections.</p>
<p>D.BYL.4.2 For the purposes of this bylaw, positions that report directly to GSA Council include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Directly-Elected Officers (DEOs) b. Council-Elected Officers (CEOs) c. Members of GSA Standing Committees d. Councillors-at-Large (CALs) e. Departmental Councillors 	<p>The roles of Speaker, Deputy Speaker, CRO, and DRO are designed to be impartial and oversee various GSA processes. Allowing these individuals to hold other positions could compromise the checks and balances within the GSA governance structure.</p>
<p>D.BYL.4.3 Upon appointment or election to the position of Speaker, Deputy Speaker, CRO, or DRO, the individual must resign from any other GSA positions that directly report to GSA Council.</p>	<p>Especially for the Speaker, Deputy Speaker and CRO roles, impartiality is crucial. Holding other positions could create perceived or actual bias in decision-making processes.</p>
<p>D.BYL.4.4 This bylaw does not restrict these individuals from serving as Departmental Councillors as these positions are directly elected by the graduate student body.</p>	<p>Clear separation of these roles from other GSA positions enhances transparency and builds trust among the graduate student body in the fairness of GSA processes. These bylaws are in line with the vague policy D.POL.13.3 Restrictions under the Speaker and Deputy Speaker policy section</p>

Current Policy (deletions are noted as strikes and changes/additions are noted in red font)	Rationale
C.POL.3.1.e One (1) Councillor elected by the Black Graduate Students' Association (BGSA) as a voting member	<p>Renumber C.POL.3.1.f and g.</p> <p>Adding BGSA Representative as this newly created position will be open in the general election.</p>
C.POL.3.2 Departmental Councillors, and the IGSA Councillor, the BGSA 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 and BGSA according to their own procedures or their group Constitution. If a department has no student group, a council seat will still be provided on an interim basis until they are able to get their group registered with Student Group Services (SGS).	
C.POL.3.2.a The duties of Departmental Councillors, and the IGSA Councillor, and the BGSA Councillor will be:	
C.POL.3.2.b.i The IGSA and BGSA will be provided with GSA Council remuneration, as specified in GSA Policy, GSA Council Attendance.	
C.POL.6.3 Departmental Councillors and the Representatives of the Indigenous Graduate Students' Association and Black Graduate Students' Association	
C.POL.6.3.a It is a duty of Departmental Councillors, the Indigenous Graduate Students' Association (IGSA) Councillor, and the Black Graduate Students Association (BGSA Councillor) "to attend all meetings of GSA Council or, if they are unable to attend, to ensure their alternate can attend in their place" (GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section C.POL.3.2.a.ii). If both the Departmental Councillor and the alternate cannot attend a meeting, they will provide an advance written reason to the Speaker. If a Departmental Councillor, or alternate, or the IGSA Councillor, or alternate, misses two (2) consecutive GSA Council meetings or a total of three (3) GSA Council meetings within a year, without an advance written reason acceptable to the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker, the Speaker, in consultation with the Deputy Speaker and the ED (or delegate), will declare the position vacant and seek to have the position filled.	

<p>C.POL.6.3.b The GSA will provide, for the benefit of graduate students in each department, faculty, or extra-departmental unit, and for the benefit of graduate students represented by the IGSA and BGSA, remuneration based on an attendance rate of at least 50% at GSA Council meetings in a given year, which is defined as 1 May to the following 30 April, by a Departmental Councillor, or alternate, and the IGSA Councillor, or alternate.</p>	
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Date: August 26, 2024
To: Haseeb Arshad, President and Chair of the GSA Board
From: Lewie Moodley, Executive Director
Re: 2024-2025 GSA Spring/Summer Term Budget and Expenditure Report

Dear Haseeb,

I am pleased to report we are **on track overall after the Spring/Summer period of our fiscal year** and we are **projecting a positive surplus balance** at the end of the 2024-2025 fiscal year. As per our ongoing work to ensure revenue is aligned with expenses, and now that our Financial Stabilization Fund has grown to an adequate level, the fiscal year report will better reflect our status as a non-profit organization.

As we are only working with three months' worth of data related to our revenue and expenses, it is too early to be definitive, but we are confident in the forecast. I have highlighted a few areas to draw your attention to below.

GSA Fees Revenue

As a fee-based organization, graduate student enrollment levels are the key drivers of our budget and, as has been the case in previous years, the financial team will prepare a Fall Term Financial Report, for the GSA Budget and Finance Committee, the GSA Board and GSA Council, that will note the increase or decrease in enrollment and the effect on our budget. As you will recall, the 2023-2024 budget was developed from a conservative standpoint that assumed a modest growth in enrollment; the enrollment numbers are likely to be higher for 2024-2025.

Expenses

We are forecasting three other positive variances in budget lines: higher than projected revenues associated with the GSA's interest revenue, savings in the HR budget line, and savings in the operating/contingency fund line. Further details are included in the attached materials. Additionally, we have experienced ebbs and flows in our DEO and staff teams at the GSA, thus affecting our monthly salary spending.

In closing, while it remains early in our fiscal year and the financial team will closely monitor the situation moving forward, we are on track. My thanks to the other members of the GSA's financial team (CPA Seidy Louangxay, Financial Manager Dorte Sheikh) for their work thus far in the 2024-2025 fiscal year. I will be happy to answer any questions at the August 26 2024 meeting.

Lewie Moodley
cc: GSA Board members

Outline of Issue

GSA 2024-2025 Spring/Summer Term Budget and Expenditure Report

Suggested Motion:

That the **GSA COUNCIL RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION (FOR INFORMATION)** the GSA 2024-2025 Spring/Summer Term Budget and Expenditure Report.

Background:

These regular financial reports ensure year-over-year tracking and monitoring into the GSA's financial systems, and allow greater control over budget. In addition to yearly comparisons, regular reporting allows for better forward planning and illustrates the GSA yearly financial cycle. This is the first budget and expenditure report on the 2024-2025 GSA's fiscal year.

More information can be found in the attached cover letter.

Following receipt for information and forwarding by the GSA Board by the GSA Budget and Finance Committee, the GSA Board will receive for information and forward to GSA Council the GSA 2024-2025 Spring/Summer Term Budget and Expenditure Report (to receive for information). The BFC was held in a hybrid format on August 29 1pm-3pm. The GSA Board meeting was held in person on September 4 from 10:00am to 12:00pm and the GSA Council meeting will be held in-person on September 23 beginning at 6:00pm. GSA BFC members are invited to attend both meetings and advise the Executive Director if they plan to do so in order for meeting information to be shared.

Jurisdiction:

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section K.POL.3.4.a:

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

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section K.POL.5.7:

"The GSA BFC will receive for information and forward to the GSAB reports on expenses and revenues in the fall, winter, and spring/summer terms; these reports will present comparative information from previous years in a way that shows, in transparent fashion, the percent of the annual budget spent to date, by budget division."

Dear GSA Council Colleagues,

23 September 2024

I am pleased to report we are **on track overall after the end of the first three months of our fiscal year** and we are **projecting a modest positive balance** at the end of the 2024-2025 fiscal year (and one that, as per our ongoing work to ensure revenue is aligned with expenses, now that our Financial Stabilization Fund has grown to an adequate level, better reflects our status as a non-profit organization).

Since we are only working with three months' worth of data related to our revenue and expenses, it is too early to be definitive (although we are confident in the forecast). I have highlighted a few areas to draw your attention to below.

GSA Fees Revenue

As a fee-based organization, graduate student enrolment levels are the key drivers of our budget and, as has been the case in previous years, the Financial Team will prepare a Fall Term financial report for the GSA Budget and Finance Committee, the GSA Board, and GSA Council which will note the increases or decreases in enrolment and the effect of such on our budget. As you will recall, the 2024-2025 budget was developed from a conservative standpoint that assumed a moderate growth in enrollment, although actual numbers will likely be higher.

Expenses

We are also forecasting three other positive variances in budget lines: higher than projected revenues associated with the GSA's interest revenue, savings in the HR – staffing and DEO budget line, and savings in the operating/contingency fund line. We have experienced ebbs and flows in our staffing numbers which will show savings in the upcoming months.

In closing, while it remains early in our fiscal year and the financial team will closely monitor the situation moving forward, we are on track. My thanks to the members of the GSA's financial team (Executive Director Lewie Moodley and Seidy Louangaxy, CPA, for their work thus far in the 2024-2025 fiscal year and I will be happy to answer any questions when we meet.

Haseeb Arshad

President and Chair of the GSA Budget and Finance Committee

GSA - Restricted and Other Funding - Revenue

	2024-2025	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Actual	Forecast	Total	Over/(Under Budget)	% Over/(Under)	
	Approved Budget	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast	Apr 2024 - Jun 2024	Jul 2024-Mar 2025				
Fundraised Activity																			
GSA Planner	3,620	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,620	-100%
Graduate Student Support Fund (GSSF) Projects (Restricted Revenue)																			
GSA Graduate Student Recognition Awards	18,000	18,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18,000	-	18,000	-	-	0%
GSA Child Care Grants	331,100	331,100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	331,100	-	331,100	-	-	0%
GSA Emergency Bursaries	378,400	378,400	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	378,400	-	378,400	-	-	0%
GSA Academic Travel Awards	236,500	236,500	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	236,500	-	236,500	-	-	0%
	964,000	964,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	964,000	-	964,000	-	-	0%
Other Restricted Funding																			
CJSR Fees Collected Per Referendum	16,610	-	-	-	-	-	-	8,000	-	-	-	8,610	-	-	16,610	16,610	-	-	0%
GSAP (Graduate Student Assistance Program) Fees Collected Per Referendum	181,049	-	-	-	-	-	-	60,000	-	-	-	121,049	-	-	181,049	181,049	-	-	0%
Health Plan Fees Collected Per Referendum	2,114,063	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,200,000	-	-	-	914,063	-	-	2,114,063	2,114,063	-	-	0%
Dental Plan Fees Collected Per Referendum	1,580,086	-	-	-	-	-	-	950,000	-	-	-	630,086	-	-	1,580,086	1,580,086	-	-	0%
	3,891,808	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,218,000	-	-	-	1,673,808	-	-	3,891,808	3,891,808	-	-	0%
	4,859,428	964,000	-	-	-	-	-	2,218,000	-	-	-	1,673,808	-	964,000	3,891,808	4,855,808	-	3,620	0%

GSA 2024-2025 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Narrative

Account Name and Budget	Brief Description	Narrative and Variance
	REVENUE	
	GSA Fees	
Annual GSA Membership Fees \$1,232,821 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The GSA is supported by annual graduate student membership fees which are levied by GSA Council and collected by the University. The fees received are based on the number of full-time and part-time graduate students attending the University. Following approval of the fee amount by GSA Council, the annual fees are submitted to the University Board of Governors to provide for collection. ● Based on the three-year funding agreement signed between the GSA and the University on 17 May 2022, the GSA will receive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 40% advance in May based on the projected fall/winter enrollment. ○ 90% (of fall term fees) in October based on the assessed fees for the fall/winter terms, <i>after the fall term 100% withdrawal deadline in October.</i> ○ 90% (of winter term fees) in February based on the assessed fees for the fall/winter terms, <i>after the winter term 100% withdrawal deadline in February.</i> ○ Final payment in April (next fiscal year) after the actual graduate student enrollment is reconciled. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No change in GSA fees. ● For 2024-2025, the projected GSA revenue is \$1,232,821. This is based on fees paid by a projected 6,691 full-time graduate students (6,691 @ \$156.02 per graduate student) and a projected 1,614 part-time graduate students (1,614 @ \$117.01 per graduate student). ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$493,114. ● Forecast July to March: \$739,707. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$1,209,319.
	Interest Income	
Interest Income \$80,000 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interest income on bank accounts is deposited monthly. ● The GSA also holds an investment portfolio and the income from these investments is re-invested and is reported in the annual audited financial statements. ● ATB Wealth manages the investment portfolio in compliance with the GSA Investment Strategy. This strategy includes monthly reporting of the investment activity and bi-annual meetings with the investment advisor and the GSA Budget and Finance Committee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Projected surplus due to continued high interest rates. ● Actual April to June: \$29,351. ● Forecast July to March: \$72,000. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$164,997.

GSA 2024-2025 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Narrative

External Committed Funding		
Funding from the Dean of Students and the Dean of FGSR \$7,190 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This funding is described in letters from the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) and Dean of Students and covers, for instance, some of the expenses of the GSA-hosted fall and winter orientation events and other graduate student engagement activities. FGSR funding must be requested yearly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to June: \$0.00. Forecast July to March: \$7,190. The 2023-2024 actual was \$9,190
Funding from Studentcare \$8,190 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Studentcare provides \$8,190 per year to the GSA to be used for the benefit of graduate students entirely at the discretion of the GSA. The commitment is for a 5-year term: 2020-2025. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to June: \$0.00. Forecast July to March: \$10,000. The 2023-2024 actual was \$10,000.
Funding from TDIMM \$11,500 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signed agreement with TD Insurance Meloche Monnex (TDIMM) (from 2021-2026) provides funding for various events and initiatives organized by the GSA, such as GSA Awards Night and orientation/engagement events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to June: \$0.00. Forecast July to March: \$11,500. The 2023-2024 actual was \$12,000.
Revenue from Commercial Activities		
Chopped Leaf (in the Physical Activity and Wellness (PAW) Centre) Revenue \$40,162 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The GSA has a financial arrangement, in the form of a sub-lease, with the Students' Union to receive rental revenue from the Chopped Leaf food outlet. Revenues commenced in August 2015. From 2020-2021 there was an interruption in revenue due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Revenue has been slow to return to normal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to June: \$3,347. Forecast July to March: \$36,816. The 2023-2024 actual was \$27,796.
Other Revenue		
Other Revenue \$1,300 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This line is used to record revenue that may arise from other sources such as StudentCare Continuum payments or one-time funding/grant opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to June: \$0.00. Forecast July to March: \$1,300. The 2023-2024 actual was \$0.00.

GSA 2024-2025 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Narrative

EXPENSES		
Advocacy		
Business Travel and External Relations and Advocacy \$24,368 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationship-building, with a focus on advocacy, between the GSA, government, and other organizations (usually in the form of travel expenses, hosting, or meetings related to advocacy). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to June: \$4,222. Forecast July to March: \$20,146. The 2023-2024 actual was \$4,194.
University Relations \$1,084 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expenses related to the building and maintenance of relationships between the GSA and University units (usually in the form of hosting/meeting expenses). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to June: \$0.00. Forecast July to March: \$1,084. The 2023-2024 actual was \$544.
Indigenous Strategic Initiatives \$5,000 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GSA support of Indigenous strategic initiatives in support of the U of A Indigenous Strategic Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New budget line for 2024-2025. Actual April to June: \$0.00. Forecast July to March: \$5,000.
External Advocacy (CASA) \$33,220 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership fees in the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to June: \$9,577. Forecast July to March: \$22,347. The 2023-2024 actual was \$0.00.
Services		
Grants and Subsidies		
Academic Workshop Subsidies \$12,000 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subsidies to the Academic Success Centre and the Career Centre increased in 2020-2021 to ensure that their graduate student programs can be accessed by more students. Graduate students' reviews (reviewed regularly by the GSAB) of the workshops are outstanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to June: \$12,000. Forecast July to March: \$0.00. The 2023-2024 actual was \$12,000.
External Grants \$4,000 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funds requested for external grants for events such as the Student Advisors' Conference and International Week. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to June: \$0.00. Forecast July to March: \$4,000. The 2023-2024 actual was \$0.00.
Campus Food Bank \$27,000 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contribution made to the Campus Food Bank (CFB) (which was founded by the GSA) in recognition of the valuable support it provides to graduate students. The CFB held a referendum in March 2024 to assess a dedicated fee directly to students. The referendum passed so effective September 2024 students will be assessed a fee of \$3.00 in each fall and winter term and \$1.00 in each spring and summer term. This budget line will cease in 2025-2026. The CFB Executive Director reports annually to the GSAB. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to June: \$27,000. Forecast July to March: \$0.00. The 2023-2024 actual was \$27,000.

GSA 2024-2025 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Narrative

<p>Child Care Access</p> <p>\$5,021 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continuation of a partnership with the Students' Union for a membership with a local daycare provider to facilitate limited childcare services for students who parent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• On target.• Actual April to June: \$0.00.• Forecast July to March: \$5,021.• The 2023-2024 actual was \$5,249.
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GSA 2024-2025 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Narrative

Graduate Student Groups		
<p>GSA Council Remuneration</p> <p>\$17,250 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Funding of \$250 for eligible graduate student groups (69) based on the attendance of their Councillor at GSA Council meetings from 1 May to 30 April. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$0.00. ● Forecast July to March: \$10,000. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$9,750.
<p>GSA Graduate Student Group Grant</p> <p>\$36,000 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The GSA provides a grant program, ongoing through the year, for GSA Graduate Student Groups to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bring in special guest lecturers or host events. ▪ Support the academic activities of graduate students. ▪ Provide modest start-up funding for new groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$10,940. ● Forecast July to March: \$25,060. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$32,950.
Other Expenses		
<p>Annual Strategic Work Plan Initiatives</p> <p>\$3,500 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Any new Strategic Work Plan (SWP) initiatives may be funded from this budget line. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$77. ● Forecast July to March: \$3,423. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$642.
<p>Engagement, Orientation, and Outreach</p> <p>\$40,114 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Covers the expenses of the GSA-hosted fall and winter orientation events for new graduate students, other engagement events (aside from the GSA Awards Night), swag purchases and SUTV ads. ● Depending on graduate student demand for the GSA Planner, and the ad revenue, this budget is also used to cover the cost of printing additional Planners not covered by the revenue from ad sales. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$8,238. ● Forecast July to March: \$31,876. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$18,143.
<p>GSA Awards Night</p> <p>\$12,273 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Expenses for the annual GSA Awards Night (normally in March). Awards distributed are funded by the Graduate Student Support Fund (see the Restricted and Other Funding Budget Narrative). ● Indigenous Student Graduate Award and two Spirit Awards are funded from this budget line (GSA supported). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$444. ● Forecast July to March: \$11,829. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$13,032.

GSA 2024-2025 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Narrative

Governance		
Directly Elected Officer Stipends		
Directly Elected Officers (DEOs) Stipends \$192,189 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DEOs include the President, the VP Academic, the VP External, the VP Student Life, and the VP Student Services. In 2024-2025, the President will receive an annual stipend of \$45,757 and the four VP positions will each receive \$36,608. Any changes in the stipends above the Alberta Consumer Price Index are subject to explicit approval by GSA Council (GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section D.BYL.1.4.b). • Note that the stipends are gross stipends and include income tax, and Canada Pension Plan (CPP) deductions. Remittances are made on behalf of DEOs from their stipend totals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target. • Actual April to June: \$47,703. • Forecast July to March: \$144,142. • The 2023-2024 actual was \$187,537.
Directly Elected Officer Benefits		
GSA Health and Dental Plan \$3,100 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2024-2025 rate is \$694.82 per DEO per annum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target. • Actual April to June: \$0.00. • Forecast July to March: \$3,100. • The 2023-2024 actual was \$3,021.
U-Pass \$2,700 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The U-Pass is set at \$180 each term in 2023-2024 per agreement with the transit systems and municipal student associations. This amount is reimbursed in May, September, and January. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target. • Actual April to June: \$540. • Forecast July to March: \$1,980. • The 2023-2024 actual was \$2,160.
Directly Elected Officer Employer Contributions		
Employer CPP Contributions \$10,555 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPP is calculated at the Government of Canada rate for 2024. • This line shows the employer’s contribution only (not the employee contribution). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target. • Actual April to June: \$2,621. • Forecast July to March: \$7,795. • The 2023-2024 actual was \$12,051.
Directly Elected Officers - Other Expenses		
Insurance \$1,437 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directors and Officers Liability Insurance paid annually in January. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target. • Actual April to June: \$0.00. • Forecast July to March: \$1,437. • The 2023-2024 actual was \$1,170.
Election Expenses \$3,926 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is used to cover expenses associated with the GSA General Election that takes place in February/March. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target. • Actual April to June: \$338. • Forecast July to March: \$3,588. • The 2023-2024 actual was \$3,253.
Transition/Discover Governance (Early Call)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition/Discover Governance programming occurs in the fall and early winter. • Transition programming typically occurs in March and April. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target. • Actual April to June: \$566. • Forecast July to March: \$4,574.

GSA 2024-2025 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Narrative

\$5,140 budget		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$709.
Training/Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Expenses for the training and development of the DEOs to promote the effective performance of their duties. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$3,511. ● Forecast July to March: \$2,489 ● The 2023-2024 actual was: \$1,188.
\$6,000 budget		
Directly Elected Officers' Expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Expenses related to hosting/food/conferences to pursue GSA goals or initiatives. (e.g., one-on-one meetings with graduate students to discuss the role of the GSA in the lives of graduate students). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$905. ● Forecast July to March: \$2,196. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$779.
\$3,101 budget		
GSA Standing Committee Food and Other Expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provision of light refreshments, where warranted, at GSA standing committees meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$885. ● Forecast July to March: \$0.00 ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$59.
\$528 budget		
	GSA Council Expenses	
GSA Council Food and Other Expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The estimate is based on 12 meetings per year. ● Provision of food at GSA Council (alternates between pizza and sandwich offerings) and other hosting expenses. ● Includes printing of GSA Council placards and celebratory/acknowledgement events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$915. ● Forecast July to March: \$4,585. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$4,015.
\$6,340 budget		
GSA Council Speaker Honorarium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Speaker is paid an honorarium for chairing (and related duties) each GSA Council meeting (\$185 per meeting). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$555. ● Forecast July to March: \$1,665. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$2,035.
\$2,269 budget		
Chief Returning Officer (CRO) Honorarium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The CRO is paid an honorarium for managing the GSA General Election, including any by-elections and referenda. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$0.00. ● Forecast July to March: \$1,533. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$2,000.
\$1,533 budget		
Other Honoraria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This pool of money may be used to pay an honorarium to an individual(s) for significant and high-level work like that done by the Speaker or CRO (e.g., the Deputy Returning Officer needs to significantly assist the CRO for a significant period). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$0.00. ● Forecast July to March: \$1,500. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$5,000.
\$1,500 budget		

GSA 2024-2025 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Narrative

Human Resources		
Support Staff (Represented by NASA)		
Support Staff – Salaries \$243,840 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There are three full-time support staff positions (Strategic Operations Coordinator, Elections Coordinator, Grants Coordinator and Support Specialist). ● Includes contractual cost of living increases and one-time payments (e.g., responsibility pay). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$71,723. ● Forecast July to March: \$169,840. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$278,713.
Support Staff – Benefits \$16,892 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Calculated based on 8% of salary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$4,217. ● Forecast July to March: \$12,179. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$19,761.
Support Staff – RRSP \$23,227 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support staff receive RRSP payments for contribution to their own plans. ● Calculated based on 11% of salary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$5,799. ● Forecast July to March: \$16,745. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$27,172.
Support Staff – GSA Health and Dental Plan and Graduate Student Assistance Program \$1,926 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The 2024-2025 rate is \$694.82 per support staff member per annum. ● The Graduate Student Assistance Program (GSAP) is \$21.80 per support staff per annum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$449. ● Forecast July to March: \$2,250. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$1,433.
Support Staff – Employer CPP Contributions \$13,843 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CPP is calculated at the Government of Canada rate for 2023. ● This line shows the employer’s contribution only (not the employee contribution). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$4,658. ● Forecast July to March: \$9,185. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$14,575.
Support Staff – Employer EI Contributions \$5,060 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● EI is calculated at the Government of Canada rate for 2023. ● This line shows the employer’s contribution only (not the employee contribution). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$1,901. ● Forecast July to March: \$3,810. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$5,595.
Support Staff Development \$4,500 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The support staff’s NASA collective agreement provides for support of \$1,500 per support staff for courses related to staff development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$0.00. ● Forecast July to March: \$4,015. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$2,520.
Support Staff Required Professional Development \$1,500 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This line is to support staff training and professional development opportunities as required by management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$195. ● Forecast July to March: \$1,305. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$83.
Administrative/Professional Staff		

GSA 2024-2025 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Narrative

<p>Administrative/ Professional Staff -- Salaries</p> <p>\$255,194 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There are 2 full-time administrative/professional staff (Executive Director and Associate Director) and 2 part-time administrative/professional staff (Financial Manager and Accountant (CPA)). ● The Executive Director’s (ED) salary and other employment related expenses are established in a contractual agreement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$64,939. ● Forecast July to March: \$188,251. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$224,912.
<p>Administrative/ Professional Staff -- Merit Pay</p> <p>\$23,990 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In accordance with the ED’s contract, the ED can receive an annual merit payment. ● Additionally, the other administrative/professional staff are eligible to receive merit payments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$0,00. ● Forecast July to March: \$23,990. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$19,000.
<p>Administrative/ Professional Staff -- Benefits</p> <p>\$18,567 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Calculated based on 8% of salary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$4,423. ● Forecast July to March: \$13,896. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$16,434.
<p>Administrative/ Professional Staff -- RRSP</p> <p>\$25,529 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Administrative/professional staff receive RRSP payments for contribution to their own plans calculated based on 11% of salary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$6,082. ● Forecast July to March: \$18,548. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$22,597.
<p>Administrative/ Professional Staff -- GSA Health and Dental Plan and Graduate Student Assistance Program</p> <p>\$1,926 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The 2024-2025 rate is \$694.82 per administrative/professional staff per annum. ● The GSAP is \$21.80 per administrative/professional staff per annum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$225. ● Forecast July to March: \$1,120. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$1,682.
<p>Administrative/ Professional Staff -- Employer CPP Contributions</p> <p>\$10,873 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CPP is calculated at the Government of Canada rate for 2024. ● This line shows the employer’s contribution only (not the employee contribution). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$3,716. ● Forecast July to March: \$7,157 ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$13,172.
<p>Administrative/ Professional Staff – Employer EI Contributions</p> <p>\$3,947 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● EI is calculated at the Government of Canada rate for 2024. ● This line shows the employer’s contribution only (not the employee contribution). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$1,554. ● Forecast July to March: \$2,393. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$5,137.

GSA 2024-2025 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Narrative

	Other HR Expenses	
Office Recognition \$1,000 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This pool of money is used for recognition of GSA staff members (e.g., when a staff member leaves or reaches significant benchmarks). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to June: \$77. Forecast July to March: \$923. The 2023-2024 actual was \$1,723.
Professional Expense Allowance \$6,886 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractual arrangement with the ED. Budget also used for the professional development of administrative/professional staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to June: \$2,919. Forecast July to March: \$3,967. The 2023-2024 actual was \$7,512.
Workers' Compensation \$2,717 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WCB-Alberta is disability insurance for workers against the impact of workplace injuries. Our insurance providers strongly recommended that the GSA enrol in Workers' Compensation. WCB-Alberta requires an annual return be filed by the last day of February each year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to June: \$361. Forecast July to March: \$1,417. The 2023-2024 actual was \$2,951.

GSA 2024-2025 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Narrative

Office Administration and Operational Costs		
Capital Items \$8,250 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This budget line refers to purchases of major assets that the GSA will need and is part of a ten-year ever-greening plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to June: \$320. Forecast July to March: \$7,930. The 2023-2024 actual was \$2,316.
Information Technology Service Agreement \$6,000 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The GSA has a service agreement with Information Service Technology to support the GSA's IT and provide troubleshooting services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to June: \$0.00. Forecast July to March: \$6,000. The 2023-2024 actual was \$3,150.
Telephone and Cable \$2,900 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Billed monthly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to June: \$470. Forecast July to March: \$2,350. The 2023-2024 actual was \$2,822.
Office Supplies and Maintenance \$3,577 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General office expenses including office supplies, postage, printing/photocopying, and miscellaneous office expenses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to June: \$2,425. Forecast July to March: \$1,152 The 2023-2024 actual was \$2,401.
Computer Software \$13,017 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly or annual fees for Adobe Creative Cloud, Canva, Jib Jab, Zoom, Active Campaigner, Microsoft 365, Sage Simply Accounting and Otter AI. Additional funds budgeted for a website hosting fee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to June: \$1,580. Forecast July to March: \$11,437. The 2023-2024 actual was \$10,371.
Grants Processing Software \$12,000 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New budget line for grants processing software to be used to streamline the grants process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New budget line for 2024-2025. On target. Actual April to June: \$10,600. Forecast July to March: \$0.00
Payroll and Banking Service Charges \$1,991 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The payroll processing charges to CERIDIAN (payroll service provider). Business banking plan fees and corporate MasterCard annual fees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to June: \$298. Forecast July to March: \$1,693. The 2023-2024 actual was \$1,929.
Photocopier Lease and Meter \$2,000 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The GSA leases a photocopier from Xerox for office use. Billing for the lease and metering (variable according to usage) charges occurs monthly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to June: \$335. Forecast July to March: \$1,665. The 2023-2024 actual was \$1,312.
General Liability Insurance (Office) \$773 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General liability insurance to cover property damage, personal injury, tenants' legal liability, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to June: \$686. Forecast July to March: \$0.00. The 2023-2024 actual was \$558.

GSA 2024-2025 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Narrative

AMICCUS-C Membership \$800 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Membership to AMICCUS-C (Association of Managers in Canadian Colleges and University Student Centers).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• On target.• Actual April to June \$0.00.• Forecast July to March: \$800• The 2023-2024 actual was \$800.
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GSA 2024-2025 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Narrative

Professional		
Financial Auditing \$14,564 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● GSA has an annual audit performed by RSM. ● Required by the <i>Post-Secondary Learning Act</i> and submitted to the University Board of Governors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$0.00 ● Forecast July to March: \$14,564. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$17,329.
Consultants \$5,000 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consultancy fees should a need arise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$1,066. ● Forecast July to March: \$3,934. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$5,317.
Investment Advisor \$22,000 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Investment advisor fees for ATB Wealth. ● These fees are charged at a rate commensurate with the dollar value of our portfolio. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$5,385. ● Forecast July to March: \$16,615. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$15,798.
Legal Fees - General \$20,000 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Legal advice on significant operational issues as needed. ● If there are monies remaining at year-end these funds are added to the Legal Defence Fund, on advice from our auditor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Modest over expenditure. ● Actual April to June: \$23,289. ● Forecast July to March: \$0.00. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$13,970.
Operating/Contingency Fund		
Operating /Contingency Fund \$15,000 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A fund set aside to handle unexpected and unanticipated expenses that are outside the range of the Operating Budget. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$0.00. ● Forecast July to March: \$0.00. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$0.00.

The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta
2024-2025 GSA Operating Budget (including Capital Budget)
Budget and Expenditure Report
 Summer Term Update, April to June 2024 actuals and July 2024 to March 2025 forecast

	CURRENT YEAR April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025				PRIOR YEAR Comparative				
	2024-2025	Actual	Forecast	Total	Variance	Ref #	% Variance	Actual	Total Actual
	Approved Budget	Apr 2024 to Jun 2024	Jul 2024 to Mar 2025					Apr 2023 to Jun 2023	Apr 2023 to Mar 2024
REVENUE									
GSA Fees Revenue	1,232,821	493,114	739,707	1,232,821	(0)		0%	493,114	1,209,319
Interest Income	80,000	29,351	72,000	101,351	21,351	1	27%	45,236	164,997
External Committed Funding	26,880	-	28,690	28,690	1,810		7%	-	31,190
Revenue from Commercial Activities	40,162	3,347	36,816	40,162	0		0%	-	27,796
Other Revenue	1,300	-	1,300	1,300	-		0%	-	-
Total Revenue	1,381,163	525,811	878,513	1,404,324	23,161		2%	538,350	1,433,302
EXPENSES									
Advocacy	63,672	13,799	48,577	62,377	1,295	2	2%	11	4,738
Services	157,158	58,700	91,209	149,909	7,250	3	5%	55,123	118,766
Governance	240,318	58,524	180,598	239,122	1,196		0%	52,922	224,977
Human Resources	661,417	173,238	480,991	654,229	7,188	4	1%	159,502	664,972
Office Administration and Operational Costs	51,308	16,716	33,027	49,743	1,565		3%	8,308	25,659
Professional	61,564	29,740	35,113	64,853	(3,289)	5	-5%	13,755	52,414
Operating/Contingency Fund	15,000	-	-	-	15,000	6	100%	-	-
Total Expenses	1,250,437	350,716	869,516	1,220,233	30,204		2%	289,621	1,091,526
BALANCE	130,726	175,095	8,996	184,091	53,365		41%	248,729	341,776

Explanatory notes:

Variance formula: for Revenue the variance is the total for the 2024-2025 year subtracted by the approved budget amount.

Variance formula: for Expenses the variance is the approved budget amount subtracted by the total for the 2024-2025 year.

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

Variance column references:

1. Projected surplus in Interest Income since interest rates have remained high since the budget was developed and approved.
2. Projected savings in Advocacy as CASA membership fees are less than budgeted for.
3. Projected savings in Service Expenses due to fewer council remuneration payments than expected.
4. Projected savings due to staff reorganization.
5. Projected overexpenditure in Professional due to increased Legal expenses related to staff reorganization.
6. Projected savings in the Operating/Contingency Fund.

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

For further reference, see the attached narrative.

The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta

2024-2025 GSA Restricted and Other Funding

Budget and Expenditure Report

Summer Update, April to June 2024 actuals and July 2024 to March 2025 forecast

	CURRENT YEAR April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025						PRIOR YEAR Comparative		
	2024-2025 Approved Budget	Actual Apr 2024 to Jun 2024	Forecast Jul 2024 to Mar 2025	Total	Variance	Ref #	% Variance	Actual Apr 2023 to Jun 2023	Total Actual 2023-2024 Apr 2023 to Mar 2024
Fundraised Activity									
GSA Planner	3,620	-	-	-	-	3,620	-100%	-	5,110
Graduate Student Support Fund (GSSF) Projects (Restricted Revenue)									
GSA Recognition Awards	18,000	-	18,000	18,000	-		0%	-	20,000
GSA Child Care Grants	331,100	103,379	227,721	331,100	-		0%	4,000	434,000
GSA Emergency Bursaries	141,900	-	141,900	141,900	-		0%	-	76,035
GSA Academic Travel Grants	473,000	80,328	392,672	473,000	-	0	0%	49,769	365,377
	964,000	183,707	780,293	964,000	-	0	0%	53,769	895,412
Other Restricted Funding									
CJSR Fees Collected - \$1.00 per student goes to the radio station's operations	16,610	-	16,610	16,610	-		0%	-	16,337
GSAP (Graduate Student Assistance Program) Fees Collected	181,049	-	181,049	181,049	-		0%	-	158,072
Health Plan Revenue	2,114,063	-	2,114,063	2,114,063	-		0%	-	2,250,143
Dental Plan Revenue	1,580,086	-	1,580,086	1,580,086	-		0%	-	1,785,912
	3,891,808	-	3,891,808	3,891,808	-		0%	-	4,210,464
BALANCE	4,859,428	183,707	4,672,101	4,855,808	(3,620)		0%	53,769	5,110,986

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

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

For further reference see the attached narrative.

The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta

2024-2025 GSA Labour Union Fund Dues

Budget and Expenditure Report

Summer Term Update, April to June 2024 actuals and July 2024 to March 2025 forecast

CURRENT YEAR April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025

PRIOR YEAR Comparative

	2024-2025 Approved Budget	Actual Apr 2024 to Jun 2024	Forecast Jul 2024 to Mar 2025	Total	Variance	Ref #	% Variance	Actual Apr 2023 to Jun 2023	Total Actual 2023-2024 Apr 2023 to Mar 2024
REVENUE									
GSA Labour Union Fund Dues	196,403	26,475	169,928	196,403	0		100%	25,265	64,684
Bank interest	10,000	5,171	9,600	14,771	4,771		148%	3,000	14,701
Total	206,403	31,647	179,528	211,175	4,772		102%	28,265	79,385
EXPENSES									
GSA Labour Union PSAC Service Agreement	75,000	7,598	67,402	75,000	(0)		100%	18,750	75,414
GSA Labour Union Sundry Expenses	5,000	0	5,000	5,000	-		100%	63	2,541
GSA Directly-Elected Associate VP Labour Stipend, Benefits, and Employer Contributions	39,770	9,766	28,316	38,082	(1,688)		96%	6,150	32,835
GSA Outreach Coordinator Stipend	5,000	0	5,000	5,000	-		100%	N/A	N/A
GSA Chief Steward Stipend	5,000	0	5,000	5,000	-		100%	N/A	N/A
Total	129,770	17,364	110,718	128,082	(1,688)		99%	24,963	110,790
BALANCE	76,633	14,283	68,810	83,093	6,460		108%	3,302	-31,405

Explanatory notes:

Revenue: Effective September 1, 2021 Academically Employed Graduate Students have union dues deducted by HR from their pay and these deductions are submitted to the GSA monthly.

Expenses (in compliance with applicable legislation) include quarterly payments to PSAC for the GSA's service agreement and incidental expenses such as printing of labour booklets and posters for departments.

Balance: Projected surplus funds will be transferred to the GSA Labour Union Investment Fund (which was set up in September 2021 per approval by the GSA Council on July 19, 2021).

GSA 2024-2025 Restricted and Other Funding Budget (Narrative)

Account Name and Budget	Brief Description	Narrative
Restricted and Other Funding		
Fundraised Activity		
GSA Planner \$3,620 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The GSA sells advertising space in its yearly graduate student planner to subsidize printing costs. ● There are agreements with the Office of the Dean of Students and Studentcare for the purchase of ad space. The cost of printing Planners is offset from the “Engagement, Orientation and Outreach” line in the Operating budget. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Budget deficit as no ads have been sold. ● Actual April to June: \$0.00. ● Forecast July to March: \$0.00 ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$5,110.
Graduate Student Support Fund (Restricted Revenue) The funding provided for the Graduate Student Support Fund (GSSF) for 2024-2025 remains at the level provided in 2023-2024 (total of \$964,000).		
GSA Recognition Awards \$18,000 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Funds provided for various awards presented at the annual GSA Awards Night. ● Revenue is received in the form of GSSF funds. ● Expenses for the GSA Awards Night event itself are processed in March from the Operating budget. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$0.00. ● Forecast July to March: \$18,000. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$18,000.
GSA Child Care Grants \$331,100 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Graduate students can apply for this grant to offset the cost of child care. ● Revenue is received in the form of GSSF funds. ● Expenses are processed throughout the year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$221,379. ● Forecast July to March: \$109,721. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$471,000.
GSA Emergency Bursaries \$378,400 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Emergency Bursaries are a non-repayable bursary for graduate students who need assistance due to an unanticipated emergency. ● Revenue is received in the form of GSSF funds. ● Expenses are processed throughout the year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$70,000. ● Forecast July to March: \$71,900. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$76,035.
GSA Academic Travel Grants \$236,500 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Graduate students can apply for this grant to participate in academic activities such as conferences and research trips. ● Revenue is received in the form of GSSF funds. ● Expenses are processed throughout the year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$90,478. ● Forecast July to March: \$382,522. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$355,277.

GSA 2024-2025 Restricted and Other Funding Budget (Narrative)

<p>CJSR Fees</p> <p>\$16,610 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The U of A campus radio station (CJSR) receives \$1 per graduate student per term. This is a dedicated fee that was implemented by a referendum in 1999. ● Revenue and the related expenses are processed in October and February. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$0.00. ● Forecast July to March: \$16,610. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$16,610.
<p>GSAP (Graduate Student Assistance Program)</p> <p>\$181,049 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In February 2021 a referendum was held during the GSA elections to approve continuation of the GSAP at a cost of up to \$21.80 per graduate student. Collection of the new fee began in September 2021. ● From 2009 until March 2021 the GSAP fee was \$12 per graduate student per annum. ● The University provides a subsidy against the cost of the GSAP until March 2025. ● Revenue and the related expenses are processed in October and February. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$0.00 ● Forecast July to March: \$181,049. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$91,968.
<p>GSA Health Plan</p> <p>\$2,169,213 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This is the fee that is charged to graduate students for the health part of the GSA Health and Dental Plan. ● The 2024-2025 fee is \$396.60 per graduate student per year. ● Revenue and related expenses are processed in October, February, and March. ● There is a GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund which was established to ensure that adequate funds are available in the event the GSA Health and Dental Plan costs exceed the amounts collected in fees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$0.00. ● Forecast July to March: \$2,169,213. ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$2,253,381.
<p>GSA Dental Plan</p> <p>\$1,621,306 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● This is the fee that is charged to graduate students for the dental part of the Health and Dental Plan. ● The 2024-2025 fee is \$298.22 per graduate student per year. ● Revenue and related expenses are processed in October, February, and March. ● There is a GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund which was established to ensure that adequate funds are available in the event the GSA Health and Dental Plan costs exceed the amounts collected in fees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target. ● Actual April to June: \$0.00. ● Forecast July to March: \$1,621,3016 ● The 2023-2024 actual was \$1,788,083.

GSA 2024-2025 Labour Union Restricted Fund Budget (Narrative)

Account Name and Budget	Brief Description	Narrative
Labour Union Restricted Fund Revenue		
GSA Labour Union Dues Collected \$196,403 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beginning in September 2021 the GSA commenced collection of labour union dues from Academically-Employed Graduate Students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to June: \$26,475. Forecast July to March: \$142,776. The 2023-2024 actual was \$64,684.
Bank interest \$10,000 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interest earned on dues held in the Labour Union Dues bank account. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to June: \$5,171. Forecast July to March: \$9,600. The 2023-2024 actual was \$14,701.
Labour Union Restricted Fund Expenses		
GSA Labour Union PSAC Service Agreement \$75,000 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In October 2021 the GSA signed a service agreement with the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC). The annual cost of this is \$75,000 per annum, assessed quarterly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to June: \$7,598. Forecast July to March: \$67,402. The 2023-2024 actual was \$75,414.
GSA Labour Union Sundry Expenses \$5,000 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In compliance with relevant legislation this budget line covers incidental expenses (such as printing of materials, steward training, etc.). Expenses in the implementation year 2021-2022 were higher than on an ongoing basis due to one-time expenses such as legal fees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to June: \$0. Forecast July to March: \$5,000. The 2023-2024 actual was \$2,541.
GSA Directly-Elected Associate Vice-President Labour Stipend, Benefits, and Employer Contributions \$39,770 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Per GSA Council approval of officer portfolio restructuring the GSA Assoc VP Labour stipend and benefits (Health and Dental Plan and U-Pass) and employer CPP contributions are to be paid from the Labour Union Fund revenue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to June: \$9,766. Forecast July to March: \$28,316. The 2023-2024 actual was \$32,835.

GSA 2024-2025 Labour Union Restricted Fund Budget (Narrative)

<p>GSA Outreach Coordinator Stipend</p> <p>\$5,000 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Newly formed position for the 2024-2025 year. This is an elected position by the Labour Relations Committee for a one-year tenure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target ● Actual April to June: \$0.00. ● Forecast July to March: \$5,000.
<p>GSA Chief Steward Stipend</p> <p>\$5,000 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Newly formed position for the 2024-2025 year. This is an elected position by the Labour Relations Committee for a one-year tenure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On target ● Actual April to June: \$0.00. ● Forecast July to March: \$5,000.

GSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE (GSA NoC) (ONE (1) POSITION FOR A GSA MEMBER): TWO (2) NOMINEES

Information regarding the one (1) vacancy for GSA members was advertised in the GSA Newsletters of August 23 and 30, 6 September, with a deadline of 11 September 2024 at 12:00 PM (noon). Four (4) nominations were received and two (2) were approved by the GSA NoC.

The GSA NoC is charged with selecting graduate student representatives to serve on councils, committees, and other bodies requiring such representation. The GSA NoC also leads an annual initiative in October during which graduate students interested in running for elected office are invited to attend a series of events and training sessions (GSA Bylaw and Policy, Sections E.POL.8.2 and E.POL.8.7).

There will be an electronic vote held at the 23 September 2024 GSA Council meeting.

If you and your alternate are unable to attend the Monday September 23 2024 meeting of GSA Council and would like to cast an electronic vote for this position, you must contact the GSA Administrative Coordinator (gsaca@ualberta.ca) BEFORE 3:00 PM on Monday 23 September 2024 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. 'None of the Candidates' will also be considered a nominee.

- 1. Mary Cheuk**
- 2. Pam Hung**

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

Jurisdiction:

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section E.POL.4

"Vacancies on the GSA NoC will be advertised by the ED or delegate and GSA Speaker. The ED or delegate and GSA Speaker will provide GSA Council with the names of nominees for the GSA NoC who meet the criteria set out in Section E.POL.5, below. These vacancies will be advertised at least twice in advance of the nomination deadline noted in the advertisement."

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section E.POL.5.1

The GSA NoC is composed of "a total of five (5) graduate student members, including at least two (2) voting members of GSA Council (who may be alternates) elected by GSA Council, and three (3) additional graduate student members elected by GSA Council, as voting members."

The names and biographies received for the nominees are BELOW. The biographies and resumes are presented as received (i.e. not edited).

Nominations for the GSA Nominating Committee (GSA NoC)
ONE (1) VACANCY FOR A GSA MEMBER
Two (2) Nominees

1. Mary Cheung

Statement of Interest
I loved being involved in various leadership roles on campus during my undergraduate degree, which I really missed during my first year of my graduate degree. Now in my second year of my program, I have a better understanding of graduate student life and would love the opportunity to contribute to building a good grad school experience for others.
Bio
The volunteer roles I took on during my undergraduate degree spoke to my desire to help better students' experiences. I served in the Interdepartmental Science Students' Society as the Director of Eureka (an undergraduate science journal) for 2 years. As a director, I coordinated the recruitment of volunteers (editors, reviewers, judges, etc.), publishing of articles, establishing a research symposium, and other various other tasks. I was also part of the Peer Support Centre, UofA Sexual Assault Centre, and Student Library Advisory Committee, which allowed me to contribute to the campus community at different capacities and gain a wider perspective of student experiences. Working in these positions gave me opportunities to understand different positive and negative aspects of student life. I also learnt skills in recruitment, team management, coordination, and communication. I would love to gain new experiences in the GSA and be able to contribute my current experience to the community.

2. Pam Hung

Statement of Interest
Serving on the GSA Nominating Committee would provide me with exposure to the functions and processes of different committees in the broader UAlberta community. I would like to learn more about university governance and contribute to improving graduate student experiences, given that I plan to pursue an academic career after my PhD.
Being involved in this position would also allow me to connect with other graduate students beyond my own program and faculty that are interested in governance and making a difference in the UAlberta community for graduate students.
Bio

I am starting my 5th (and final) year of the PhD in Rehabilitation Science program in the Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine. Prior to my PhD, I worked as an occupational therapist in clinical and leadership positions in Alberta Health Services for over 10 years, serving on department committees related to patient engagement and professional development, including a provincial committee focused on improving occupational therapy practice in our provincial health system. These roles provided me with exposure to leadership and governance at multiple levels in a complex health care system, but the organization, advocacy and critical thinking skills to consider multiple perspectives and factors that impact decision-making that I developed in these roles would be an asset to this role.

During my PhD, I have held teaching and GRA positions supporting other occupational therapy and Rehabilitation Science graduate students with mentorship, consultation, and organizing graduate student experiences such as Virtual Writing Bootcamps, our faculty's student research day, and other conferences. In these roles, I have connected with many graduate students, faculty and administrators in the Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine, which has validated my interest in learning more about system-level decision-making to improve experiences for graduate students, leading me to pursue this role with the Graduate Students Association.

Outside of my PhD, I am the Co-Chair of the Professional Affairs Committee with the Society of Alberta Occupational Therapists. This role provides leadership in collaboration with the Executive Director, to a committee that works to advocate for occupational therapy services and promote occupational therapy in Alberta. Some of our initiatives, requiring consideration of multiple factors, have included a letter writing campaign to the provincial government to advocate for re-instate funding to provide rehabilitation services for preschool aged children in Alberta, and we are currently developing a podcast series to promote the role of occupational therapy. The leadership and communication skills I have developed in this role would support my ability to contribute to the GSA Nominating Committee by connecting with students and administrators in various roles at the University of Alberta.

I believe that my professional, graduate student, and volunteer positions have supported my skill development in communication, critical thinking and leadership, all of which would serve me well as a student member of the GSA Nominating Committee. I look forward to learning more about governance and the GSA Committees here at the University of Alberta. Thank you for considering this application. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

GSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE (NoC)
GSA Budget and Finance Committee (ONE (1) GSA MEMBER POSITION)
FIVE (5) NOMINEES

Information regarding the one (1) vacancy for GSA members was advertised in the GSA Newsletters of August 23 and 30, 6 September, with a deadline of 11 September 2024 at 12:00 PM (noon). The GSA received five (5) nominations by the deadline.

There will be an electronic ballot vote held at the September 23 2024 GSA Council meeting.

If you and your alternate are unable to attend the Monday September 23 2024 meeting of GSA Council and would like to cast an electronic vote for this position, you must contact the GSA Administrative Coordinator (gsaca@ualberta.ca) BEFORE 3:00 PM on Monday September 23 2024 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. 'None of the Candidates' will also be considered a nominee.

1. Aeshwarye Aggarwal
2. Cassandra Cowan
3. Gary Godinho
4. Jagrat Ruparel
5. Reuben Ross

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

Jurisdiction:

GSA Bylaw and GSA Policy, Section K: Finances, GSA Policy, Standing Committees, GSA Budget and Finance Committee, Section K.POL.5.1

"The overall mandate of the GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC) is to advise on the financial affairs of the GSA (including the long-term planning and priorities of the GSA in light of its strategic goals) and on the provision of the long-term financial health of the organization."

GSA Bylaw and GSA Policy, Section K: Finances, GSA Policy, Standing Committees, GSA Budget and Finance Committee, Section K.POL.4.1

The GSA BFC is composed of *"one (1) Councillor elected by GSA Council as a voting member."*

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 nominees are BELOW. The biographies and resumes are presented as received (i.e. not edited).

**NOMINATIONS FOR THE GSA BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE (GSA BFC)
(ONE (1) VACANCY FOR GSA MEMBERS)
Five (5) Nominees**

1. Aeshwarye Aggarwal

Statement of Interest
<p>Dear Members of the Selection Committee,</p> <p>I am writing to express my strong interest in joining the Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Budget and Finance Committee. As a first-year MBA student at the University of Alberta with a background in finance and investment banking, I believe my skills and experience make me a valuable candidate for this position.</p> <p>My experience in investment banking, paired with my CFA certification, has equipped me with the technical skills needed to analyze complex financial data and develop sound financial strategies. I am confident that my ability to manage budgets, create financial models, and ensure compliance with regulatory standards will allow me to contribute meaningfully to the committee's goals of ensuring responsible financial management and transparency.</p> <p>Moreover, my leadership and collaboration experience, developed through both professional roles and my MBA coursework, will allow me to work seamlessly with other committee members to ensure transparent and prudent financial management for the GSA. I am eager to apply my skills and make a meaningful contribution to the university's student governance structure.</p> <p>Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to the opportunity to serve and contribute to the financial well-being of the Graduate Students' Association.</p> <p>Sincerely, Aeshwarye Aggarwal</p>
Bio
<p>I am a first-year MBA student at the University of Alberta with a background in finance and investment banking. Before beginning my MBA journey, I worked as an Investment Banking Associate at SKI Capital Services Limited, where I led the valuations department and provided tailored financial solutions to clients. My experience includes conducting over 100 valuations, handling SME IPOs, and ensuring regulatory compliance for alternative investment funds.</p> <p>Additionally, I have a strong foundation in financial modeling, market research, and valuation frameworks, skills that are further enhanced by my attainment of the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) Level III credential.</p> <p>My passion for finance, coupled with my technical expertise, has driven me to seek opportunities to apply my knowledge to real-world challenges. Through my MBA studies, I am focused on refining my financial planning and management skills, while also exploring innovative financial technologies that are transforming the industry. I am excited to contribute to the University of Alberta community through leadership and service roles, particularly in areas related to financial governance and decision-making.</p>

2. Cassandra Cowan

Statement of Interest
<p>I strongly value financial health and would like to serve and support the student body here at U of A. Due to my previous experience as VP of Finance within Concordia University of Edmonton's</p>

Science Union and as a member of their Policy and Governance committee, I think I have a skill set that could help support the BFC. I am always looking to increase my financial literacy!

Bio

Hello, my name is Cassandra Cowan, and I am entering the first year of the PhD program in Rehabilitation Science. During my undergraduate degree, I was pretty active within student organizations such as a general counsellor, judicial board member, Mental Health Canada student rep, VP of finance, and student ambassador. In the past year, I have been able to join various committees on campus and I would like to become more involved! Based on my prior experience I have strengthened soft (adaptability, leadership, and time management) and hard (carrying out Robert's Rule of Order, leading meetings, proposing and voting on policy/budget) skills involved in serving on committees.

3. Gary Godinho

Statement of Interest

The GSA Budget and Finance Committee is a crucial body of our student body. Since the GSA distributes grants, bursaries, and assistance to graduate students, its success is vital to its strength. I am keen to contribute to this committee and want to support the Chair and Vice-Chair in pursuing a fiscally strong graduate body.

Bio

I am a second-year graduate student in the Policy Studies program of the Department of Political Science and a member of the GSA LRC. I have understood the GSA's governance structure and have considerable knowledge of its by-laws. As a volunteer for an Edmonton-based Non-Profit, I am currently assisting them in managing their financial records. This experience has demonstrated that I am trusted with confidential information. My academic knowledge and financial acumen, combined with my professional skills as a policy analyst make me a great fit for this position and I urge the Nominating Committee to consider me as a candidate.

4. Jagrat Ruparel

Statement of Interest

I would like to volunteer for the GSA Budget & Finance Committee because I am passionate about making a meaningful impact on the financial decisions that directly affect our graduate student community. I believe that transparent and efficient financial management is crucial to enhance the overall student experience, and I'm eager to contribute to this process. Volunteering on this committee would allow me to apply my analytical skills and commitment to responsible financial stewardship while also giving me the opportunity to learn more about how financial decisions are made at a level which caters hundreds of students. My goal is to help ensure that resources are allocated in a way that maximizes their benefit to all students, supporting initiatives that truly make a difference in our academic and social environments.

Bio

I am a Master's student in Mechanical Engineering at the University of Alberta with a strong background in leadership, financial management, and teamwork. My experience as President and Treasurer of the Mechanical Engineering Student Association (MESA) at Dharmsinh Desai University has equipped me with valuable skills in budgeting, resource allocation, and financial oversight. Professionally, I have honed my problem-solving and organizational abilities through internships in production and research settings. My commitment to financial transparency and strategic

decision-making, combined with my ability to collaborate effectively, would make me a strong asset to the GSA Budget & Finance Committee.

5. Reuben Ross

Statement of Interest
I am a mature student who finished my undergraduate degree in 2010 and worked as an engineering consultant for over 10 years before returning to school. The GSA provides many important functions and services, and I am committed to helping ensure the continued success of the organization. With my industry experience, I believe I can provide a unique and valuable perspective.
Bio
I completed my undergraduate degree in Civil Engineering in 2010 and have been working in consulting since 2012. My most recent position was as a project manager for large civil construction projects. Over the past 15 years, I have served on several committees, including the company Health and Safety Committee, VP Education at my local Toastmasters club, athlete representative for Diving Canada, and the VP of a Young Professionals Group at WSP. A significant portion of my work as a project manager involved managing project finances, providing me with unique, real-world experience that would be valuable to the GSA Budget and Finance Committee. My understanding of committees and the industry would be an asset to the organization.

GSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE (GSA NoC)
**GSA ELECTIONS AND REFERENDA COMMITTEE (GSA ERC) (TWO (2) POSITIONS FOR GSA MEMBERS): THREE (3)
 NOMINEES**

Information regarding the two (2) vacancies for GSA members was advertised in the GSA Newsletters of August 23 and 30, 6 September, with a deadline of 11 September 2024 at 12:00 PM (noon). Six (6) nominations were received and three (3) were approved by the GSA NoC.

The GSA ERC acts to “advise the CRO on all matters pertaining to the GSA General Election, by-elections, and referenda” (GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section I.POL.18.1).

There will be an electronic vote held at the September 23 2024 GSA Council meeting.

If you and your alternate are unable to attend the Monday September 23 2024 meeting of GSA Council and would like to cast an electronic vote for this position, you must contact the GSA Administrative Coordinator (gsaca@ualberta.ca) BEFORE 3:00 PM on Monday September 23 2024 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. ‘None of the Candidates’ will also be considered a nominee.

1. Isa Dzhabrailov
2. Md Rakibul Hasan
3. Rebecca Elsie Osei

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

Jurisdiction:

GSA Bylaw and GSA Policy, Section I: Elections, GSA Policy, Standing Committees, GSA Elections and Referenda Committee, Section I.POL.16.1

The GSA ERC is composed of “a total of six (6) GSA members including at least one (1) Councillor elected by GSA Council, as voting members.”

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 nominee are BELOW. The biographies and resumes are presented as received (i.e. not edited).

**NOMINATIONS FOR THE GSA ELECTIONS AND REFERENDA COMMITTEE (GSA ERC)
(TWO (2) VACANCIES FOR GSA MEMBERS)
Three (3) Nominees**

1. Isa Dzhabrailov

Statement of Interest
<p>As a Doctor of Medicine (MD) student at the University of Alberta, currently studying in the school of business as part of the combined MD/MBA program, I am excited to apply my unique skillset to the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee. I have been a researcher at the Brain and Aging Research Building for the past 5 years, investigating protein misfolding diseases, and looking to develop a prion detection kit for timely detection of Creutzfeldt Jacob Disease. Serving as the President of the UofA Bench to Bedside Students' Association for the past 2 years, I have led a team of graduate and medical students to organize a wide array of events, including: Young Innovators Competition a multi-disciplinary case competition bringing together students from the UofA, UofC, and UofA to present their innovative ideas to improve patient care; Inaugural B2B Research symposium, gathering young researchers from many different academic programs to collaborate and share their work; and networking events such as our welcome Barbeque which brought together 150+ students to socialize and share their experiences. In my various leadership roles, I have overseen elections on a number of occasions, such as while serving as president of University Toastmasters Club and as an area director for Toastmasters International, when I worked with clubs within Edmonton to improve their programming and membership. I have had many experiences on governance committees, including serving in the Medical Students Association Constitution and Bylaw Committee and the UME Community of Research Committee. I regularly volunteer and serve in the UofA community, as a judge for the Festival of Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities (FURCA), as well as participant in various academic research days and symposiums. This position on the Elections and Referenda Committee presents a unique opportunity for me to work with others in the graduate student community to ensure a smooth and effective 2024 GSA General Election. I am excited to apply my skillset to this task, and I hope to hear from you soon. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.</p>
Bio
See above.

2. Md Rakibul Hasan

Statement of Interest
<p>I am thrilled to serve as a member of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (ERC). I would be happy to assist the Chief Returning Officer (CRO) on all matters related to GSA Elections, By-Elections, and Referenda. Being part of this committee means actively participating in the democratic process within the Graduate Students' Association. It's a chance to help ensure that elections and referenda are conducted fairly and transparently. It's an opportunity to contribute to decisions that affect the graduate student community. Also, this role will allow me to develop</p>

valuable skills such as organizational management, conflict resolution, and understanding electoral processes. So, It's a great chance to take responsibility and contribute to a big community.

Bio

I, Md Rakibul Hasan am a second-year master's student in the Department of Mechanical Engineering (Engineering Management). I hold a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from Rajshahi University of Engineering & Technology (RUET). In late 2022, I relocated to Canada and started to pursue my master's in engineering management from Fall, 2023. Before relocating to Canada, I worked in a multinational pharmaceutical company as an engineering manager in the project and maintenance departments. Apart from engineering plan, design, and maintenance, I supervised an engineering team of 72 people. I served as a Vice President of the Greater Rangpur Association of RUET (a University student welfare association) during my undergraduate study and had a wide range of experience working with students from all walks of life.

I gained valuable experience working in a leadership role by managing a large engineering team and handled administrative responsibilities such as training, recruitment, electing leaders of multiple teams, policy-making, and the ability to build and maintain strong relationships with internal and external stakeholders. These responsibilities have greatly improved my comprehension of the difficulties that an organization encounter and have increased my desire to apply for this position.

3. Rebecca Elsie Osei

Statement of Interest

I am writing to express my sincere interest in serving as a GSA Member on the Elections and Referenda Committee at the University of Alberta. With my background as a Student Success Manager at BlueCrest University in Ghana, I bring a wealth of experience in student support, engagement, and organizational management that I believe would be invaluable to your committee.

During my tenure as a Student Success Manager, I was responsible for overseeing a variety of initiatives aimed at enhancing student experience and academic achievement. This role required me to coordinate numerous student activities, manage election processes for student leadership roles, and ensure fair and transparent procedures were in place. My experience in this capacity has provided me with a solid understanding of the importance of impartiality, clarity, and effective communication in managing electoral processes.

One of my key responsibilities involved organizing and overseeing student elections, where I was tasked with ensuring that all candidates and voters had access to the information and resources they needed. This experience has equipped me with practical skills in election logistics, conflict resolution, and stakeholder engagement. I learned to navigate complex situations with diplomacy and fairness, qualities that I believe are essential for a role on the Elections and Referenda Committee.

My transition to the University of Alberta has further solidified my commitment to fostering a supportive and inclusive student environment. I am deeply motivated to contribute to our graduate student community by ensuring that our electoral processes are conducted with the highest level of integrity and inclusivity. I am excited about the opportunity to bring my skills in organizational management and student advocacy to the committee, and to work collaboratively with other members to uphold the democratic principles that underpin our student governance.

Bio

Elsie Osei is a dedicated PhD student in Human Ecology at the University of Alberta, where she investigates the intricate relationships between people and their environments to enhance human well-being and sustainability. Her academic journey is supported by an MFA in Textile Design and a BA in Industrial Art from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology in Ghana.

Elsie leverages her expertise in textile design to research ideas that improve the quality of life for individuals with disabilities. Her position as a Graduate Teaching and Research Assistant further highlights her commitment to education, as she contributes to various courses.

Elsie's previous experience as a Students Success Manager and Lecturer at BlueCrest University highlights her skills in student development, engagement, and career readiness. Her previous involvement with the Young African Leaders Initiative and African Students for Liberty highlights her commitment to leadership and empowerment.

Her extensive participation in conferences, presentations demonstrates her deep engagement with both the theoretical and practical aspects of her field. Elsie's strong communication, empathy, and organizational skills make her a valuable candidate for committee work, where she is eager to contribute her insights and expertise.

GSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE (GSA NoC)

GSA AWARDS SELECTION COMMITTEE (GSA ASC) (FOUR (4) POSITIONS FOR GSA MEMBERS): FIFTEEN (15) NOMINEES

Information regarding the four (4) vacancies for GSA members was advertised in the GSA Newsletters of August 23 and 30, 6 September, with a deadline of 11 September 2024 at 12:00 PM (noon). Fifteen (15) nominations were received.

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

There will be an electronic vote held at the September 23 2024 GSA Council meeting.

If you and your alternate are unable to attend the Monday September 23 2024 meeting of GSA Council and would like to cast an electronic vote for this position, you must contact the GSA Administrative Coordinator (gsaca@ualberta.ca) BEFORE 3:00 PM on Monday September 23 2024 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. ‘None of the Candidates’ will also be considered a nominee.

1. Olumide Adaolowo
2. Abigail Adom
3. Bilal Asghar
4. Emily Coombs
5. Haroun Elyasir
6. Jahanzaib
7. Dayirai C Kapfunde
8. Paula Mazur
9. Masoud Mirimoghaddam
10. Joseph Onguene
11. Oghenevwede Oturuhoyi
12. Jeremiah Reyes
13. Marissa Stelmack
14. Xiangyu Xiong
15. Amber Yu

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

Jurisdiction:

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

The GSA ASC is composed of “a minimum of seven (7) and up to eleven (11) GSA members elected by GSA Council as voting members. The GSA Awards Selection Committee (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 nominee are **BELOW**. The biographies and resumes are presented as **received** (i.e. not edited).

**NOMINATIONS FOR THE GSA AWARDS SELECTION COMMITTEE (GSA ASC)
(FOUR (4) VACANCIES FOR GSA MEMBERS)
Fifteen (15) Nominees**

1. Olumide Adaolowo

Statement of Interest
As a doctoral student in the Department of Mechanical Engineering at FGPS, I am passionate about enriching the post-secondary learning experience. My primary focus lies in promoting academic excellence, fostering professional development, and cultivating strong relationships among graduate students. Through my leadership roles and engagement in diverse, cross-cultural communities, I have developed a deep commitment to academic integrity and excellence. These experiences have also equipped me with the skills to design policies and initiatives that contribute to a vibrant academic culture, fostering growth and innovation across both academic and industry settings. This is why I am particularly interested in serving on the GSA Awards Selection Committee (GSA Standing Committee).
Bio
I am an international student with a keen passion for academic growth and professional advancement, which motivated me to pursue a doctoral degree in mechanical engineering at the University of Alberta after a few years as a project engineer in the ship repair and maintenance industry. Along with this drive, I am dedicated to contributing positively to the academic success and well-being of graduate students. This commitment led me to volunteer as the Secretary of the Black Graduate Student Association, University of Alberta, where I work to foster a thriving campus experience and strengthen bonds among Black graduate students. My commitment to teamwork, community engagement, and the initiatives I have developed through previous leadership roles will be invaluable assets to the GSA Standing Committee as a volunteer.

2. Abigail Adom

Statement of Interest
I am applying for the GSA member position with a passion for recognizing and celebrating the outstanding achievements of my fellow graduate students. As a committed and detailed oriented individual, i value the importance of fostering a supportive academic community where hard work and accomplishments are acknowledged. My background in Nursing has equipped me with strong organizational and collaborative skills, making me well situated to contribute to this committee's vital role.

I am eager to support and elevate the achievements of our diverse graduate student body through meaningful recognition.

Bio

I am an international student from Ghana, offering MN NURSING for a period of 2 years. I have 6 years working experience as a labor and delivery nurse and 3 years working experience as a Public Health Nurse in Ghana at Korle Bu Teaching Hospital. I am Married with three beautiful children but i came alone to Canada to pursue the program. I was the medical team president in my church, where medical outreaches and health screening services were provided to the vulnerable in other communities. I was also part of the Emergency Response Team in my Hospital as well as other committees , to mention but a few.

3. Bilal Asghar

Statement of Interest

I am an international student from Pakistan. As the intake of international students from Pakistan is increasing yearly here at UofA, I think the representation of international students in these committees will be impactful. International students are always seeking new experiences and exposure, so it will also significantly contribute to the international student community. Many internationally funded students are bound to return to their home countries after their studies, so these committees and similar platforms provide an excellent substrate to gain something new to replicate this sort of work in the motherland alma matters.

I have been here for more than four years, so I may be available for an extended period if necessary. I want to volunteer for this sort of work now and during upcoming events.

Bio

I am a PhD student (Animal Science) in the faculty of ALES. I am a faculty member in my home country (Pakistan). Handling students with their grievances and research work and doing development research projects have been a part of my job lately. I have been a mentor to many students in tutorials as well as research works. I have participated in various volunteer activities, including the Quality Enhancement Cell of the department, group talk activities, organizing seminars and talks, etc. I am profoundly confident that my experience can contribute well to such positions.

4. Emily Coombs

Statement of Interest

I am eager to volunteer for the GSA Awards Selection Committee (ASC) due to my passion for student governance and my extensive experience in leadership roles at the University of Calgary. As the former President of the Graduate Programs in Education Students' Association (GPESA) and a member of various university committees, I have been deeply involved in advocating for student voices and ensuring fair and transparent decision-making.

Serving on the ASC would allow me to contribute to recognizing the achievements of our student community, an area I believe is vital for fostering a supportive academic environment. I am committed to upholding the values of fairness and integrity throughout the selection process and am excited to bring my collaborative skills and experience to this important role.

Thank you for considering my application. I look forward to the opportunity to further support our student community through the ASC.

Bio

I am currently a PhD student deeply engaged in academic and student governance. My role as the Editor-in-Chief and Journal Manager of *Emerging Perspectives: Interdisciplinary Graduate Research in Education and Psychology* has equipped me with strong leadership, editorial, and organizational skills, which I believe would be an asset to this position. Additionally, as the Co-President of the Graduate Programs in Education Students' Association (GPESA) and a member of several committees at the University of Calgary, I have honed my ability to work collaboratively, advocate for student needs, and contribute to important decision-making processes.

My experience extends beyond the University of Calgary, as I have also served in various roles at the University of Victoria, including as a Board Member - Disability Representative for the Pride Center and a Peer Support Worker. My diverse background in both academic and volunteer capacities has prepared me to bring a well-rounded and committed perspective to the GSA Awards Selection Committee.

5. Haroun Elyasir

Statement of Interest

I would like to volunteer for the GSA Award Selection Committee because, with over 15 years of experience, I can effectively evaluate both the academic rigor and practical application of research. I am passionate about recognizing contributions that drive innovation and bring tangible benefits. My expertise would bring valuable insights to the selection process, ensuring fairness and objectivity. I also see this as an opportunity to collaborate with fellow professionals and support GSA's mission to promote excellence in the scientific community.

Bio

Haroun grew up on an olive farm, where hard work, persistence, and resilience were part of daily life. His passion for problem-solving and his deep interest in science and technology led him to pursue a degree in engineering, with a strong desire to make a positive impact on the world around him.

After earning his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Regina, where he was actively involved in both sports and student committees, Haroun is now pursuing a PhD at the University of Alberta. His research is focused on combining engineering, law, and sustainability practices, with a special emphasis on Indigenous perspectives in sustainable construction. He is deeply committed to exploring how Indigenous knowledge can contribute to improving sustainability in the industry, ensuring projects benefit both the environment and local communities.

Haroun understands the challenges graduate students face and is committed to making a meaningful impact. If selected to serve on the committee, he's eager to collaborate and bring his experience in academia and student leadership to ensure that decisions are fair, objective, and beneficial to the community. He's motivated to help celebrate the achievements that push boundaries and bring real-world solutions, making the student experience the best it can be.

6. Jahanzaib

Statement of Interest

I want to add voluntary/leadership work experience to my CV, which will be good for future scholarship applications. It is mandatory to be a reasonable candidate for scholarships available at the university.

Bio

I am an international graduate student from Pakistan. I feel pleasure to work voluntarily. I have also worked voluntarily in flood-affected areas in my country. I had been part of a society that worked as a career counselor. I speak four languages (Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, and English), which would benefit multiple regions and help them on their level, like India and Pakistan. I also worked as a visiting lecturer in one of the prestigious institutes of Pakistan. I would be here for a long time, which would be beneficial since I can be part of the committee for a long time. I hope that I will be proven a good candidate for this committee.

7. Dayirai C Kapfunde

Statement of Interest

Volunteering to serve on the GSA Nominating Committee (GSA NoC) offers several valuable opportunities. Impact on Representation: I play a crucial role in ensuring that graduate students are effectively represented on various committees and councils by participating in the committee. My input can help shape the leadership and direction of the GSA, making a difference in the graduate student community. Also, serving on the committee allows me to connect with other graduate students and faculty members, expanding my professional network, which is helpful as I am new to the University of Alberta community. This can lead to future collaborations and support within my academic journey.

Volunteering for the GSA Awards Selection Committee (ASC) presents several compelling reasons to consider: Recognition of Excellence: By serving on the ASC, I have the opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate the outstanding achievements of my fellow graduate students. This role allows me to contribute to a culture of recognition and appreciation within the graduate community. Additionally, as a committee member, I will have a say in reviewing and recommending changes to the GSA Policy on awards. This involvement allows me to help shape the criteria and processes that govern how achievements are recognized, ensuring they align with the values of the graduate community. Being part of the committee allows me to connect with other graduate students and faculty members who are passionate about recognizing excellence, which can lead to valuable relationships and collaborations within my academic field.

Bio

Dayirai is a doctoral student in public health promotion at the University of Alberta and a psychotherapist with over 15 years of experience. Her work in mental wellness spans individuals, families, and communities.

With a Master of Social Work from Toronto Metropolitan University, Dayirai's research delved into the impact of immigration policies on Zimbabwean immigrants and the complexities of transnational care. Her current research is centred on amplifying the voices of racialized as Black women and addressing health disparities in Alberta.

Dayirai's active participation in academic and community events, coupled with her significant contributions, is truly inspiring. Her involvement in the University of Alberta's Pan African Symposium and the City of Calgary's Racial Justice Conference, as well as her role as a community liaison and volunteer, is a testament to her dedication to creating inclusive and diverse spaces.

As a Graduate Research Assistant for Dr. Domale Keys, she supported mental health initiatives for Black women students. She is also a Graduate Teaching Assistant developing a 'Health Promotion in an Unequal World' course.

Dayirai founded Journeys of Life Counselling Services Inc., offering virtual, culturally affirming, and trauma-informed mental health services. Her work emphasizes holistic healing, anti-colonial practices, and collective well-being.

As a long-time volunteer with the Alberta College of Social Work Council, Dayirai brings strong collaboration skills and a deep commitment to recognizing academic excellence. Her dedication to this cause is a testament to her respect for the efforts of others.

8. Paula Mazur

Statement of Interest

I am eager to serve on the GSA Awards Selection Committee (ASC) as it aligns closely with my aspirations to contribute to the academic community while deepening my leadership and committee experience. As a PhD student in Sport Psychology, I have a vested interest in promoting and recognizing the outstanding achievements of my fellow graduate students, as I believe such recognition fosters a supportive and motivating academic environment. This opportunity would also allow me to further develop skills crucial for my academic career, such as decision-making and collaboration within interdisciplinary teams. By contributing my unique perspective as a member of the Faculty of Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation—currently underrepresented on the ASC—I would bring a fresh lens to the adjudication process, particularly with a focus on the importance of well-being, resilience, and performance within academia.

Bio

As a second-year international PhD student with academic experience in both the UK and Canada, I have cultivated a diverse set of skills that I believe will greatly benefit the GSA Awards Selection Committee. My previous committee work, including serving as an undergraduate student representative on a staff-student liaison committee in the UK and more recently as the graduate student representative on the Vice Dean Selection Committee for the Faculty of Kinesiology, Sport, and Recreation, has equipped me with valuable expertise in fair and unbiased adjudication processes. These roles have taught me the importance of evaluating candidates solely on their merits, a principle that I am committed to upholding. Additionally, my upcoming role on the faculty's EDI committee further strengthens my commitment to fostering inclusivity and fairness.

My research, which examines how individualized preferences among student-athletes influence their experience of self-compassion interventions, aligns with my broader philosophy of recognizing and appreciating the unique needs and contributions individuals bring to their fields. This perspective has heightened my awareness that graduate students' achievements can take many forms, each worthy of thoughtful consideration. My individualized approach to both research and practice will guide my work on the GSA Awards Selection Committee, enabling me to thoughtfully and fairly assess the wide range of accomplishments within the graduate student community. With a strong foundation in research, committee experience, and leadership, I am confident in my ability to contribute meaningfully to the GSA ASC's mission of recognizing and celebrating excellence across our graduate community.

9. Masoud Mirimoghaddam

Statement of Interest
I am interested in volunteering for this committee because it offers the opportunity to support and recognize the accomplishments of my peers. Serving in this role would allow me to develop my decision-making and leadership skills further while contributing to the high standards and sense of community that define our institution. Throughout my academic journey, these awards have played a significant role in keeping me motivated and rewarded. I am eager to contribute to fair adjudications, ensuring that outstanding efforts are acknowledged and celebrated.
Bio
I am currently enrolled in a 6-year PhD combined specialty training program at the School of Dentistry. I am also an alumnus of the University of Alberta, having graduated from the MSc in Medical Sciences in Dentistry program last September. Following graduation, I began working at Statistics Canada, where I had the opportunity to contribute to national-level initiatives and serve the public. During my master's program, I served as an executive member of the School of Dentistry Student Research Group for two years, holding roles as Secretary and Vice President. In my undergraduate years, I was President of the Student Research Group, Class of 2018 President, and the School of Dentistry Representative on the University Advisory Committee, where I represented both my class and school. I believe these professional and volunteer experiences have prepared me well to serve on this committee and contribute to the fair adjudication of awards.

10. Joseph Onguene

Statement of Interest
I like this activity I did in the past (primary, secondary and postsecondary schools)
Bio
I have a great experience in education and as an instructor (French, Marketing and International Relations). Indeed, in Canada and abroad (Cameroon and France), I have always been involved in student competitions and awards celebrations. It is one of my passions aimed at promoting excellence in the study environment.

11. Oghenevwede Oturuhoyi

Statement of Interest
Over the years, precisely during my undergraduate studies and my National Youth Service in my country, I served as a member of the Awards Selection Committee. As we know, this committee is a delicate one, that needs fairness and transparency, as it is a reward for hard work and diligence. When I become a member of the Awards Selection Committee, we will ensure that all recipients of awards and recognition merit it. Also, we will ensure that hard work

and diligence are rewarded accordingly, which will challenge students and all members of the GSA to be productive and efficient.

Bio

I am Oghenevwede Oturuhoyi. My country of Citizenship is Nigeria. I hold a Bachelors Degree in Theatre Arts from University of Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

I am an MA (Thesis) Candidate of the Department of Drama. I am currently in my second year.

I have held numerous leadership positions, such as, Artistic Director for Dance and Drama Community Development Service, Minna, Nigeria, Production Coordinator for National Festival for Arts and Culture, Nigeria, Administrative Head, Bsing School of Fashion and Design, to mention but a few.

12. Jeremiah Reyes

Statement of Interest

As a Graduate and International Student, it is my earnest desire to serve the UofA community by recognizing the exemplary performance of graduate students. Upon sharing their superb efforts to other students, it ripples inspiration especially to those younger generations. And from my end, these works are worth proliferating as they convey that we should play part for the betterment of the future.

Bio

As a former engineer and supervisor of skilled workers in a construction company, I always spare time meeting them in the morning – telling them how good their outputs are yesterday. And when the company president praised me in the meeting, I guaranteed in the meeting that it was a collective effort and I let my workers know that the president commended them. In this way, their perseverance increased and the quality of their performance emerged every day because their efforts were being recognized.

With this, I would like to emulate my previous work to UofA by enlisting myself as the Awards Collection Committee of the UofA, hoping that everyone will do their best efforts each day in their academics.

13. Marissa Stelmack

Statement of Interest

I would like to serve on the GSA Awards Selection Committee because I would like to become more involved with the larger graduate community at the University of Alberta. Although I am currently a member of the Digital Humanities Student Association and the Library and Information Studies Student Association, joining the GSA Awards Selection Committee would permit me to meet and serve members of the broader University of Alberta graduate community. This opportunity would also allow me to give back to the community of which I am a part by utilizing my previous awards committee volunteer experience, academic history, and best judgement to adjudicate awards for my fellow graduate students and supporting faculty and staff.

Bio

I am a first year student in the combined MA/MLIS degree program. In June I completed my MA in English at the University of Calgary, which has allowed me to develop strong analytical discernment and a greater understanding, appreciation, and use of the proper conventions and grammar of the English language, which is similarly key when adjudicating awards. As someone who has already completed two degrees and is currently working on a third, I am very acquainted and comfortable with applying for awards, so I feel that I have a strong basis of understanding for what is required and sought out in a proficient award application. While completing my most recent degree I also served on the University of Calgary GSA Awards Committee, which adjudicated financial awards, grants, and bursaries including Recognition Awards for students and faculty. Following the completed adjudication of the 2023-24 awards, I was recognized by the award committee chairs and the VP Academic as a top adjudicator. I believe that my recent experience and excellence in adjudicating similar graduate and faculty recognition awards is an asset for this position at the University of Alberta.

14. Xiangyu Xiong

Statement of Interest
I came to Canada 6 months ago. This is my first time to study abroad. I am very curious about Canadian culture and how governance bodies in the university work. I want to enrich my knowledge, broaden my horizons, and make more friends. I think the opportunity in GSA can help me enrich my experience in Canada.
Bio
I worked as volunteer for several academic conferences in university of Alberta. I have rich experience as a volunteer, such as how to talk with somebody unknown, how to handle an emergency situation, how to coordinate multiple people to complete a complex task. And as a Phd student, I have extensive professional academic knowledge and do well in multitasking. I can efficiently manage several projects at once. I think my skills and experience can help me be well-qualified for this position.

15. Amber Yu

Statement of Interest
I've been deep into my research since starting my graduate program, so I am looking to mix things up a bit. Being volunteer in GSA is great to get new experiences, learn how awards are decided, and contribute to the campus community.
Bio
I am second-year PhD student at EAS. In 2023, I was the symposium coordinator for the ATLAS, and it really helped me get better at managing projects, coordinating things, and working in teams. I believe these experiences make me a good fit for the Award Selection Committee member position.

**2024-2025 President
Report to GSA Council for the 23 September 2024 Meeting**

To: Council Members
From: Muhammad Haseeb Arshad
Date: 2024/09/20

2024-2025 GSA President Meetings Attended (Muhammad Haseeb Arshad)

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between Aug 19 to Sep 20, 2024 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

Date	Meeting
Aug 19	SWP Discussion with IPR Office
Aug 20	FPC Meeting
Aug 20	Regular Meeting with M. Padfield
Aug 20	Meeting with Campus Services Leadership
Aug 22	Meeting with E. O'Neil, CFB Chair
Aug 23	AI Policy Paper Working Group
Aug 26	BFC Meeting Prep
Aug 26	BFC meeting
Aug 27	Monthly Meeting with B. Flanagan, UofA President
Aug 29	Food Security Grant
Aug 29	Meeting with E. O'Neil, CFB ED
Aug 29	BFC meeting (hybrid)
Aug 29	Meeting with T. Raivio & VP Academic
Aug 29	Tracy and GSA Exec - GSA Strategic Plan
Aug 30	FPC Meeting
Sep 3	Regular Meeting with M. Padfield
Sep 5	Meeting with C. Smith, Vice-Provost EDI, re SWP
Sep 5	ESA Meeting
Sep 5	GSA - Follow up meeting to discuss Google storage issue
Sep 5	Meeting with T. Raivio re Course-based Award
Sep 5	Meeting with a Student
Sep 6	Meeting with UAI re SWP
Sep 6	Tuition and Fees Orientation
Sep 9	SGSC Organizing Committee Meeting
Sep 9	SWP Discussion Meeting with BoG

Sep 9	Meeting with L. Glock, SU President
Sep 10	Mock Advo Meeting ESA
Sep 10	Bi-Monthly Meeting with DoS
Sep 11	Post-Secondary Task Force Meeting
Sep 11	GFC Academic Planning Committee
Sep 11	Meeting with L. Glock, SU President
Sep 11	GSA Dinner with the Chancellor
Sep 12	Tuition Budget Advisory Committee
Sep 12	UofA BoG Retreat Day & Dinner
Sep 13	UofA Board Retreat Day
Sep 16	Multimedia MSc Internship Program Discussion
Sep 16	Meeting with Dillon Kearl
Sep 16	In-person Monthly Update: Jeannie/Haseeb (GSA President)
Sep 16	Campus Wide Food Strategy Meeting
Sep 17	GAC Meeting
Sep 17	Campus Recovery Pledge Follow-up Meeting
Sep 17	Student Experience Meeting
Sep 17	Governance Committee Meeting - Online
Sep 17	Meeting with M. Padfield, Deputy Provost, & V. Yiu, Provost
Sep 18	Ad-hoc Grad student GAC meeting.
Sep 19	GSA SWP Townhall
Sep 19	ESA Meeting with Edmonton Mayor
Sep 20	Campus & Community Recreation Bi-Monthly Meeting
Sep 20	CASA E-Plenary
Sep 20	Cap 'n' Gown Ceremony

Dear Council Members,

I hope this report finds you well. I know the past month has been both challenging and exciting for graduate students. It is challenging for some of our international members, who must experience many hurdles to finally arrive in Edmonton and attend their first class. The issues they face range from the delay in processing visas to the struggle with finding accommodation and adjusting to a new cultural environment in the first weeks of arrival. I am cognizant of how steep the learning curve is and appreciate everyone's effort to successfully manage it. The start of the fall semester is generally extremely busy with the advocacy efforts with the stakeholders of university, municipal, provincial, and federal governments. In the past month, I have attended a couple of very important meetings that I would like to report to Council. The following subsections break down the main points from those meetings:

Strategic Work Plan Discussions:

The GSA Vice Presidents and I are currently meeting with various stakeholders on campus to discuss the GSA Board Strategic Work Plan and figure out areas of cooperation that will benefit graduate students. These stakeholders include Chancellor Nizar Somji, Tracy Ravoio (Dean of the Faculty of Graduate and Post Doctoral Studies (FGPS)), Kate Chisholm (Chair of the University Board of Governors), Giri Puligandla (Chair of Board Learning, Research, & Student Experience Committee), Ravina Sanghera (Dean of Students), Campus Services Leadership, Florence Glanfield (Vice-Provost Indigenous Research & Programming), Carrie Smith (Vice-Provost EDI), and University of Alberta International Student Services Leadership, among other important leaders in university administration. Moreover, both the GSA office and my team are working together on executing the strategic plan and implementing GSA priorities as our council dictates. More updates will be delivered to the Council next month in the form of the GSA Strategic Plan Update, in recognition of my commitment to transparency and accountability to the council.

Collaboration with FGPS:

One of SWP's most important initiatives this year is the Hybrid Course-Based Master's Scholarship, which we will start promoting in early October. This award, now valued at \$2,500, will be open for applications in October. We have reduced the award price from \$5,000 to \$2,500 as the board has decided to give this award to as many graduate students (80 awards) as possible. Our idea is that GSA will take care of the average rent for the term, and the graduate student should focus on their coursework. FGPS has already created the framework to accept nominations for this award through GSMS. This hybrid award aims to encourage graduate students to volunteer and support their peers through university committees and events. I am super proud and thrilled to see that we have been able to not only start this award, but we are funding it completely for this academic year.

Furthermore, as I mentioned in last month's report, we are collaborating with FGPS to conduct a joint student-supervisory report. Rija and I met with Sujata Persad (Assoc. Prof., Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry), as she is leading this initiative from the FGPS. Ben, Rija and I will soon start drafting this survey, which we plan to launch in late fall. Our goal is to finalize the results by the end of January, ensuring that we have enough time to present this report before the end of this board term. I encourage you all to spread the word about this survey and encourage your constituents to take part in this important survey, which aims to improve the dynamics of the student-supervisory relationship.

Discussions with Verna Yiu (Provost) & Melissa Padfield (Deputy Provost):

As you all are aware, we have been advocating for optimizing the Google storage space for graduate students by creating separate space quotas for course-based master's students and other research students. Regarding this advocacy goal, I met with the Google Space Optimization project's program manager, and because of their disappointing response, I have now raised this issue with the provost. Dr. Yiu has promised to advocate for our request and explore ways to enhance it further. I have put forward the proposal of giving 15 GBs to course-based students instead of 30 GBs and distributing the rest of space allocated to research graduate students.

Given that there are currently no university-wide guidelines for the use of GenAI tools, and that faculties, departments, and instructors are free to define their own policies, I have also pushed for a general GenAI ethical usage policy. As you are all aware, GenAI detectors have a 78% false positive rate for non-native speakers, which

will have huge implications for international students. If falsely accused of cheating, they could face not only the academic integrity policy but also potential visa implications.

Another subject matter that I brought up with both the provost and deputy provost is the university's commitment to the Recovery on Campus (ROC) initiative. Recently, UCalgary's provost pledged that the university would provide logistical and financial support to their ROC initiative to help students recover from drugs. I have urged the provost to extend the same level of support to UofA students, especially those in graduate studies.

Finally, the most important topic of my conversation with the deputy provost and provost has been our Graduate Student Support Fund (GSSF). I have emphasized the importance of this university's support for the GSA and how it has aided so many graduate students over the years. I have also formally asked the provost to provide me with a written response to our request, as we are currently working on the initial draft of the GSA Budget for 2025-2026. We have had great discussions, and I am very optimistic that we will see an increase in our GSSF, even in the current harsh financial situation of the university. I have also informed the provost and deputy provost that this is our only monetary request over the last four years, and graduate students will appreciate the university's support given the current inflationary pressures on our membership.

Support for Campus Food Bank:

Erin, the Campus Food Bank Executive Director, has asked me to advocate for a budget line from the university to support CFB's operations. Given the fact that CFB clients have recently doubled and most of the food-related grants have ceased after the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a higher need for support. I have brought this up with the university's stakeholders and the Board of Governors (BoG) to see how the university can support CFB. I believe our proposed food strategy can help alleviate some of the pressure. Also, back in mid-August, Lewie Moodley (our Executive Director) and I discussed the possibility of applying for a sustainable food grant, which is available to Non-Profit Organizations, and we explored ways to use the funds to support CFB. The Government of Alberta (GoA) supports the grant, but there has been no update on the application timeline. I am extremely grateful to Venassa (our grant coordinator), who has graciously accepted the responsibility of applying for this grant in case it opens. If we win this grant, we can support graduate students directly with food-related initiatives, reducing some of the pressure on CFB.

Federal Advocacy:

Every year, the CASA's Federal Policy Committee (FPC) typically selects 2-3 primary topics for policy papers, where they propose recommendations to the federal government that can benefit students in general. This year, one of my top priorities was to work on a GenAI policy paper. I have worked very closely with the CASA home office and other voting members of FPC, and I am extremely excited to report that we now have an approved AI policy paper from CASA. I encourage you to read it and share the recommendations with general members to educate them about GenAI ethics.

In the meantime, the Graduate Advocacy Committee (GAC) has begun finalizing plans for the graduate forum, set to take place during AdvoWeek in November. The purpose of this graduate forum is to encourage undergraduate students, who make up most of the membership, to pursue research careers by showcasing their research.

Additionally, I have also chatted with the GAC Chair to see if graduate voting members of CASA can run a survey on their campus around the initiative to request the federal government to index the Tri-Council grants to inflation just so we can have statistical facts to back this important initiative.

Tuition Fee Consultation:

The consultation process for next year's tuition fee proposal has begun, and I would like to draw the councilors' attention to the University of Alberta's upcoming proposals for Exceptional Tuition Increases, which will impact nine graduate programs. Details of that are yet to be revealed, but I anticipate that the proposals will be brought to the October Tuition and Budget Advisory Committee (TBAC) meeting for discussion. I encourage the impacted units to participate to ensure that meaningful consultation processes are followed and that the proposals address the quality improvement of the program. I am working with Lewie to organize a Town Hall in the first week of October, where the Deputy Provost, Melissa Padfield, will discuss these proposals. I encourage all Council members to attend and raise any questions they may have.

Municipal Advocacy:

Our new VP External, Parman, and I met with the City of Edmonton stakeholders to discuss areas of concern for graduate students. One of these areas is affordable housing. We will be in conversation with the Office of the Mayor to organize a council visit by the mayor so that council members can raise their concerns directly to the mayor regarding higher rent prices and no official body to regulate rent increases. We also discussed the need to improve transit safety with the mayor and encouraged by the city's willingness to work on this closely with the Edmonton Student Alliance (ESA). The mayor's office also reported that they are planning to increase peace officers to 98 in the city in the coming months to help alleviate concerns about safety, especially at the train transit centers.

Bylaws Updates:

Lastly, I want to again highlight the work of the Governance Committee. Councilors have some new updates to our bylaws on the agenda, and it is a testament to our efforts to improve transparency, accountability, ensure neutrality, and give all diverse voices an active role in our association's decision-making. I would also like to express my gratitude to Grace Kinley (our Admin Support Specialist) and Lewie for their support in revising these bylaws, as well as to Cindy Rose (our Associate Director) and the Governance Committee members for their thorough and rational debate on the proposed changes. I still believe this is the most important work the association is doing this year, and it will have an incredibly positive impact in the future.

In conclusion, I will be happy to answer any questions in the Council meeting or feel free to reach out to me via email (gsa.president@ualberta.ca).

**GSA Budget and Finance Committee
Report to GSA Council for the 23 September 2024 Meeting**

To: Council Members
From: Chair BFC
Date: 2024/09/20

Dear Council Members,

The GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC) convened on August 29 to assess the latest quarterly investment report. Representatives from the ATB investment management team were present to address the inquiries of the members, and it was noted that the GSA's investments are showing positive performance.

The committee also reviewed the Fall Term Budget and Expenditure Report, prepared by the GSA's Financial Team, which is attached to the council agenda for informational purposes. Additionally, members briefly discussed the upcoming year's work plan, with a focus on developing the GSA's budget for 2025-2026.

The next GSA BFC meeting is scheduled for October 17, where the initial draft of the 2025-2026 GSA budget will be reviewed before its presentation to the GSA Council. I am happy to take any questions on the presented report.

Sincerely,
Haseeb Arshad, President and Chair of the GSA BFC

**2024-2025 Vice-President Academic
Report to GSA Council for the September 2024 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Rija Kamran, VP Academic
Date: September 19, 2024

2024-2025 GSA VP Academic's Meetings Attended (Rija)

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between August 19 2024 to September 23 2024 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

NAC Meeting (Aug 20)
Meeting with Campus Services Leadership (Aug 20)
Meeting with a Student (Aug 21)
GAC Committee Meeting (Aug 22)
Summer/Co-op Student Presentation Day (Aug 23)
Meeting with a Student (Aug 23)
Meeting with a Student (Aug 26)
Graduate Program Support Team (Aug 26)
GFC Nominating Committee (Aug 28)
Meeting with T. Raivio (Aug 29)
Meeting with C. Smith, Vice-Provost EDI, re SWP (Sept 5)
Meeting with a Student (Sept 5)
Meeting with T. Raivio re Course-based Award (Sept 5)
Meeting with UAI re SWP (Sept 6)
FGPS Caucus (Sept 9)
SWP Discussion Meeting with BoG (Sept 9)
GFC Executive Committee (Sept 9)
LMS of the Future Advisory Committee Meeting (Sept 10)
Bi-Monthly Meeting with DoS (Sept 10)
FGPS Council (Sept 11)
GSA Dinner with the Chancellor (Sept 11)
Tuition Budget Advisory Committee (Sept 12)
GFC Programs Committee (Sept 12)
CASA FPC Consultation (Sept 12)
Student/Supervisor Relationship, Office of Student Ombuds (Sept 16)
GAC Meeting (Sept 17)
Student Experience Meeting (Sept 17)
NAC Meeting (Sept 18)
CASA GIRC Consultation (Sept 18)
GSA SWP Townhall (Sept 19)
Council on Student Affairs (Sept 19)
University Research and Innovation Advisory Committee (Sept 20)
FGPS Caucus (Sept 20)

Graduate Program Support Team (Sept 23)
GFC Members' Orientation (Sept 23)
GFC (Sept 23)

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope you are doing well. It's been a busy start of the Fall term. I'll be away in Belgium presenting at the International Spinal Cord Injury Society Meeting this week and won't be able to be there for the council. I have provided a summary of the advocacy work I have been engaged in since the last council meeting.

(August 20) NAC Meeting

I attend the CASA National Advocacy Committee meeting. This committee works to enhance CASA's advocacy efforts by organizing campaigns across CASA's member campuses and developing lobbying tools and training to help empower members to meet with their local Members of Parliament. We are currently working on budgetary asks including mechanisms for student loan relief and easy repayments.

(August 22) GAC Committee meeting

I attend the CASA Graduate Advisory Committee meeting. This committee works to enhance CASA's advocacy efforts for graduate students. This committee is finalizing the asks for the Federal government which include indexing of Tri-council grants to inflation. This committee is also planning the graduate forum during the CASA's advocacy committee, to increase awareness of graduate student issues for the members.

(August 26) Graduate Program Support Team

Graduate Program Support Team works of approvals of major and minor program changes before they go to GFC Programs Committee for final approval. The changes that came to GPST this month included program changes in Lab Medicine and Pathology (2nd level specialization), addition of an English language Proficiency exam, Masters of Advanced Practice Nursing, combined MBA/MScURP, and Master of Real Estate Development.

(August 28) GFC Nominating Committee

I attended the GFC nominating committee meeting. This committee nominated a slate of both staff and students to be appointed to GFC and GFC committees/subcommittees. I would encourage all of you to reach out if you would like to put your name forward for one of the GFC committees, happy to provide you with an overview of the committee work.

(September 10) LMS of the Future Advisory Committee Meeting FGPS Council (Sept 11)

LMS of future advisory committee met following launch of phase 1 this Fall 2024. The new LMS, Canvas is being adopted in 3 phases with some departments and courses transition to Canvas this Fall. For this academic year, e-class and Canvas will both be accessible for students depending on where the course is being housed. As we navigate through this change, please feel free to pass on any comments or concerns about Canvas to me, and I will take them to the committee on your behalf.

(September 11) FGPS Council

I attended the first FGPS council meeting for this academic year. I presented council with the updates from GSA and presented the GSA Strategic Work Plan. We were presented with updates from Enrollment Growth planning work that was completed over the past few months.

Thank you for your support and engagement. Please feel free to reach out to me at gsavpaca@ualberta.ca if you have any questions, concerns or suggestions. Thank you

Rija Kamran, Vice-President Academic (2024-25)

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**2024-2025 Vice-President Student Life
Report to GSA Council for the September 23rd 2024 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Benjamin Kucher
Date: September 18, 2024

2024-2025 GSA VP Student Life Meetings Attended (Benjamin Kucher)

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 19 August to 23 September 2024 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

Date	Meeting
August 19	SWP Discussion with IGSA Office
August 20	Meeting with Campus Services Leadership
August 21	CASA Meeting with T. Maleeka
August 21	Meeting with D. Strohschein, Assistant Dean CW & SVS
August 22	Meeting with L. Adam, EDI Strategic Officer
August 22	SGBV in WIL Working Group
August 22	Community Operations Coordination Meeting
August 23	NIAC Weekly Co-Chairs Meeting
August 26	Student Housing Stability Working Group
August 28	Volunteer for the Graduate Student Move-In
August 29	Meeting with T. Raivio
August 30	NIAC Weekly Co-Chairs Meeting
August 30	Meeting with C. Smith, Vice-Provost EDI
August 30	EDI Plan Steering Committee
September 1	Residence Orientation Social Event
September 3	Co-Sponsor SEAP Meeting
September 5	Meeting with C. Smith, Vice-Provost EDI, re SWP
September 6	Meeting with UAI re SWP
September 6	NIAC Weekly Co-Chairs Meeting
September 9	FGPS Caucus
September 9	Graduate Student Panel, DoS
September 9	SWP Discussion Meeting with BoG
September 10	Meeting with K. Huising
September 10	Meeting with T. Ira, EDI Initiatives
September 10	Student Group Meeting
September 10	Meeting with D. Strohschein, Assistant Dean CW & SVS
September 10	Bi-Monthly Meeting with DoS
September 17	Meeting with S. Dion
September 17	NIAC Meeting
September 17	UASSC

September 17	Governance Committee Meeting
September 19	GSA SWP Townhall
September 20	Campus & Community Recreation Meeting
September 20	CASA E-Plenary
September 20	NIAC Weekly Co-Chairs Meeting
September 23	UASSC Meeting
September 23	Meeting with D. Strohschein, Assistant Dean CW & SVS

Dear Council Colleagues,

Welcome back to a new academic year! I hope each of you had the opportunity to recharge and reflect over the summer, preparing for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. As we convene for our first GSA Council meeting of this academic year, I want to extend a heartfelt welcome to both our new members, who are joining us for the first time, and our returning colleagues. This meeting marks the beginning of what I believe will be another successful year filled with meaningful collaboration, productive advocacy, and increased engagement within our graduate student community. I am genuinely excited to work alongside all of you as we continue to champion the interests of graduate students at the University of Alberta.

As the rhythm of the new academic term settles in, I hope you’re finding your footing amidst research, coursework, and other commitments. I recognize that the start of the year can bring unique challenges as we adjust to new schedules and responsibilities, but please remember that the GSA is here to support you every step of the way. I encourage each of you to lean on the resources available through the GSA and stay connected with one another as we navigate this journey together. The collective work we do—whether it's addressing pressing student concerns or creating positive change on campus—has the potential to make a profound impact, and I am confident that, together, we will continue to foster a strong and thriving graduate student community.

In the past month, I have been working diligently to push forward initiatives that enhance the graduate student experience. As co-sponsor of the Student Experience Action Plan (SEAP), I have actively contributed to initiatives aimed at improving various aspects of student life, from academic support to mental health and wellness services. I have also focused on addressing critical concerns raised by our peers, particularly surrounding campus safety and residence-related issues, which are essential in creating a secure and supportive environment for all students. Additionally, I have been deeply involved in our broader advocacy efforts, both through the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) and the National Indigenous Advocacy Committee (NIAC), ensuring that the voices of graduate students—especially those from Indigenous backgrounds—are heard on national platforms.

In collaboration with CASA, we have concentrated on a range of initiatives designed to improve the overall graduate student experience. One of the key developments is the formation of the Sustainable Growth Working Group, which has been tasked with crafting strategies that ensure CASA’s growth remains aligned with its mission and values. This includes reviewing financial procedures and updating governance policies to meet the needs of an expanding organization. By actively contributing to the Terms of Reference and financial strategies, I aim to ensure that CASA continues to serve the interests of its members effectively, including our own GSA.

Moreover, the Federal Policy Committee (FPC) has been hard at work on several policy updates, including revisions to the Repayment Assistance Plan (F09) and new policies supporting students’ transitions to the workforce (Q23.1 and Q23.2). These upcoming changes, which will be voted on during the September E-Plenary, are critical to ensuring that graduate students have access to financial and employment support systems during and after their

studies. My involvement in these discussions guarantees that the needs of our GSA members are well-represented at the national level, and I am committed to continuing this advocacy work as the year progresses.

I have been actively involved in the GSA Governance Committee, where one of our key initiatives has been the implementation of a designated council seat for the Black Graduate Students' Association (BGSA). This initiative reflects our commitment to amplifying the voices of Black graduate students and ensuring their perspectives are represented within the GSA's decision-making processes. By creating this seat, we aim to promote greater inclusivity and equity within our governance structure, reinforcing the importance of diverse representation in all facets of graduate student life.

In addition to this, I am excited to announce the upcoming Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Reading Group, which will take place four times this year. This initiative provides graduate students with a dedicated space to engage in meaningful discussions about EDI principles, share experiences, and reflect on how we can foster a more inclusive academic environment. The reading group will also offer professional development (PD) credits, giving participants an opportunity to enhance both their academic and professional skill sets while deepening their understanding of EDI issues. I encourage all graduate students to participate and contribute to these important conversations as we work together to promote a culture of inclusion and understanding across campus.

Looking ahead, I am confident that the work we've started will continue to make a meaningful difference in the lives of graduate students. With continued collaboration on projects like the SEAP and our advocacy work through CASA, we are building the foundation for a more inclusive, supportive, and equitable environment. Whether it's addressing campus safety concerns, improving residence conditions, or advocating for students' rights at the national level, our efforts are already having a tangible impact, and there is much more progress to be made.

I am eager to continue this important work alongside all of you in the coming months. Your feedback, dedication, and active involvement will be essential in ensuring the success of our initiatives, and I know that, together, we will keep the momentum going as we strive for positive change. Let's make this academic year one of meaningful progress for the entire graduate student body. As always please don't hesitate to reach out to me to provide feedback or advice on what you would like to see. I'm always available to answer any questions or address any of your concerns.

Thank you for your continued commitment, and I look forward to the opportunities we will create together.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Kucher; GSA VP Student Life.

**2024-2025 VP Student Services
Report to GSA Council for the August 2024 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Saad A. Iqbal
Date: Sept. 20, 2024

2024-2025 GSA VP Student Services Meetings Attended by Saad A. Iqbal
Below is a list of meetings I attended between August 14 and September 20, 2024 (not including weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

Date	Meeting
August 15	U-Pass Strategic Meeting Session 2 (internal meeting among participating institutions)
August 15	U-Pass Strategic Meeting Session 3 (internal meeting among participating institutions)
August 16	World Mental Health Day Creative Programming
August 19	U-Pass Preparation Meeting (internal meeting among participating institutions)
August 19	GSA/VPIPR (Florence Glanfield – Vice Provost Indigenous Programming & Research) Bi-monthly Meeting
August 20	U-Pass Negotiations Round 2 (Day 1)
August 20	GSA/Campus Services Leadership Meeting
August 21	U-Pass Negotiations Round 2 (Day 2) internal meeting among participating institutions
August 22	U-Pass Negotiations Round 2 (Day 3)
August 23	Meeting with Erin (CFB Director)
August 23	Faculty of Education Orientation
August 27	Student Group Mental Health Network Kick-off Event
August 28	CFB Policy Committee Meeting
August 28	Days of Action Committee Meeting
August 28	North Campus Move-in Volunteering

August 29	Chemistry Department Orientation
August 29	GSA Strategic Work Plan Meeting (GSA Execs/Tracy Raivio- Vice Provost & Dean, FGPS)
August 30	English & Film Orientation
August 30	East Asian Studies Orientation
September 1	Residence Orientation (graduate Student Social Event)
September 3	Earth & Atmospheric Sciences Orientation
September 3	GSA Fall Orientation
September 4	GSA/UAI Regular Meeting (with Diana Kim)
September 5	GSA Strategic Work Plan Meeting (GSA Execs/Carrie Smith- Vice Provost EDI)
September 5	Meeting with Dr. Samira Elatia (Associate Dean – Research, Graduate Studies & Internationalization)
September 5	Economics Ph.D. Orientation
September 6	GSA Strategic Work Plan Meeting (GSA Execs/UAI Officials)
September 6	Tuition and Fees Orientation
September 6	Business Ph.D. Orientation
September 9	GSA Strategic Work Plan Meeting (GSA Execs/Kate Chisholm – Chair, UofA Board of Governors)
September 9	Graduate Student Discussion Panel
September 10	Meeting with Kevin Friese (Assistant Dean, Health & Wellness – DoS Office)
September 10	U-Pass Meeting (internal meeting among participating institutions)
September 10	GSA Strategic Work Plan Meeting (Dr. Ravina Sanghera – Dean of Students and team)
September 11	GSA Executives Dinner with UofA Chancellor Nizar Somji
September 12	Meeting with StudentCare Representatives
September 13	KATZ Orientation

September 13	Meeting with Jillian Ames (Graduate Students who Parent Initiatives)
September 13	Oncology Orientation
September 13	Art & Design Orientation
September 16	U-Pass Meeting (internal meeting among participating institutions)
September 19	GSA SWP Town Hall
September 19	Student Group Mental Health Networking Meeting
September 20	GSA/Campus & Community Recreation Bi-Monthly Meeting
September 20	Microgrant Confirmation Panel Onboarding Meeting
September 20	Grad. Student Photo Contest on Mental Health Meeting (Heather Ritz, Wellness Supports)
Aug. 13, 27, Sept. 17	CFB Prairie Urban Farm Volunteering

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope you're all doing well, in your academic, professional, and personal pursuits. Below are the details of the meetings I have attended between August 14 and September 20, 2024:

U-Pass Meetings and Negotiation Sessions (Collective Update)

There were multiple meetings during this period to discuss the ongoing negotiations for a new U-Pass program. In the internal meetings among the institutes, we discussed and brainstormed ideas about our next proposals to the transit providers. Round two of the negotiations also took place within this time frame. However, no agreement was found, which is why we now have a third round of negotiations planned. Representatives from the UASU and UAGSA are working tirelessly with other representatives from participating institutions to ensure that the new agreement is valuable for our students. More updates will be provided later.

World Mental Health Day Creative Programming

This was a regular meeting where Heather Ritz from Wellness Supports briefed Renson Alva (UASU VP Student Life) and me about the updates on the creative programming. Both the UASU and the UAGSA are facilitating in the Days of Action creative programming events planned by the Wellness Supports.

GSA/VPIPR Meeting

In this meeting, the GSA Executives presented the Strategic Work Plan to explain our individual and collective initiatives and priorities. We also had a chance to receive valuable feedback and information from Dr. Glanfield and other attending members to enhance our work for graduate students.

GSA/Campus Services Leadership Meeting

In this meeting, the GSA Executives presented the Strategic Work Plan to explain our individual and collective initiatives and priorities to the Campus Services Leadership and talked about areas for improvement and collaboration.

Meeting with Erin (CFB Director)

In this meeting, Erin and I discussed some ideas to increase funding options for the Campus Food Bank. We also discussed the potential for creating a hydroponics farm at the university to help CFB with the rising demand for food supplies, potential PD credits for graduate students who volunteer for the CFB, and other details.

CFB Policy Committee Meeting

As a board member of the CFB, I am also contributing to the CFB's Policy Committee. In this meeting, the members discussed key policy-related issues to enhance the operations of the CFB.

Days of Action Committee Meeting

In this meeting, members discussed some amendments to the Days of Action Charter as well as shared updates from their respective student groups.

North Campus Move-in Volunteering

This was a volunteering session where VP Student Life, Benjamin Kucher and I volunteered in the East Campus Commons and assisted graduate students moving in on graduate residences.

GSA Strategic Work Plan Meeting (GSA Execs/Tracy Raivio- Vice Provost & Dean, FGPS)

In this meeting, the GSA Executives presented the Strategic Work Plan to explain our individual and collective initiatives and priorities to Dr. Tracy and members from the FGPS and talked about areas for improvement and collaboration.

Residence Orientation (graduate Student Social Event)

This was a socialization session where VP Student Life, Benjamin Kucher and I interacted with graduate students in the East Campus Commons, shared our ideas and initiatives and got to know one another.

GSA Fall Orientation

In this session, new students from across campus joined the GSA and allied partners from the university to receive important information and guidance to help them navigate their graduate student experiences.

GSA/UAI Regular Meeting (with Diana Kim)

In this meeting, Diana Kim and I discussed areas for collaboration. We mainly discussed the possibility of UAI partnering with the GSA for our Graduate Student Photo Contest. This request was later approved, and we now have the Dos and the UAI as partners for the event.

GSA Strategic Work Plan Meeting (GSA Execs/Carrie Smith- Vice Provost EDI)

In this meeting, the GSA Executives presented the Strategic Work Plan to explain our individual and collective initiatives and priorities to Dr. Carrie and members from the office and talked about areas for improvement and collaboration.

Meeting with Dr. Samira Elatia (Associate Dean – Research, Graduate Studies & Internationalization)

Dr. Samira and I met at Triffo Hall to discuss information pieces that can be helpful for our graduate students at the Campus Saint-Jean. We also discussed potential avenues for these graduate students to engage with the GSA members at the North Campus and how services can be improved for them.

GSA Strategic Work Plan Meeting (GSA Execs/UAI Officials)

In this meeting, the GSA Executives presented the Strategic Work Plan to explain our individual and collective initiatives and priorities to attending UAI officials and talked about areas for improvement and collaboration.

Tuition and Fees Orientation

In this meeting attended by both UASU and UAGSA executives, members were briefed about tuition and fees related information considering the Alberta Tuition Framework, Tuition Budget Advisory Committee (TBAC) Terms of Reference and the Joint Student/University Oversight Committee on Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees Agreement.

GSA Strategic Work Plan Meeting (GSA Execs/Kate Chisholm – Chair, UofA Board of Governors)

In this meeting, the GSA Executives presented the Strategic Work Plan to explain our individual and collective initiatives and priorities Kate Chisholm, Chair UofA BoG. We also received valuable feedback on our initiatives and areas for improvement.

Graduate Student Discussion Panel

In this panel, also attended by VP of Student Life, Benjamin Kucher, we answered questions and gave feedback to new graduate students on campus based on our graduate student experiences. The DoS's office will be sharing this information pieces through a blog post.

Meeting with Kevin Friese (Assistant Dean, Health & Wellness – DoS Office)

In this meeting, Kevin and I discussed top priorities for collaboration such as the hydroponics farm. Kevin also shared important updates through the Dean of Students Office and indicated that all support networks are working at their full capacity to support our students.

GSA Strategic Work Plan Meeting (Dr. Ravina Sanghera – Dean of Students and team)

In this meeting, the GSA Executives presented the Strategic Work Plan to explain our individual and collective initiatives and priorities to Dr. Ravina and members from the DoS and talked about areas for improvement and collaboration.

GSA Executives Dinner with UofA Chancellor Nizar Somji

The GSA executives were invited over dinner at the UofA's Chancellor Nizar Somji's residence. We talked at great length about our initiatives, and educational, and professional backgrounds and also had a chance to listen to the Chancellor's philanthropic, professional work and life experiences all of which will be valuable for the university.

Meeting with Studentcare Representatives

Our Executive Director, Lewie Moodley and I met with Studentcare representatives to talk about areas of improvement in the coverage of health & dental plans for GSA members. We also shared some key concerns raised by graduate students through our recent health and dental survey.

Meeting with Jillian Ames (Graduate Students who Parent Initiatives)

In this meeting, Jillian and I discussed the GSA's services-related initiatives for graduate students who parent. Jillian is a member and past President of the Students Who Parent Group at the university, which is why the feedback and suggestions are very helpful and valuable.

GSA SWP Town Hall

At the GSA SWP Town Hall, the GSA Executives shared their initiatives and collaborations with the attending graduate students and received valuable feedback to improve our individual and collective work.

Student Group Mental Health Networking Meeting

This is a group of representatives of student groups across campus who work to address mental health issues in creative ways. Members shared important updates about their respective groups' work in this regard. I shared the details of our upcoming graduate student photo contest. We also discussed the need and potential for student groups to do more collaborative events.

Microgrant Confirmation Panel Onboarding Meeting

This was an onboarding meeting for the microgrant panel. The [Mutual Aid Project Micro-grants](#) aims to offer small grants to UofA groups, units, and informal collectives to help them navigate through experiences of harm and grief while also imagining and learning about other ways together.

Best Regards,
Saad Arslan Iqbal

**2024-2025 Associate Vice-President Labour
Report to GSA Council for the September 23 2024 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Muneeb Masood Raja
Date: 18 Sept 2024

2024-2025 GSA Associate VP Labour Meetings Attended

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 20 Aug to 20 Sept 2024 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

Date	Meeting
20 Aug	GSA/Campus Services Leadership Meeting – GSA Strategic Work Plan
21 Aug	New Council Member Orientation
23 Aug	Weekly Meeting with PSAC Representative
26 Aug	BFC Meeting
29 Aug	Civil & Environmental Engineering Orientation Presentation
29 Aug	BFC Meeting
29 Aug	Tracy and GSA Exec - GSA Strategic Plan
30 Aug	History, Classics & Religion Orientation Presentation
30 Aug	Weekly Meeting with PSAC Representative
3 Sept	GSA Fall Orientation 2024
3 Sept	Renewable Resources Orientation Presentation
4 Sept	Duty to Accommodate
5 Sept	GSA Board 2024-2025 Strategic Work Plan and Future Recommendations - VPEDI
5 Sept	AACA Meeting
5 Sept	Economics (Masters) Orientation Presentation
6 Sept	GSA Strategic Work Plan Discussion
6 Sept	Tuition and Fees Orientation

6 Sept	Public Health Orientation Presentation
9 Sept	GSA Strategic Work Plan Discussion – BoGs Chair
9 Sept	Program Planning Updates
10 Sept	GSA & DoS - Bi-Monthly
11 Sept	Grievance Discussion (Confidential)
11 Sept	GSA Dinner with the Chancellor
12 Sept	CSD Orientation Presentation
12 Sept	Meeting with a Student (Confidential)
13 Sept	MINT Orientation Presentation
13 Sept	Weekly Meeting with PSAC Representative
17 Sept	LRC Lunch
17 Sept	Labour Training
18 Sept	AACA Meeting
19 Sept	Pharmacy Orientation Presentation
19 Sept	SWP Town Hall
20 Sept	Campus & Community Recreation & GSA Bi-Monthly Meeting

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope you're all doing well and had a wonderful summer. I have attended several meetings between 20 Aug 2024 and 20 Sept 2024 which are listed in the table above. Here are the details of the meetings:

(Aug 23, 30, & Sept 12) Weekly Meeting with PSAC Representative

In our recent meetings, we focused on planning educational sessions for academically employed graduate students and LRC members. We organized a lunch for LRC members and a comprehensive training session earlier this week aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of our union. Additionally, we discussed our upcoming bargaining process and the ongoing support from the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC).

(Aug 20, 29, & Sept 5, 6, 9 and 10) GSA Strategic Work Plan Discussions with Different University Offices

The GSA executive team met with different university offices to discuss the GSA Strategic Work Plan (SWP). In my portfolio the main priority is negotiating gains in collective bargaining this year. Besides that, we are also improving the education that we used to offer to our union members. Additionally, we are expanding how we operate as a union with the help of the recently created positions of chief steward and outreach coordinator. We will have more in-house events and training opportunities for the Labour Relations Committee members and the union members.

Finally, resolving graduate workers issues would also be my main priority to ensure collective agreement compliance across campus.

(Sept 3) GSA Fall Orientation

On September 3, 2024, we held our Fall Orientation in the Maple Leaf Room at the Lister Conference Centre, marking a great kickoff to the academic year! Attendees had the opportunity to explore various tables set up to showcase a wide range of resources available to support them both on campus and beyond. They also met the Directly Elected Officers (DEOs) and learned how to navigate their graduate journey effectively. It was a wonderful chance to connect with fellow grad students, build community, and enjoy exciting door prizes and swag from our partners.

(Sept 4) Duty to Accommodate Training

On September 4th, 2024, I attended a full-day training on the "Duty to Accommodate" training, which focused on the tripartite system involving workers, unions, and employers. The course emphasized the employer's responsibility to create inclusive workplaces that enable full participation for all employees. We explored the evolving definitions and understandings of accommodation needs, noting that while employees must still initiate requests, there are strategies to shift the employer's approach. The discussion highlighted the importance of integrating accommodation into workplace culture, rather than treating it as an exception to standard practices. Overall, the training provided valuable insights into fostering a more inclusive work environment.

(Sept 6) Tuition and Fees Orientation

The GSA and SU executive teams participated in a Tuition and Fees Orientation organized by the Deputy Provost (Student & Enrolment). During this session, we gained insights into the Alberta Tuition Framework and learned about the University of Alberta's processes for determining and utilizing tuition and fee revenue.

(Sept 9) Program Planning Meeting

In our recent meeting, we discussed how the LRC Outreach Coordinator and Chief Steward can help improve how we operate as a union and how the GSA office can support these roles. We explored ideas to enhance the union's presence, improve educational initiatives, establish stronger connections with graduate student groups, effectively utilize PSAC resources, and collaborate to strengthen our steward network.

(Sept 17) Labour Training

The primary objective of this training was to brainstorm ways to enhance our effectiveness as a union. We established specific goals for the LRC Outreach Coordinator and Chief Steward, along with metrics to assess progress, foster accountability, and identify areas for improvement. While we currently provide educational opportunities and host events using PSAC resources, we have decided to increase in-house training for our members and host more outreach events. We also plan to improve our communication using different platforms. This approach will not only help mobilize our union members when needed but also encourage greater participation from our stewards and provide additional support to them.

I have been involved in several departmental orientation presentations, where I had the opportunity to introduce ourselves, explain our role as the GSA, and highlight how we advocate for graduate students at the University of Alberta. Before our next council meeting in October, we will have exchanged our proposals with the university and will be working to ensure that our bargaining team can negotiate significant gains for our academically employed graduate students.

I would really appreciate any feedback from the respected council members related to any labour related matters.

In Solidarity,
Muneeb Masood Raja, Associate Vice-President Labour 2024-2025

CRO Report to GSA Council for the September 23 2024 Meeting

Dear GSA Council,

I hope the start of the semester is going well for all of you! As you all know, we held a recent By-Election of the Vice-President External. I would like to thank members of ERC who provided interpretations of Bylaw and Policy, GSA staff for their continued work supporting ERC and the CRO/DRO in all elections-related matters, all of the candidates for putting their names forward, and graduate students for voting.

Congratulations to the winner, Parman Mojir Shaibani. As highlighted in the results email, there were a total of 462 ballots cast out of a total 8189 graduate students eligible, for a voter turnout of 5.64%.

Although no major complaints were brought forward, we learned several things that will help improve election processes in the future. I will be meeting with ERC, presenting some potential changes to policy and procedures, and bringing them forward to Governance Committee and eventually Council.

This month, I also met with GSA staff to start planning for the 2025 General Election and brainstorming methods to increase voter engagement and turnout. I also met with a potential referendum asker. In the coming months, we will be ramping up activities for the 2025 General Election and Referenda, and Election of the Associate Vice President Labour.

As always, if you have any questions, please contact gsa.elections@ualberta.ca.

Sophie Shi
GSA Chief Returning Officer

**2024-2025 Nominating Committee Chair
Report to GSA Council for the September 23 2024 Meeting**

To: GSA Council

From: Arseniy Belosokhov

Date: September 18, 2024

Dear members of the GSA Council,

Since the last Council meeting, the Nominating Committee has advertised, received and reviewed nominations for outstanding vacancies for several graduate student-represented bodies: General Faculties Council (GFC), Faculty of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies (FGPS) Council, GSA Nominating Committee, GSA Appeal and Complaints Board (GSA ACB), GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (ERC), GSA Budget & Finance Committee (BFC), Awards Selection Committee (ASC).

Additionally, the Nominating Committee Chair together with the GSA ED met a potential ACB candidate for an interview. However, following the interview the candidate withdrew their application, thus no action item is presented to the council regarding this vacant position at this time.

I would like to note that there has been a slight increase in the number of applications received by the Committee, which is a welcome sign. I would also like to bring to the attention of the Council that we, unfortunately, have not received any applications for some key role positions, such as one vacant Councilor position at the GSA Governance Committee (GC), as well as for the GSA Deputy Speaker.

Since there was a question raised previously, I would like to clarify that the NoC acts in accordance with "E.POL.1.5: *The GSA NoC will be proactive in seeking out potential candidates for all Directly-Elected Officer and GSA Council-Elected Officer positions,*" which expects us to take proactive initiatives. Thus, even though no official resignation letter has been received from the current GSA Speaker, Farhan Khalid, given his imminent graduation and the pivotal importance of the Speaker position to the Council, we will take a proactive approach in order to hopefully see no disruption to the Council's operations.

Finally, the NoC is determined to contribute to the GSA Strategic Work Plan, approved by the GSA Council on June 24, 2024, with one of the goals being modernizing outdated clauses and streamlining our procedures. Currently, we are doing internal work of reviewing Bylaws and Policies pertaining to our function as a standing committee. The potential improvements have been identified and we seek to pass them forward to the Governance Committee for review.

Sincerely,

Arseniy Belosokhov, Nominating Committee Chair

GSA Executive Director
Report to GSA Council for September 23 2024 Meeting

To: GSA Council
From: Lewie Moodley
Date: September 23 2024

Dear Members of the GSA Council,

I trust this message finds you well and you are enjoying the beautiful Fall. I am pleased to provide you with an update on the various initiatives and activities currently underway within the Graduate Students' Association. Our team has been diligently working to ensure that we continue to meet the needs of our members and board while enhancing the overall effectiveness of our operations. Below, I outline the key points of our ongoing efforts.

Over the last month, we have delivered over 50 departmental orientations across the University of Alberta, helping graduate students integrate into their programs and the campus community. We would like to extend our gratitude to Grace Kinley for her exceptional dedication and hard work in organizing and team-leading these orientations. Her efforts have ensured that new graduate students feel welcomed and well-prepared for their academic journeys.

We are pleased to report that our Fall Orientation, held at Lister Hall, was a tremendous success with close to 300 attendees. This event allowed incoming new students to connect with stakeholders, faculty, and GSA representatives, fostering a sense of community. The positive feedback from students reflects the great planning and coordination by the GSA team, and we look forward to building on this success for future events. Students won door prizes and collected many other wonderful gifts and swag. In mid-October, we will be launching our new Good Grants platform, designed to streamline and enhance the application process for GSA grants. This initiative will make it easier for students to apply for funding and track their applications. A big thank you goes to Vanessa Miller, who has worked tirelessly to bring this platform to life. We are confident it will greatly benefit our graduate students.

Additionally, we have successfully launched our new GSA website, which is now live. While we continue refining its features and functionality, the new site represents a significant improvement in usability and access to resources. Brandy Ellamil deserves our heartfelt thanks for leading and managing this project, ensuring that the website meets the needs of our members and staff.

Finally, we are currently in the process of recruiting a new Finance and HR Manager following the retirement of Dorte Sheikh earlier this month. We thank Dorte for her years of dedicated service to the GSA and wish her all the best in her retirement. Additionally, the GSA office has been working diligently on the upcoming by-election. With the election concluded and our new VP External elected, we will now begin the onboarding process to ensure a smooth transition and continued success in the role. We look forward to working with Parman Mojir Shaiban in the near future.

We are confident that these efforts will significantly enhance our ability to serve the graduate student community and advance the mission of the GSA. We appreciate your continued support and look forward to working together to achieve our shared goals. Should you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

Lewie Moodley, Executive Director.

Management Report to the GSA Board, August 28 2024

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on **August 14 2024**.

Executive Director update:

- Grants are now open again for summer. All forms in Good Grants have been completed and we will continue training with our specialist on next steps to have it set up. We approved 70 applications during the month of August. For our new system updates, we have been approved for the integration with CCID. We have approved in this quarter: ATG: 244; CCG: 47; ESGS: 4; EB: 8.
- Our annual audit with RSM Canada; this is an annual financial report. RSM began our audit and is ongoing. We are working with the auditors in the final weeks of the audit and will have the final report in the coming weeks.
- Social Media updates:
 - **Facebook** Reach: +117.1% (Aug 13-27); Followers: +2 followers (current: 2056)
 - **Instagram** Reach: -18.5% (Aug 13-27); Followers: +16 followers (current: 1385)
 - **Twitter/ X** Followers: -2 followers (1348)
- Our new website design is underway and will be ready to launch in August 2024. Our new logo is now live and being used on documents and we are making changes to all our materials and assets.
- A number of new bylaws and policies have been passed by the Governance committee and have been presented today to the board. This went to the August council meeting for its first vote, which passed. The next meeting will be in September for the second reading and vote. Policies were passed in the August council and are now binding and in action.
- Staff and DEOs are currently busy with delivering multiple departmental orientations and our larger Fall orientation which is next week.

Management Report to the GSA Board, September 4 2024

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on **August 28 2024**.

Executive Director update:

- Grants are now open again for summer. All forms in Good Grants have been completed and we will continue training with our specialist on next steps to have it set up. We approved 70 applications during the month of August. For our new system updates, we have been approved for the integration with CCID. We have approved in this quarter: ATG: 244; CCG: 47; ESGS: 4; EB: 8. We are now starting our next round of grant approvals for the month of September.
- Our annual audit with RSM Canada; this is an annual financial report. RSM began our audit and is ongoing. We are working with the auditors in the final weeks of the audit and will have the final report in the coming weeks.
- The BFC met on Augusts 29 and reviewed our Spring and Summer quarterly financial statements which have been forwarded to the board and council for review. We had a presentation from ATB on the health of our investments. No concerns or information to report as this is confidential.
- Social Media updates:
 - **Facebook** Reach: -46.6% (Aug 27- Sept 3) Followers: +1 follower (current: 2057)
 - **Instagram** Reach: +16.5% (Aug 27- Sept 3) Followers: +17 follower (current: 1402)
 - **Twitter/ X** Followers: +4 followers (1352)
- A number of new bylaws and policies have been passed by the Governance committee and have been presented today to the board. This went to the August council meeting for its first vote, which passed. The next meeting will be in September for the second reading and vote. Policies were passed in the August council and are now binding and in action.
- Staff and DEOs are currently busy with delivering multiple departmental orientations and our larger Fall orientation was on September 3. This event was a success with a larger than expected attendance and I would like to thank Brandy, Grace, Vanessa, Cindy and all the DEO's for making this event a success..

Management Report to the GSA Board, September 11 2024

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on **September 4 2024**.

Executive Director update:

- Grants are now open again for summer. All forms in Good Grants have been completed and we will continue training with our specialist on next steps to complete set up. We approved 30 applications so far this month. For new system updates, we have been approved for integration with CCID.
- Our annual audit with RSM Canada is ongoing; this is an annual financial report. We are working with the auditors in the final weeks of the audit and will have the final report in the coming weeks.
- Dorte Sheikh, our long-standing Finance Manager, has officially retired after 13 years of dedicated service to the GSA. We are actively seeking her replacement and have posted an ad for a part-time Finance Manager. The ideal candidate will be responsible for overseeing financial operations, payroll, and HR matters. We are hoping to find someone with the right expertise to step into this important role soon. In the meantime, we have temporary measures in place to ensure a smooth transition and continued financial oversight.
- Our team has been working hard to deliver orientations to over 50 departments across the University of Alberta, as well as our larger Fall Orientation that was on September 3rd. We are pleased to report that the orientations have all been highly successful, with positive feedback from students and larger-than-expected attendance to our event. We are close to completing the final few orientations and are excited about the great connections we've built with incoming students. I would like to thank Brandy, Grace, Vanessa, Cindy and all the DEOs for making these events a success.
- We are currently in the process of planning the onboarding for our incoming VP External. This will be a key focus in the coming weeks, as we finalize their training and scheduling to ensure they are well-prepared to take on the role.
- Social Media updates:
 - **Facebook** Reach: -46.6% (Aug 27-Sept 3); Followers: +1 follower (current: 2057)
 - **Instagram** Reach: +16.5% (Aug 27- Sept 3); Followers: +17 followers (current: 1402)
 - **Twitter/X** Followers: +4 followers (1352)
- A number of new bylaws and policies have been passed by the Governance committee and have been presented to the board and the August council meeting for its first vote, which passed. The next meeting will be in September for the second reading and vote. Policies were passed in the August council and are now binding and in action.

Management Report to the GSA Board, September 18 2024

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on **September 11 2024**.

Executive Director update:

- Grants are now open again for summer. All forms in Good Grants have been completed and we will continue training with our specialist on next steps to complete the setup. We have 60 new applications so far this month. For new system updates, we have been approved for integration with CCID.
- Our annual audit with RSM Canada is ongoing; this is an annual financial report. We are working with the auditors in the final weeks of the audit and will have the final report in the coming weeks.
- We have scheduled interviews to find a new Finance Manager and ensure continuity in managing the GSA's financial operations. These interviews will help us identify a candidate with the necessary expertise to maintain financial stability and improve budgeting processes. The goal is to have the role filled as soon as possible for a smooth transition.
- Our team has been working hard to deliver orientations to over 50 departments across the University of Alberta, as well as our larger Fall Orientation that was on September 3rd. We are pleased to report that the orientations have all been highly successful, with positive feedback from students and larger-than-expected attendance to our event. We are close to completing the final few orientations and are excited about the great connections we've built with incoming students. I would like to thank Brandy, Grace, Vanessa, Cindy and all the DEOs for making these events a success.
- We are currently in the process of planning the onboarding for our incoming VP External. This will be a key focus in the coming weeks, as we finalize their training and scheduling to ensure they are well-prepared to take on the role.
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 - **Instagram** Reach: +16.5% (Aug 27-Sept 3); Followers: +17 followers (current: 1402)
 - **Twitter/X** Followers: +4 followers (1352)
- A number of new bylaws and policies have been passed by the Governance committee and have been presented to the board and the August council meeting for its first vote, which passed. The GFC passed the Bylaw updates on September 17 and will move forward to council on September 23.