

**GSA Council Meeting AGENDA**  
Monday, April 15, 2024, at 6:00 pm  
Held in-person in Council Chambers

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

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

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

**Deputy Speaker Camila Rodriguez de Freitas in the Chair**

<b>OPEN SESSION</b>	<b>Attached Numbered Pages</b>
1. Approval of the April 15, 2024 Agenda <i>(suggested time: 1 min)</i>	
2. Approval of the Minutes from the March 18, 2024 GSA Council Meeting <i>(suggested time: 1 min)</i> <i>Attachment:</i> i. Minutes from the March 18, 2024 GSA Council Meeting	<b>2.0 - 2.4</b>
3. Changes in GSA Council Membership <i>(suggested time: 1 min)</i> i. Introduction of New GSA Council Members <i>(If you are new to GSA Council, please let us know it is your first meeting)</i> ii. Farewell to Departing GSA Council Members <i>(If this is your last GSA Council meeting, or if your last GSA Council meeting is approaching, please let us know)</i>	
<b>GSA Council Member Announcements</b>	
4. GSA Council Member Announcements <i>(suggested time: 5 min)</i>	
<b>Presentation Item:</b>	
5. <b>Canadian Alliance of Student Association (CASA)</b> <i>(suggested time: 20 min)</i> Bishoi Aziz (President) will present the item and introduce the guests (Wasiimah Joomun).	
<b>Action Item:</b>	
6. <b>2024 GSA General Election and Election of the Associate Vice-President Labour Results:</b> To Receive for Information for the Purposes of Transferring Banking Signing Authority <i>(suggested time: 5 min)</i> Sophie Shi (Chief Returning Officer) will present the item.  <i>Attachments:</i> ● Outline of Issue	<b>6.0</b>
7. <b>GSA joining Canadian Alliance of Student Association (CASA)</b> Presented by BA	

Prepared by L Moodley for GSA Council April 15 2024

/Volumes/GoogleDrive/Shared drives/GSA OFFICE/GSA Council/Meetings/2023-2024/April 2024/Second Mailing/GSA Council April 15 2024 Item 1 - Agenda (Second Mailing).docx

<p><i>Attachments:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Outline of Issue</li> </ul> <p><b>8. GSA Health and Dental Plan Changes for 2024-2025</b> Presented by BA Guest: R Patches, Program Manager, Studentcare <i>Attachments:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Outline of Issue</li> <li>● Projected premiums for 2024-2025 (For Information)</li> </ul> <p><b>9. Labour Relations Committee Policy changes</b> Presented by MR <i>Attachments:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Outline of Issue</li> <li>● LRC Policy changes</li> </ul>	<p><b>7.0</b></p> <p><b>8.0</b> Original pagination 1-20</p> <p><b>9.0</b> 9.1-9.3</p>
<p><b>Discussion Item:</b></p> <p><b>10 . GSA Board Strategic Work Plan (SWP): Update to GSA Council (suggested time: 20 min)</b> Bishoiz Aziz (President) will present the item. <i>Attachment:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● GSA Board Strategic Work Plan 2023-2024: Update to GSA Council</li> </ul>	<p>Original pagination 1-8</p>
<p><b>Elections</b></p>	
<p><b>11. GSA Council Elections (suggested time – to be determined)</b> <b>Violet Sun GSA Nominating Committee Chair) will present the item.</b></p> <p>GSA Council-Elected Officer Position</p> <p><b>12. Farhan Khalid (GSA Speaker) will present this portion of the item</b></p> <p>b. GSA Board/GSA Nominating Committee (GSAB/GSA NoC) <i>Attachment:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Nominees for the GSAB/GSA NoC (1 GSA Councilor vacancies)</li> </ul>	<p><b>12.0-12.2</b></p>
<p><b>Reports (suggested time: 15 min)</b></p>	
<p><b>13. President (Bishoi Aziz, President)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. President’s Report</li> <li>ii. GSA Board Report (<b>no written report at this time</b>)</li> <li>iii. GSA Budget and Finance Committee Report (<b>no written report at this time</b>)</li> <li>iv. GSA Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee Report (<b>no written report at this time</b>)</li> <li>v. GSA Governance Committee Report (<b>no written report at this time</b>)</li> </ul>	<p><b>13.0-13.1</b></p>
<p><b>14. Vice-President Academic (Rija Kamran, Vice-President Academic)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Vice-President Academic’s Report</li> </ul>	<p><b>14.0-14.1</b></p>
<p><b>15. Vice-President External (Hamid Hassani, Vice-President External)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Vice-President External’s Report</li> </ul>	<p><b>15.0</b></p>

<b>16. Associate Vice-President Labour (Muneeb Masood Raja, Vice-President Labour)</b> i. Associate Vice-President Labour's Report	<b>16.0-16.2</b>
<b>17. Vice-President Student Services (Haseeb Arshad, Vice-President Student Services)</b> i. Vice-President Student Services' Report.	<b>17.0-17.1</b>
<b>18. Vice-President Student Life (Tiffany Kung, Vice-President Student Life)</b> i. Vice-President Student Life's Report	<b>18.0-18.5</b>
<b>19. Senator (Ola Mabrouk)</b> i. Senator's Report <b>(no written report at this time)</b>	
<b>20. Speaker (Farhan Khalid, Speaker)</b> i. Speaker's Report <b>(no written report at this time)</b>	
<b>21. Deputy Returning Officer (Zain Patel, Deputy Returning Officer)</b> i. Deputy Returning Officer's Report	<b>21.0</b>
<b>22. GSA Nominating Committee (Violet Sun, GSA Nominating Committee Chair)</b> i. GSA Nominating Committee Report	<b>22.0-22.1</b>
<b>23. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (Andrew Pohlka, GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Chair)</b> i. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Report	<b>23.0</b>
<b>24. GSA Management (Lewie Moodley, Executive Director)</b> i. Executive Director's Report	<b>24.0-24.2</b>
<b>Question Period</b>	
Written Questions <b>(none received at this time; questions may be submitted to the GSA Speaker before 4 PM on Thursday, March 14, 2024)</b>	
<b>25. Oral Questions</b>	
<b>Adjournment</b>	

**GSA Council Meeting MINUTES**  
Monday, 18 March 2024 at 6:00 pm  
Held in-person and online [via Zoom] in Council Chamber

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Bishoi Aziz (President)	Goldy Thevaruparambil Raju (Councilor-at-Large)	Michelle Bey (Dentistry)	Pouneh Mohammadi Nejad (Math & Stat'l Sciences)	Evan Vienneau (Physics)
Rija Kamran (VP Academic)	Peineng Zhu (Ag, Food & Nutri Sci)	Lyudmyla Honcharova (Alternate- Drama)	Kineshta Pillay (Mech Eng)	Grace Essuman (Physiology)
Hamid Hassani (VP External)	Uthman Khan (Anthropology)	Shaun Woudstra (Earth & Atmo Sci)	Simon Walker (Med Microbio & Immun)	Victoria Young (Political Science)
Tiffany Kung (VP Student Life)	Andrew Pohlka (Biochemistry)	Shuai Yu (Alternate- Ed Policy Studies)	Connor Oborn (Medical Genetics)	Emilie Desnoyers (Psychiatry)
Haseeb Arshad (VP Student Services)	Mehri Ebrahiminejad Baloochi (Business PhD)	Ahmed El-Damanhoury (History, Classics, & Religion)	Andy (Media & Tech Studies)	Cheryl Pan (Psychology)
Muneeb Masood Raja (AVP Labour) via Zoom	Any Zhang (Cell Biology)	Zoe Wagner (Human Ecology)	Saeed Ataei (Neuroscience)	Nicole Lau (Renewable Resources)
Farhan Khalid (Speaker)	Hadi Afsaneh (Chem & Mat Eng)	Hannah Louis (Indigenous GSA)	Nancy Hammer (Nursing)	Margaret DeCoste (Guest)
Sophie Shi (CRO)	Kiera Greenaway (Civ & Enviro Eng)	Taylor Walsh (Lab Med & Path)	Ahmed Ahmed (Pharm & Pharm'l Sci)	
Zain Patel (Deputy Returning Officer)	Cassandra Baragar (Comm Sci & Disorder)	Taylor Zimmerman (Alternate-Library & Info Studies)	Janye Johnson (Pharmacology)	
Ola Mabrouk (Senator)	Maksym Lishchynskyi (Comp Sci)	Dalia Cristerna Roman (Linguistics)	Farid Saberi (Philosophy)	

Speaker Farhan Khalid in the Chair.

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

**Approval of Agenda**

**1. Approval of the 18 March 2024 Consolidated Agenda**

Members had before them the 18 March 2024 Consolidated Agenda, which had been previously distributed on 15 March 2024. TK MOVED; AP SECONDED.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes**

**2. Minutes from the 26 February 2024 GSA Council Meeting**

Members had before them the 26 February GSA Council meeting minutes, which had been previously distributed. TK MOVED; AP SECONDED.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

### Changes in GSA Council Membership

3. **Changes in GSA Council Membership**
  - i. **Introduction of New Councillors:** None at this time
  - ii. **Farewell to Departing GSA Council Members :** None at this time

### GSA Council Member Announcements

4. **GSA Council Member Announcements**
  - **RK:** The PhD guaranteed minimum funding project will be voted on in April by the GPS Council. Members of the GPS Council are encouraged to attend, and those not on the council can sign up to observe. Additionally, changes to Google Storage for graduate students have been postponed to January 2025. Until then, the current storage structure remains. From 2025, graduate students will have access to 30 GB storage for My Drive and Docs in Gmail, excluding shared drives.
  - **CRO:** VP Student Life re-election voting starts tomorrow at 10 AM and ends Thursday at 10 AM. Reminded the council to vote and to remind their constituents to vote as well.
  - **Speaker:** Asked councilors to stay for the closed session

### Discussion Items:

5. **DOS Updates** (suggested time:20 min)  
*Bishoi Aziz(President) will present the item and introduce the guests(Dr. Ravina Sanghera and Tim Tang)'*

TT and RS presented to the GSA Council about reimagining the Office of the DoS. They shared their backgrounds and visions for enhancing student support services, focusing on proactive and responsive community building. Key initiatives include expanding clinical and counseling services, enhancing accessibility, and integrating services for comprehensive support across the student journey. They emphasized the importance of relationships, being approachable, and actively involving graduate students in service planning and implementation. Questions from council members highlighted the need for greater graduate student representation and awareness of available services, prompting discussions on improved communication and engagement strategies.

### Action Items:

6. **Operating and Capital Budget (2024-2025), Labour Union Dues (2024-2025), and Restricted and Other Funding Budget (2024-2025) AND Operating and Capital Three-Year Budget/Business Plan (2024-2027), Labour Union Dues Three-Year Budget/Business Plan (2024-2027), and Restricted and Other Funding Three-Year Budget/Business Plan (2024-2027)**  
*BA will present the item*

**MOTION:** That GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION**, having been reviewed and advised upon by the GSA Budget and Finance Committee and recommended to GSA Council by the GSA Board, the Operating and Capital Budget (2024-2025 , 2024-2027) in the attached material in the "2024-2025 Budget for Approval" column bordered in red on each page), the Labour Union Fund Budget (2024-2027) in the attached material in the "2024-2025 Budget for Approval" column bordered in red on each page), and the Restricted and Other Funding Budget (2024--2027) in the attached material in the "2024-2025" Budget for Approval". *TK MOVER. AP SECONDER.*

The GSA operational budget saw major changes due to internal changes, saving \$80,800 for future use. The provincial lobby budget was renamed to "external advocacy," hinting at a future shift towards a no-money model and possible collaboration with CASA, awaiting council's approval. The plan is to use extra funds for a growth fund to bring in more money for GSA and lower member fees, like the SU does. GSAB managed to handle inflation without raising member fees. The labor budget didn't change but plans for two new roles are in the works. The health and dental plan might go up by 15% because of more claims, especially for mental health meds, even though the board negotiated it down from 18% to avoid asking everyone to vote on it. GSA is looking for better deals for next year and thinking about what coverage to keep to make costs lower. There were also talks about making documents easier to access and the format of council packages. A detailed discussion on how the GSA staff restructure affects us will happen later.

One (1) **ABSTAIN**. Motion **PASSED**.

7. **2023-2024 GSA Winter Term Budget and Expenditure Report**

*BA will present the item*

**MOTION:** That the GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the GSA 2023-2024 Winter Term Budget and Expenditure Report. TK **MOVER**. HA **SECONDER**.

GSA is experiencing a higher surplus than anticipated, largely due to internal staff restructuring, which has significantly reduced staffing costs. Additionally, increased interest on liquid funds—money in the bank from membership fees—has contributed to this unexpected boost in funds. This situation, while not directly beneficial to individuals, is advantageous for the GSA as it increases available financial resources.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

**Elections**

8. **GSAGSA Council Elections (suggested time – to be determined): No elections to be held**

**Reports**

9. **President**

i. **President's Report:**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 15 March 2024. The report stood as submitted. BA highlighted focusing on the onboarding of the President-Elect as a primary task, ensuring a smooth transition into their new role.

ii. **GSA Board**

No written report at this time

iii. **GSA Budget and Finance Committee**

No written report at this time

iv. **GSA Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee Report**

No written report at this time

v. **GSA Governance Committee**

No written report at this time.

10. **Vice-President Academic**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 15 March 2024. The report stood as submitted. RK highlighted an upcoming tuition increase for MBA admissions, urging any MBA representatives to connect for more details, with specific numbers to be shared once made public. Also discussed a proposal by the university to introduce three exam slots per day, leading to potential scheduling conflicts – this issue will be addressed in upcoming discussions with the Committee on Learning Environment (CLE) and the Council on Student Affairs (COSA), where graduate members have already been briefed on possible solutions. Lastly, RK reminded attendees about the upcoming vote on the proposal for minimum funding guarantee for PhD students by the GPS Council in April – encouraged council members to attend for voting and invited others interested in observing to reach out for registration.

11. **Vice-President External**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 15 March 2024. The report stood as submitted. HH highlighted a recent meeting with the Minister and discussion related to the Alberta budget for 2024, particularly focusing on advancements in education – including the allocation of \$10 million to support mental health across post-secondary institutions, a testament to effective advocacy efforts. Additionally, significant investments include \$700 million in capital grants for affordable housing and \$400 million towards modernizing Alberta's primary healthcare system. Another notable focus is on updating and enhancing the tools and instruments used at universities to improve the student experience. For more detailed

information, attendees are encouraged to review the full report and engage in further discussions for a deeper understanding of the budget's implications.

**ii. GSA Awards Selection Committee**

No written report at this time.

**12. Vice-President Student Life**

**i. Vice-President Student Life's Report**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 15 March 2024. The report stood as submitted. TK highlighted the upcoming town hall for the Vice President of Indigenous Relations position, slated for election in the 2025-2026 academic year. This event is scheduled for March 26, from 2 to 5 PM, and will be a hybrid meeting held in Triffo Hall.

**13. Vice-President Student Services**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 15 March 2024. The report stood as submitted.

**14. Associate Vice-President Labour**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 15 March 2024. The report stood as submitted.

**ii. GSA Labour Relations Committee**

No written report at this time.

**15. Senator**

**i. Senator's Report**

No written report at this time.

**16. Speaker**

**i. Speaker's Report**

No written report at this time.

**17. Chief Returning Officer**

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

SS highlighted an increase in voter turnout to 9.7%, up from 8.7% the previous year, indicating a positive trend, although still below the desired level. A re-election is currently underway, with voting open until Thursday. The Associate Vice President of Labor election had an 8.5% turnout, a decrease from last year's 10.8%. Out of four referenda, two passed: the Campus Food Bank and the Indigenous Graduate Students' initiatives, while the Gateway and the International Student Association's proposals did not. This year marked the first with multiple referenda, resulting in a 7.3% voter turnout.

**18. GSA Nominating Committee**

**■ GSA Nominating Committee Report**

**19. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee**

**■ GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Report**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 15 March 2024. The report stood as submitted.

**20. GSA Management**

**i. Executive Director's Report**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 15 March 2024. The report stood as submitted.

### **Question Period**

#### **21. Written Questions**

- No written questions were received.

#### **22. Oral Questions**

- No oral questions were received due to time.

#### **23. Closed Session (ACB Elections Decisions)**

*Presented by Laura Manerus, ACB Chair*

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 6:49 PM.

### **Closed Session**

BA MOVED. HA SECONDED. Council Members AGREED to move into CLOSED SESSION.



### Outline of Issue

#### **2024 GSA General Election and Election of the Associate Vice-President Labour Results: To Receive for Information for Purposes of Transferring Banking Signing Authority**

#### **Suggested Motion:**

That GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the results of the 2024 GSA General Election and Associate Vice-President Labour Election wherein the following graduate students were duly elected as President, Vice-President Academic, Vice-President External, Vice-President Student Life, Vice-President Student Services, and Associate Vice-President Labour:

<b>President</b>	<b>Muhammad Haseeb Arshad</b>
<b>Vice-President Academic</b>	<b>Rija Kamran</b>
<b>Vice-President External</b>	<b>Mariam Mughees</b>
<b>Vice-President Student Life</b>	<b>Benjamin Kucher</b>
<b>Vice-President Student Services</b>	<b>Saad Arslan Iqbal</b>
<b>Associate Vice-President Labour</b>	<b>Muneeb Masood Raja</b>

#### **Background:**

The 2024 GSA General Election official results and the 2024 GSA Associate Vice-President Labour Election official results were announced to all graduate students by the Chief Returning Officer on .

GSA Council is now asked to receive these results for information as the GSA's bank requires that the names of the newly Directly-Elected Officers appear in the minutes of GSA Council in order to transfer signing authority on 1 May 2024.

#### **Jurisdiction:**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Outline of Issue

### **Canadian Alliance of Student Associations Full Membership**

**ACTION:** That GSA Council **APPROVE** recommended by the GSA Board, that the University of Alberta Graduate Students Association join the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) with full membership status.

**Background:** The GSA is interested in joining CASA as ab-GPAC is no longer in operation. CASA has various federal student advocacy programs and has a focus on graduate student specific issues (such as accessing federal aid and funding opportunities, and immigration pathways for international graduate students), as well as advocacy issues that impact all students (sexual violence prevention, student employment, and mental health).

#### **Jurisdiction:**

H.POL.5.1 *GSA representatives on University committees, councils, and other bodies are expected to use their discretion to represent graduate students, or to represent the specific recommendation(s) of the GSA if so directed by GSA Council. They are obliged to present any official position or policy of the GSA Board (GSAB) or GSA Council, except as noted below in Section H.POL.5.8.a.*

D.POL.7.1.a *The Vice-President External (VPE) has overall responsibility for University engagement initiatives and external advocacy and representation with external advocacy groups at all levels of government (along with the President).*

F.POL.3.2.a *The GSAB is the senior administrative authority of the GSA as delegated to it by GSA Council.*

H.POL.5.4 *GSA representatives on University committees, councils, and other bodies are expected to uphold the wishes of their committees on all privileged or confidential information.*

H.POL.5.5 *GSA representatives on University committees, councils, and other bodies may be asked to submit a written report to the GSAB or GSA Council.*

Outline of Issue**GSA Health and Dental Plan Changes for 2024-2025****Background:**

The cost of the Plan is increasing “behind the scenes” based on usage and inflation. A small increase in the Plan fee will be necessary in the upcoming year, see **the attached document from Studentcare**. If the Plan increases by 15% (Section M.POL.10.1) and a 10% reduction in preventative dental services, the GSA will need a significantly smaller drawdown (\$37,343.36) from the GSA HDPRF. This will leave enough reserve funds to mitigate against future cost increases. This measure is to safeguard our HDPRF allowing us time to rebuild this fund back up to a healthy level.

**MOTION:** A motion that GSA Council **receives for information, on recommendation of the GSAB**, changes to the Plan coverage for 2024-2025 year and rationale behind the 15% increase to the plan fee.

**ACTION:** GSA Council **APPROVE on recommendation of the GSAB** reducing Preventative Dental per visit maximum to from 80% to 70% for the 2024-2025 year and a 15% plan fee increase.

**Jurisdiction:**

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section M: GSA Health and Dental, GSA Policy, GSA Health and Dental Plan and GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund, Section M.POL.6.1:

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

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section M: GSA Health and Dental, GSA Policy, GSA Health and Dental Plan and GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund, Section M.POL.9.1:

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

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section M: GSA Health and Dental, GSA Policy, GSA Health and Dental Plan and GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund, Section M.POL.10.1:

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

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section M: GSA Health and Dental, GSA Policy, GSA Health and Dental Plan and GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund, Section M.POL.10.2:

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



# Preliminary 2024-25 Premium Estimates & Benefit Change Options

## GSA Health & Dental Plan

# WHAT WE'LL COVER TODAY

- Year to Date Claims Analysis
- 2024/25 Plan Premium Estimate
- Benefit Change Options
- Questions

# KEY CONCEPTS



**Plan Fees:** Amount assessed to students



**Plan Premiums:** Amount paid to insurer



**Benefits:** Claimable services provided to students



**Reserve Fund:** Internal savings fund, built by H&D Fee surpluses, used by the GSA to offset years in which the Premium is higher than the Fee

# PLAN FINANCIALS TOOLKIT



## Increase Plan Fees

Increase the funds coming in to pay for the Plan.



## Benefits Reductions

This will contribute towards a lower plan premium.



Off-set additional Premium Increases by using the Internal Reserve Fund



# Year to Date Claims Analysis



# Monthly Claims

## Health

	Premiums	Claims	Loss Ratio
September	\$169,371	\$161,653	95%
October	\$169,371	\$142,385	84%
November	\$169,371	\$179,444	106%
December	\$169,371	\$141,135	83%
January	\$179,017	\$175,307	98%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$856,503</b>	<b>\$799,924</b>	<b>93%</b>

## Dental

	Premiums	Claims	Loss Ratio
September	\$137,713	\$153,156	111%
October	\$137,713	\$122,256	89%
November	\$137,713	\$155,479	113%
December	\$137,713	\$126,731	92%
January	\$145,622	\$110,079	76%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$696,472</b>	<b>\$667,700</b>	<b>96%</b>

Premiums

Claims

Loss Ratio

**GRAND TOTAL**

**\$1,552,975**

**\$1,467,624**

**95%**

# 5-Year Trend

September - January

	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	% Change
<b>Health</b>						
Claims	\$614,828	\$582,994	\$658,991	\$743,776	\$799,924	7.5%
Enrolment	5,857	5,853	6,123	6,348	6,162	-2.9%
<b>Per Capita Claims</b>	<b>\$104.97</b>	<b>\$99.60</b>	<b>\$107.63</b>	<b>\$117.16</b>	<b>\$129.81</b>	<b>10.8%</b>
% Change	12.59%	-5.11%	8.06%	8.85%	10.80%	

	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	% Change
<b>Dental</b>						
Claims	\$492,289	\$417,333	\$493,367	\$623,477	\$667,700	7.1%
Enrolment	5,835	5,812	6,074	6,315	6,129	-3.0%
<b>Per Capita Claims</b>	<b>\$84.37</b>	<b>\$71.81</b>	<b>\$81.23</b>	<b>\$98.73</b>	<b>\$108.95</b>	<b>10.4%</b>
% Change	19.26%	-14.89%	13.12%	21.54%	10.35%	

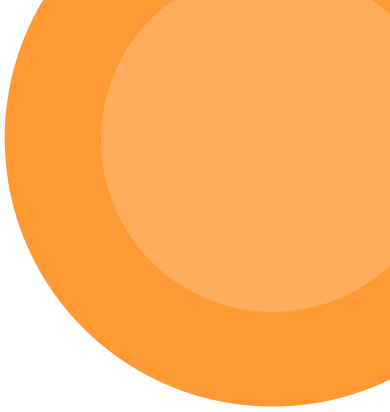
	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	% Change
<b>TOTAL</b>						
Claims	\$1,107,117	\$1,000,327	\$1,152,358	\$1,367,253	\$1,467,624	7.3%
Enrolment	5,846	5,833	6,098	6,332	6,146	-2.9%
<b>Per Capita Claims</b>	<b>\$189.38</b>	<b>\$171.51</b>	<b>\$188.97</b>	<b>\$215.93</b>	<b>\$238.81</b>	<b>10.6%</b>
% Change	15.44%	-9.44%	10.18%	14.27%	10.60%	

# Health Claims

	Total Claims		Per Capita Claims			
	2022-2023	2023-2024	2022-2023	2023-2024	Percentage change	Share of Total Change
<b>Summary</b>						
Vision Care	\$108,346.79	\$123,341.40	\$17.07	\$20.02	14.73%	23.31%
Drugs	\$405,287.84	\$415,653.61	\$63.84	\$67.45	5.35%	28.54%
Paramedical	\$185,939.33	\$192,868.74	\$29.29	\$31.30	6.42%	15.88%
Medical Supply & Miscellaneous	\$44,201.93	\$68,059.94	\$6.96	\$11.04	36.96%	32.27%
<b>Total Claims</b>	<b>\$743,775.89</b>	<b>\$799,923.69</b>	<b>\$117.16</b>	<b>\$129.81</b>	<b>9.74%</b>	<b>100%</b>

# Dental Claims

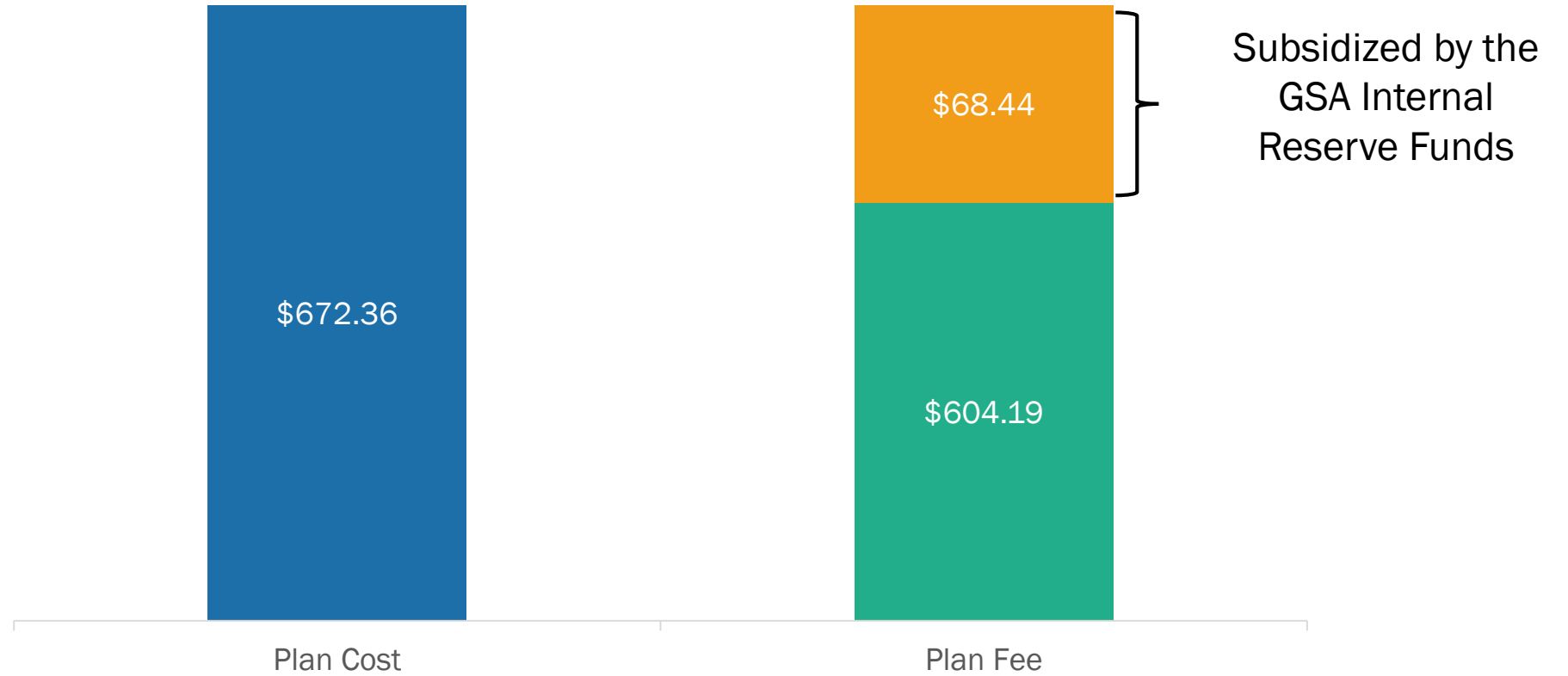
	September 1, 2022 to January 31, 2023		September 1, 2023 to January 31, 2024	
	Claims (\$)	% of claims	Claims (\$)	% of claims
<b>Preventive Services</b>	<b>\$438,706.36</b>	<b>70.36 %</b>	<b>\$477,825.77</b>	<b>71.56 %</b>
<b>Basic Services</b>	<b>\$139,023.74</b>	<b>22.30 %</b>	<b>\$139,108.23</b>	<b>20.83 %</b>
<b>Periodontics</b>	<b>\$16,585.99</b>	<b>2.66 %</b>	<b>\$20,724.84</b>	<b>3.10 %</b>
<b>Endodontics</b>	<b>\$19,627.56</b>	<b>3.15 %</b>	<b>\$20,286.21</b>	<b>3.04 %</b>
<b>Prosthesis / Major Restorative</b>	<b>\$9,533.21</b>	<b>1.53 %</b>	<b>\$9,755.16</b>	<b>1.46 %</b>
<b>Total Claims</b>	<b>\$623,476.86</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$667,700.21</b>	<b>100%</b>

A grid of light blue dots arranged in a pattern across the center of the slide, serving as a background for the main text.

# 2024/25 Plan Premium Estimate



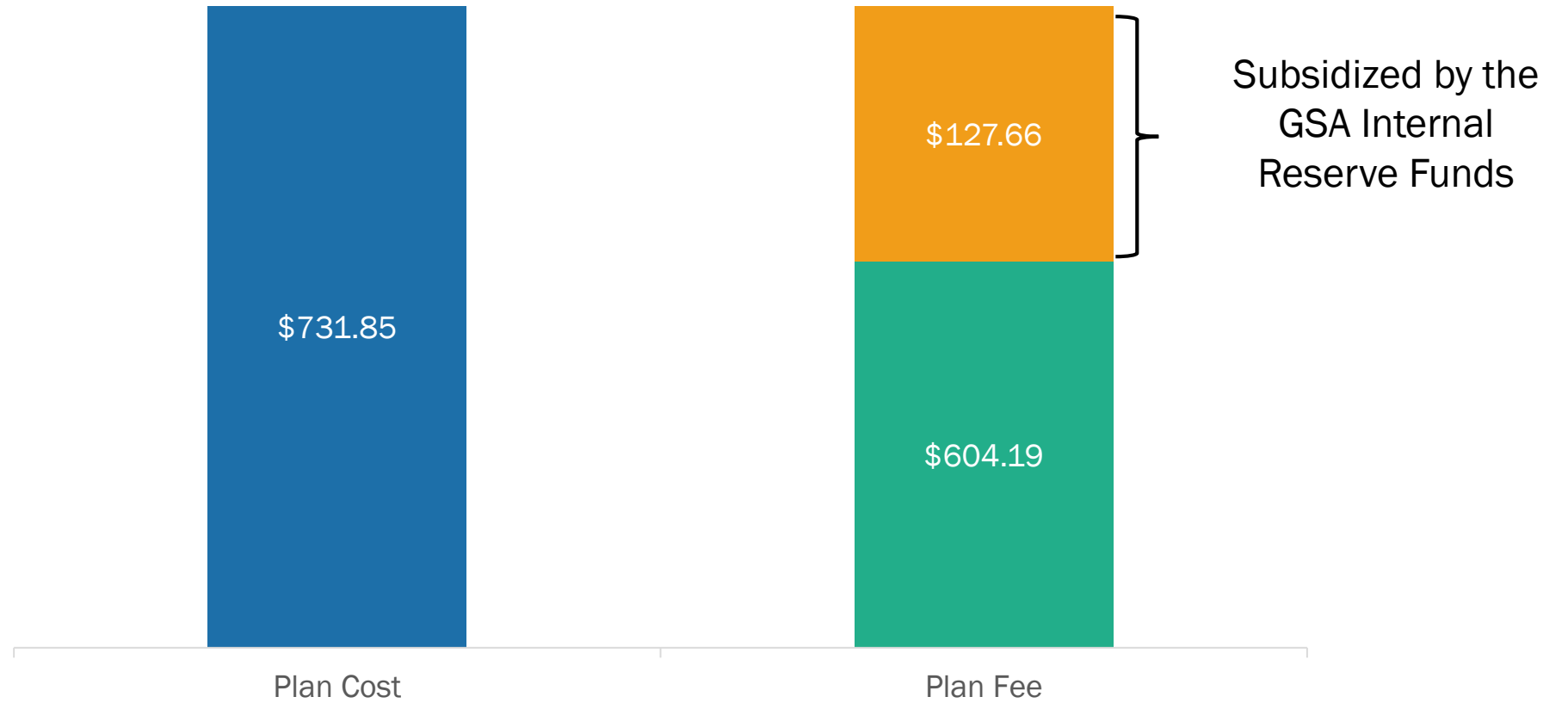
# 2023-2024 PLAN FINANCIALS



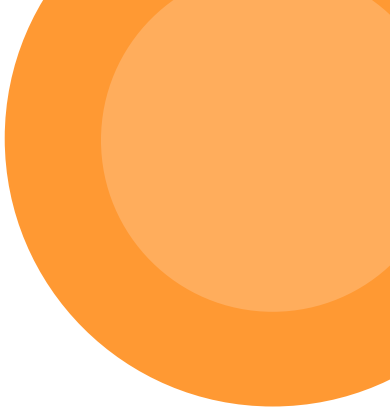
# 2024/25 Projected Plan Premium

	2023/24	2024/25	% Change
Health Premium	\$374.28	\$408.43	9%
Dental Premium	\$298.08	\$323.42	9%
Total Premium	\$672.36	\$731.85	9%

# 2024-2025 PLAN FINANCIALS - NO FEE CHANGE



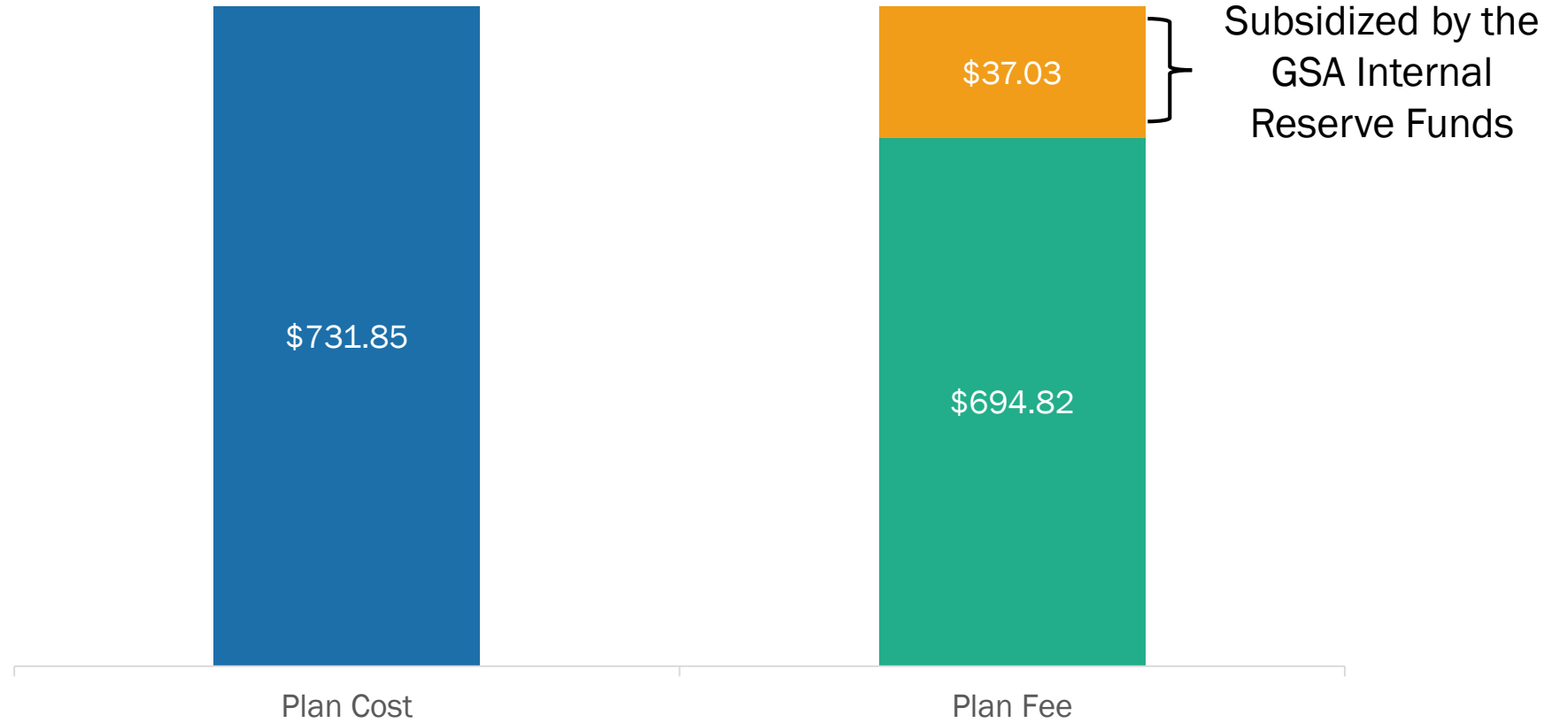




# Plan Fee Impact

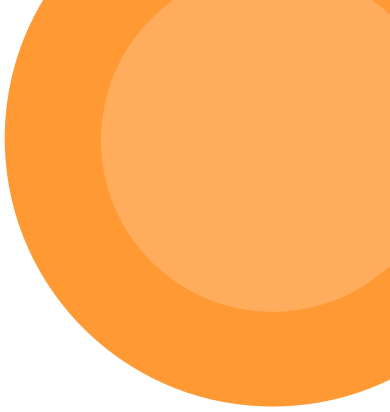


# 2024-2025 PLAN FINANCIALS - NO FEE CHANGE



# 2024/25 Projected Reserve Fund Impact

2024/25 Plan Premium	\$ 731.85
2024/25 Proposed Plan Fee (15% increase)	\$ 694.82
Required from Reserve/Member	\$ (37.03)
Total Required from Reserve	\$(233,585.24)

A grid of light blue dots arranged in a pattern across the center of the slide, serving as a background for the title.

# Benefit Change Options



# Savings Opportunity: Benefit Changes

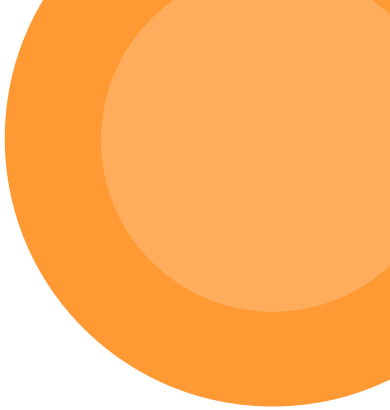
	Current Coverage	New Coverage	Premium Savings	New Premium	Amount Required from Reserve	Savings to Reserve Fund
<b>Benefit Reduction</b>						
<b>Reduce Prescription Drug Per-Visit Maximum</b>	80%	70%	\$35.43	\$696.42	\$(10,092.80)	\$223,492.44
<b>Reduce Rx Drug Annual Maximum</b>	\$10,000	\$6,000	\$30.52	\$701.33	\$(41,065.08)	\$192,520.16
<b>Reduce Eyeglasses &amp; Contact Lenses Maximum</b>	\$200	\$150	\$8.73	\$723.12	\$(178,516.40)	\$55,068.84
<b>Reduce Preventative Dental Per-Visit Maximum</b>	80%	70%	\$31.11	\$700.74	\$(37,343.36)	\$196,241.88

# Recommendation

- Increase the Plan Fee by 15%
- Reduce Preventative Dental per visit maximum to from 80% to 70%
  - With the network discount of 30%, this change will have no impacts to students if they use the network



**STUDENTCARE**



## Outline of Issue

### **Labour Relations Committee Policy changes**

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

**ACTION:** That GSA Council **APPROVE** recommended by the GSA Board, the policy amendments put forth for the Labour Relations Committee policy.

#### **Background:**

As the union grows, along with a desire to make positive impacts and create more engagement for the members, it is necessary to build upon the support system that currently exists. To that end, the AVP Labour has proposed the attached changes to the LRC Policy. These changes were unanimously approved by LRC at the last meeting on March 21, 2024.

Two positions will be created and elected from the LRC membership each year. The positions are Outreach Coordinator whose primary responsibilities will be to organize events and generate awareness for the members, and Chief Steward whose primary responsibilities will be to oversee the steward network and grow the number of stewards in each area. Both positions will report to, and collaborate with, the AVP Labour and LRC. They will be non-voting members of LRC for the duration of their appointment. Each will be required to commit approximately 5 hours/week and will receive an annual stipend from the Labour budget.

The AVP Labour has highlighted the fact that it is challenging for them alone to manage growing the union, ongoing outreach to members, and overseeing faculty stewards while balancing the other tasks associated with their role. These positions will be beneficial to help support the AVP Labour but also to generate more engagement between the union and its members.

#### **Jurisdiction:**

##### ***Amendments to GSA Policy***

As per GSA Bylaw, 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. 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.

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.

F.POL.3.2.a *The GSAB is the senior administrative authority of the GSA as delegated to it by GSA Council.*



**NOTE:** All amendments to the policy appear in red.

**GSA Policy: GSA Standing Committees, GSA Labour Relations Committee**

**Q.POL.9 GSA Labour Relations Committee**

Q.POL.9.1 Composition

Q.POL.9.1.a The Associate Vice-President Labour (AVPL), as Chair.

Q.POL.9.1.b A minimum of seven (7) and up to nine (9) voting members who are academically employed graduate students at the time of their election. To ensure a diversity of viewpoints, no more than one (1) member will be from a given department. Members of the GSA Labour Relations Committee (GSA LRC) will be elected by a simple majority of academically-employed graduate students who voted.

Q.POL.9.1.c Faculty stewards not already serving as non-voting members.

Q.POL.9.1.d One (1) member will be elected by the GSA LRC to serve as Vice-Chair for the duration of their term on the GSA LRC or until they resign from their position.

Q.POL.9.1.e One (1) member will be elected annually by the GSA LRC to serve as Chief Steward for a one year term beginning May 1.

Q.POL.9.1.f One (1) member will be elected annually by the GSA LRC to serve as Outreach Coordinator for a one year term beginning May 1.

Q.POL.9.2 Mandate

Q.POL.9.2.a Advise the AVPL with respect to educating academically-employed graduate students on the Collective Agreement (CA).

Q.POL.9.2.b Appoint and provide training to faculty stewards.

Q.POL.9.2.c Review the CA based on feedback received from academically-employed graduate students and develop a proposed bargaining mandate.

Q.POL.9.2.d As a precursor to the commencement of collective bargaining, and upon the recommendation of the AVPL, select members of the GSA Negotiating Team.

Q.POL.9.2.e Make recommendations to GSA Council with respect to GSA Bylaw and Policy on collective bargaining, following consultation with academically-employed graduate students. Q.POL.9.2.f In the event of a prolonged absence on the part of the AVPL (eg, related to illness, leave, etc), the AVPL, where possible, will consult with the GSA LRC and the GSA LRC will designate one of its members to provide coverage for the AVPL in their absence. The GSA LRC will also determine whether an honorarium should be awarded for the provision of this coverage.

Q.POL.9.3 Meetings

Q.POL.9.3.a Quorum is five (5) voting members including either the Chair or Vice-Chair. Q.POL.9.3.b The GSA LRC will meet at least twice a year and will report electronically on these meetings to academically-employed graduate students, and to GSA Council for information.

Q.POL.10 Chief Steward

Q.POL.10.1 Appointment and Training

Q.POL.10.1.a The GSA Labour Relations Committee (LRC) will appoint the Chief Steward after reviewing the applications received from current faculty stewards during the nomination period set by the AVPL and GSA LRC.

Q.POL.10.1.b The Chief Steward must be a current faculty steward, and an academically-employed graduate student at the time of appointment.

Q.POL.10.1.c The Chief Steward will receive training from the GSA LRC.

Q.POL.10.1.d Concerns or complaints regarding the conduct of Chief Steward will be addressed to the Associate Vice-President Labour (AVPL), who will consult with the GSA LRC concerning resolution. The GSA LRC, by a majority vote, may remove the Chief Steward.

### Q.POL.10.2 Duties

Q.POL.10.2.a Arrange regular meetings of the steward network at least once every two months.

Q.POL.10.2.b Collaborates with members of the executive committee of graduate student groups to maintain the steward network.

Q.POL.10.2.c Establishes and maintains a Steward's Network communication system.

Q.POL.10.2.d Ensures the proper application of the current Collective Agreement by both the employer and the union.

Q.POL.10.2.e Take and provide appropriate labour training.

Q.POL.10.2.f Assists the AVPL as appropriate.

Q.POL.10.2.g Reports on their activities to the LRC and at General Membership meetings.

Q.POL.10.2.h Hands over to their successor, at the end of their mandate, all union property in their custody.

Q.POL.10.2.i Other duties as assigned by the AVPL and GSA LRC.

Q.POL.10.3 The Chief Steward serves on the GSA LRC as a non-voting member.

### Q.POL.11 Outreach Coordinator

#### Q.POL.11.1 Appointment and Training

Q.POL.11.1.a The GSA Labour Relations Committee (LRC) will appoint the Outreach Coordinator after reviewing the applications received from current LRC members during the nomination period set by the AVPL and GSA LRC.

Q.POL.11.1.b The Outreach Coordinator must be a current LRC member, and academically-employed graduate student at the time of appointment.

Q.POL.11.1.c The Outreach Coordinator will receive training from the GSA LRC.

Q.POL.11.1.d Concerns or complaints regarding the conduct of the Outreach Coordinator will be addressed to the Associate Vice-President Labour (AVPL), who will consult with the GSA LRC concerning resolution. The GSA LRC, by a majority vote, may remove the Outreach Coordinator.

#### Q.POL.11.2 Duties

Q.POL.11.2.a Increase the union's presence to its members in consultation with the AVP Labour.

Q.POL.11.2.b Liaise with departments and other groups to host info and outreach sessions.

Q.POL.11.2.c Organize town halls and annual and special general meetings.

Q.POL.11.2.d Coordinate orientation and training events for departments and student groups.

Q.POL.11.2.e Identify and implement events and workshops for the benefit of academically-employed graduate students.

Q.POL.11.2.f Collaborate with the AVPL and other unions on awareness campaigns.

Q.POL.11.2.g Take appropriate labour training.

Q.POL.11.2.h Assists the AVPL as appropriate.

Q.POL.11.2.i Reports on their activities to the LRC and at General Membership meetings.

Q.POL.11.2.j Hands over to their successor, at the end of their mandate, all union property in their custody.

Q.POL.11.2.k Other duties as assigned by the AVPL and GSA LRC..

Q.POL.11.3 The Outreach Coordinator serves on the GSA LRC as a non-voting member. The Outreach Coordinator position does not provide additional voting privileges nor does it revoke established voting privileges already held by occupying another position on LRC.



# Graduate Students' Association

University of Alberta

## 2023-2024 GSA Board Strategic Work Plan April 2024 Update to GSA Council

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

This year's consultation initiatives were carried out in Summer 2023 and yielded a significant amount of feedback, which helped shape the 2023–2024 SWP. The final document was then approved by the GSA Board and received by the GSA Council for information at their July meeting. It can be viewed [on the GSA website](#).

A selection of ongoing work and new initiatives pursued and undertaken by the 2023-2024 student executive team (President Bishoi Aziz, VP Academic Rija Kamran, VP External Hamid Hassani, AVP Labour Muneeb Masood Raja, VP Student Services Haseeb Arshad, and VP Student Life Tiffany Kung) in accordance with the 2023-2024 SWP can be found below.



## Highlights of the 2023-2024 term:

- **PhD Minimum Funding Package:** This year, we were able to move from the discussion stage to having a draft proposal in writing from the FGPS. We secured a starting point guarantee and inclusion in the consultation process. The MGF proposal will be up for approval at the April 2024 FGPS Council.
- **Creating a new Vice President position:** During our term, we have been able to create a new role to begin in the 2025–2026 term, the Vice President of Indigenous Relations. This role is part of our mandate in advancing truth and reconciliation. The idea behind creating this role is to have someone representing Indigenous graduate students both internally and externally. Consultation for this work has been co-led by the Indigenous Graduate Students' Association and has encompassed university members like the Vice Provost, Indigenous Programming and Research, and student groups like the Indigenous Students' Union and the Indigenous Law Students' Association.
- **Establishment of the Growth Fund:** A fund has been created to help diversify the economic needs of the GSA through alternate revenue streams. The aim behind this fund is to support potential future investment projects to better prepare the GSA from a financial standpoint without relying solely on graduate student membership fees and university grants.
- **The GSA office restructure** resulted in a savings of \$80,000, which will allow us to build up our Growth fund and fund the creation of the new Vice President of Indigenous Relations.
- **VP Student Services** has held multiple meetings with DOS and other university departments to begin building the framework for our new Peer Support Program. He has also been meeting with the university administration about securing funding to run this program.



# Graduate Students' Association

## University of Alberta

### Financial

- The President and VP Academic have strongly advocated for at least a \$1.7 million increase for the international student bursary, slated to start in the 2025–2026 years.
- The President worked diligently on restructuring the GSA office in an innovative way using automation and AI. The new structure will ensure a better cost-effective operations process with a lower administrative burden and a higher strategic, creative, and data analysis focus to ensure higher efficiency and bring more value for the membership dollars. We have seen close to \$80,000 in savings from the HR line that will be placed in the Growth Fund to help the GSA explore alternative revenue generating streams, coupled with a rise in research, engagement, media campaigning, and more.
- The President, VP Student Services, and the GSA ED have worked to reduce the increased amount for the Health and Dental premium increase. We had originally anticipated a substantial increase in Health and Dental fees, however, this is no longer the case. We have been able to save students hundreds of dollars in the 2024–2025 year. This was done through tough negotiations and conversations based on the financial needs of graduate students.

### Connect

#### Professional Development:

- The VP External and VP Student Life have been working on advocating for co-op work opportunities via external organizations and advocating for internal funding in terms of grants to create more opportunities. The VP External has worked on building relationships with MITACS, AIESEC, and WIL, which are programs we have advocated for with FGPS and DOS.

#### Better communication:

- The VP Student Life has held monthly communications meetings with the staff around communications and engagement. There has been a restructure at the GSA office, which has led to a new staff member handling communications and outreach. We have seen our survey response rate grow from under 200 responses to over 830 responses in less than 12 months. We have changed our communication format on our social media pages, which has led to an increase in followers and posts being shared. We have increased our special bulletin posts and made modifications to our newsletter based on feedback from students. We plan to continue with a communications overhaul and a rebranding exercise in the summer of 2024.
- VPs have been visible at several departmental orientations, tabling events, GSA events, and other campus events to either showcase the GSA's strengths or stand in solidarity with other organizations during wearisome times.
- The AVP Labour has been holding almost monthly tabling events, LRC meetings, training sessions, and breakfast meetings to create awareness, improve union presence, and meet with members. The AVP Labour has nurtured a strong avenue of open communication for all graduate students.

780-492-2175

[www.ualberta.ca/graduate-students-association](http://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-students-association)

1-49 Triffo Hall, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, T6G 2E1



# Graduate Students' Association

## University of Alberta

- We hosted four town halls over the last few months to gain feedback and open the lines of communication with students, along with four surveys. We have shown an upsurge in communication and student feedback over the last 12 months.
- The GSA held two town halls and a PhD minimum funding package town hall to garner feedback from graduate students to better advocate for affordable education. The GSA has been vocal on the FGPS Council about tuition increases and voiced its opposition across multiple forums.
- The GSA ran the “Moderate Standard of Living Survey,” which saw over 630 responses. This data was taken to multiple media outlets and key university councils and committees. The President attended interviews with Global News, CBC, and Ched 630 FM. We have been using this data to advocate for graduate students in all possible avenues. This data was discussed at the CAGS conference with our peers, who are hoping to replicate this study at other GSAs across Canada. Furthermore, The Campus Food Bank utilized our findings to apply for two major grants (approx. \$35,000 in total) with Edmonton Food Bank.

### **Decreasing University Bureaucracy:**

- Each VP has taken this on as a pressing task when meeting with university administration. Each portfolio has access to various university stakeholders, which has led to greater transparency for students. The VP Academic has been active on over 12 university committees during her tenure. The VP Academic has been instrumental in advocating for the PhD Minimum Funding Package and getting actual figures to graduate students. The VP Academic has been fundamental in the advancement of the PhD minimum funding package and will be part of the implementation process. We anticipate approval of this funding package by April 2024.
- The VP Academic, President, VP Student Services, and VP External have been the voices of graduate students on several selection committees for university administration, such as the Vice Provost, Dean of Students, and Associate Vice President Student Experience.
- We have had an increase in candidates running for the 2024–2025 GSA elections, which we can attribute to the ongoing accessible approach of the current VPs. We have been advocating for graduate students and creating awareness about the work we do. This has inspired more people to run for office and attend GSA held events. We have seen a record number of students attending events and filling out surveys during our term.
- The restructuring of ab-GPAC has been a major undertaking, this is a key step in reducing the bureaucracy of external advocacy. The President and VP External have worked tirelessly to resolve this issue and find alternatives, such as CASA.
- We will be launching a new grant software platform in May 2024, which will help reduce the bureaucracy students face when applying for grants. We have started our project on a new GSA website and moved away from the university hosting platform.

780-492-2175

[www.ualberta.ca/graduate-students-association](http://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-students-association)

1-49 Triffo Hall, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, T6G 2E1





# Graduate Students' Association

## University of Alberta

### **Understanding AI Tools:**

- The VP Student Services has applied a machine learning analysis tool to interpret raw data collected from surveys. Given the large amounts of responses received, we have employed the use of AI tools to give us the most accurate results. The VP Student Services has employed these tools to help identify trends and outliers and draw valuable conclusions. This has enabled the GSA to better advocate for graduate students as we can better showcase our data and the implications. The VP Student Services will collaborate with the university on future projects, as our data analysis methods have received a great deal of praise. Deputy Provost Melissa Padfield has tasked Dr. Tracy Raivio with a project to better define course-based programs. They will use our machine learning analysis style to better identify the needs of graduate students in course-based programs.
- We have implemented an AI note-taking tool for our office meetings and a new grant software that will ensure better approval times on grants. We are committed to modernizing our operations with technology that best serves graduate students. This software will provide improved financial reporting and track our budgets in real-time.

### **Support:**

- The GSA has shown a stronger commitment this year to strengthening Indigenization and reconciliation efforts. This year, the President and VP Student Life have worked closely with the IGSA and the Vice-Provost (Indigenous Programming and Research) in the formation of the new VP position. This is a ground-breaking initiative at the GSA, and we will have the new VP of Indigenous Relations for the 2025–2026 term. This role aims to better serve Indigenous graduate students, both internally and externally. This role will see Indigenous representation across more committees and councils. Furthermore, we will also be able to support the IGSA's financial auditing and accounting processes as part of their referendums. We will be able to do this with savings from our office restructuring.

### **Fostering Relationships and Communities & Equity, Diversity and Inclusion:**

- The VP Student Life has been active in their labours to foster better relationships with equity deserving groups such as the IGSA, and BGSA, to name a few. The VP Student Life has worked closely on the Strategic Action Plan Committee and SEAP, where they have highlighted the graduate student experience. Having a graduate student voice on these committees has been critical to shaping action plans that affect us.
- The VP Academic and VP Student Life have been actively involved in fostering relationships with the ISA and bringing forth their concerns. The VP External has worked closely with ab-GPAC and ESA on building better relationships for graduate students in Edmonton and at a provincial level.
- The VP Student Life has been active on the EDI committee and the newly established EDI reading group. This has helped equity seeking individuals come together and work on ideas to improve campus EDI initiatives.

780-492-2175

[www.ualberta.ca/graduate-students-association](http://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-students-association)

1-49 Triffo Hall, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, T6G 2E1





# Graduate Students' Association

University of Alberta

- The VP Student Services has been advocating for a Peer Support Program to provide Mental Health support to graduate students. The aim of this is to have a diverse range of support workers to aid graduate students from all backgrounds and orientations.
- The VP Student Life is on the Student Housing Stability Working Group which looks at how to reduce instances of student homelessness. Furthermore, they have worked hard to ensure the creation of graduate students in residence associations following bylaw and policy changes in 2025.

## Advocate:

- Affordable and accessible education and increasing internship opportunities.
- VP Student Services has played a crucial role in supporting the campus food bank and advocating for a referendum to help sustain its operations. He has advocated for halal and ethnic food options and brought greater awareness to the suffering of international students in terms of food insecurity.
- VP Student Services advocated on behalf of the CFB for finalizing the Rutherford Pantry lease agreement with the university as well as for the availability of external garden space for fresh produce with the Dean of Students, which the CFB will be using in the next spring/summer season.
- VP Student Services is on the Student Who Parent Working Group where he advocated for a better student who parent academic policy that led to the creation of a graduate student research internship position. The intern is responsible for collecting information across Canada about students who parent on campus policy as well as running a campus-wide survey to gather students' perspectives. He also advocated for more family-friendly spaces on campus, which led to the creation of the Rutherford Family Room on the 3rd floor of the Rutherford Library.
- Apart from the PhD Minimum Funding Package, we have been advocating for graduate students in other areas as well. Our VP External has met with the Minister of Education, Rajan Sawhney, on multiple occasions in Calgary and Edmonton to advocate for both domestic and international students. The President and VP External have been involved in the restructuring of ab-GPAC and are seeking to join a new lobbying body, which is CASA. CASA can better serve our advocacy needs on a federal and provincial level.
- The VP External has been active with ESA, discussing affordable housing options in the city and advocating for our students. The VP Student Life has been active on the campus residency committee and has been a voice for them in university administration.
- The VP External participated in writing a grant proposal to increase funding for co-op work opportunities through the AIESEC Program. We have applied for two grants to help reduce the burden of costs associated with application fees for co-op's. The VP External has liaised with the MITACS organization to bring forth internship opportunities for graduate students. The VP Student Services has attended several meetings at the university to bring to attention the lack of graduate co-op opportunities.
- VP Student Services advocated an increase in bus route frequency to the university with the city to help students access more affordable travel to campus.

780-492-2175

[www.ualberta.ca/graduate-students-association](http://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-students-association)

1-49 Triffo Hall, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, T6G 2E1



# Graduate Students' Association

University of Alberta

- VP Student Services has asked for more multi-faith prayer spaces on campus and will continue to work with the Dean of Students and Facilities & Operations to install bidets and bidet sprayers under the gender-neutral washroom initiative of the university.

## Safety on campus:

- The President has held regular meetings with Andrew Sharman, Vice President/Facilities & Ops, Vice-President Facilities & Operations. These meetings have focused on campus security and transit-related issues on campus. The VP Student Life has been a strong advocate for restorative justice on campus, and the VP External has advocated for transit safety in the ESA council.
- VP Student Services has asked for better pedway access through one-card-based access, especially for research graduate students who tend to stay late on campus.

## Labour:

- The AVP Labour has been hard at work during his term; he has been involved in numerous outreach programs, surveys, training, and meetings. The AVP Labour has held frequent tabling events and morning breakfast events on campus during his term. The AVP Labour has formed a solid working relationship with the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) in the Labour Relations area. This relationship and knowledge have served our graduate students well.
- The AVP Labour has created two roles, the Outreach Coordinator and the Chief Steward, which in turn will better serve our students in bargaining and relations. The AVP Labour is currently preparing for bargaining. He has run frequent newsletters and surveys to spread awareness and gather feedback from academically employed graduate students. The AVP Labour has spent a great deal of time meeting with graduate students to understand their needs to better represent them.
- The AVP Labour has been advocating for classifying GRAF's as employment contracts, aiming to provide thesis-based graduate students with better funding and improved worker benefits and protection.

## Events:

- The GSA held a Fall social, Fall and Winter orientation, multiple coffee breaks, and other events to connect graduate students. We have had an increase in student participation over the past few months. Awards Night is one of the major events that was held on March 15 and was another successful event. We have partnered with the Days of Action & ASSET teams to have a collaborative Hello Day event. We worked with Unitea and ASSET again for another collaborative event on March 28 to celebrate International Day of Happiness. The usual graduate attendance at our coffee breaks has seen a major increase over the last few months, and we plan to hold rotating coffee breaks around the North Campus in the coming weeks. We have held themed events such as our Halloween, holiday, and Valentine's Day coffee breaks. We have also joined and participated in multiple events held by other organizations, such as welcome orientations, SEAP, and other student group events. The GSA has been focused on increasing the quality of events, and we have

780-492-2175

[www.ualberta.ca/graduate-students-association](http://www.ualberta.ca/graduate-students-association)

1-49 Triffo Hall, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, T6G 2E1



# Graduate Students' Association

University of Alberta

had a strong commitment to relaxation and fun. We are also trying new food vendors and making our events memorable.

- The GSA President has taken the lead in establishing a graduate student volunteer group to help run fun events on campus. We have a group of people already signed up and ready to start hosting events.

## Future:

- We plan to run council boot camps to provide more training for new councilors around how the council and GSA work and to ensure the councilors become more effective governors.
- Our goal is to have a 5-year Strategic work plan with a 3-year implementation goal. This can allow the subsequent boards to continue with a roadmap and provide stability for the GSA's initiatives.
- We plan to continue our advocacy at the federal level, with a stronger emphasis on Tri-Council funding increases and supporting immigration streams for students.
- To further strengthen our skills in using AI Tools to advance our association and data analysis,.
- The board recommends building a research plan for both the relevant terms and suggestions for future boards through collaboration between the GSA board and GSA management and staff. The preservation of ongoing research is important, as we depend on data-driven advocacy to ensure scientifically proven decision-making. Furthermore, this allows us to leverage the data for media statements and wider educational pieces on our struggles and wins.
- The 2023–2024 board has put together a recommendation for research topics that incoming boards may carry out to maintain the continuity of research projects. We recommend running surveys on supervisor relationships, course-based student difficulties, textbook usage, library resources, health and dental, surveying SEAP, residences, GSA services, UPass, and transportation. Research survey questions should ensure having equity language.
- We have learned the importance of the media and the role it plays in furthering our causes. We plan to release more media statements and embark on more training to better utilize the media outlets.
- We plan to restructure the union to enhance its effectiveness, along with establishing a long-term plan for sustainable growth.
- We have scheduled to begin this summer an update of our By-laws and Policies at the GSA, this will be ongoing work however we will begin with areas that require immediate changes.
- We continue to remain an integral part of SEAP, we have created a detailed document that will be handed over to the new board around our ongoing SEAP initiatives.

GSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE (GSA NoC)  
**GSA COUNCILLOR-AT-LARGE (GSA CAL) (ONE (1) POSITION FOR A GSA MEMBER): ONE (1) NOMINEE**

Information regarding the position for one (1) Councillor-at-Large position was circulated via the GSA newsletter on 28 March and 5 April 2024 with a nomination deadline of 10 April 2024. One (1) nomination was received.

GSA Council is the highest governing body of the GSA and is composed of the GSA President and Vice-Presidents, other elected officials of the GSA, one representative for each unit with a graduate program, and ten (10) GSA Councillors-at-Large. As noted in GSA Bylaw and Policy, "the mandate of the GSA Council is to fulfill all responsibilities listed in Section 95 of the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*" (Section C: GSA Council, GSA Bylaw, GSA Council, Section C.BYL.1.1).

**There will be a paper ballot vote held at the 15 April 2024 GSA Council meeting.**

*If you and your alternate are unable to attend the Monday 15 April meeting of GSA Council and would like to cast an electronic vote for this position, you must contact the GSA Elections Coordinator ([gsanomco@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsanomco@ualberta.ca)) BEFORE 3:00 PM on Monday 15 April 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. Ibrahim Khodabocus (Pediatrics)**

**Jurisdiction:**

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section I: Elections, GSA Policy, Elections, Section I.POL.15.3

*"In the event that any CAL positions are not filled by the end of the GSA General Election, or a CAL position is vacated, GSA Council will be responsible for electing any remaining CALs prior to 1 December (or the next working day). When electing any remaining CALs, GSA Council will aim to elect GSA members from as broad a range of disciplines as possible. The GSA NoC will decide on procedures and then provide one (1) or more names to GSA Council for consideration, except that the GSA NoC may not waive advertising. Note that the legislated GSA NoC process specifies that all vacancies will be advertised at least twice in advance of the nomination deadline noted in the advertisement."*

The name and biography received for the one (1) nominee is **BELOW on pages 12.1-12.2**. The biographies and resumes are presented as **received** (ie not edited).

**NOMINATIONS FOR THE GSA COUNCILLOR-AT-LARGE (CAL)  
(ONE (1) VACANCY FOR A GSA MEMBER)  
One (1) Nominee**

**1. Ibrahim Khodabocus**

<p><b>Other governance bodies you currently serve on (whether GSA or UAlberta)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• President, BIPOC and Allies Students' Association</li> <li>• Vice President of Mentorship, PedsGSA</li> <li>• Graduate Studies Advisory Committee (GSAC) Member, Department of Pediatrics</li> <li>• Nominating Committee (NoC) Member, GSA</li> <li>• Elections and Referenda Committee (ERC) Member, GSA</li> <li>• Trainee Advisory Committee (TAC) Member (Mentorship Subcommittee), Women and Children's Health Research Institute (WCHRI)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Statement of Interest</b></p>	
<p>I would like to serve on the GSA a Councillor-at-Large to ensure that the interests of all graduate students are accurately represented by the GSA; of particular concern are the interests of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour) students at the University of Alberta. I hope work with the body to ensure that the concerns of BIPOC persons are equitably represented and are thoroughly acknowledged within several Governance bodies within and beyond the boundaries of the GSA, and thus, I believe that my work as a GSA Councillor-at-Large will largely complement the other work that I currently partake in – please see below for more details.</p>	
<p><b>Bio</b></p>	
<p>During my research career, I have been consistently involved with student-impacted collectives. I am currently the President of the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour) and the Vice President (VP) of Mentorship of the PedsGSA (Pediatrics Graduate Student Association) at the University of Alberta (UofA). The goal of the BIPOC and Allies Students' Association is to promote the recruitment, admission, and retention of BIPOC students at the UofA. The PedsGSA exists for the purpose of supporting the personal, scholarly, and professional development of pediatrics graduate students at the UofA. I am responsible for public outreach and event broadcasting on behalf of the BIPOC-led student organization and maintaining collaboration and communication between the BIPOC initiatives. I am responsible for facilitating mentor-mentee relationships between junior graduate students and more senior pediatric researchers at the UofA. I also serve as a Graduate Studies Advisory Committee (GSAC) Member in the Department of Pediatrics, as well as a Graduate Students' Association Nominating (GSA NoC) Committee Member, and a Graduate Students' Association Elections and Referenda (GSA ERC) Committee Member. I also serve on the Women and Children's Health Research Institute Trainee Advisory Committee (WCHRI TAC), where my responsibilities largely complement the work that I do for the PedsGSA, as I serve as part of the Mentorship Subcommittee as a voting member. Importantly, I am very passionate about advocating for racial equity and justice through my roles throughout the academy. As a MSc student at the UofA, I was a part of the Biology Graduate Students' Association (BGSA) throughout my program, serving as a VP and the President of the BGSA from September 2021 - April 2022 and April 2022 – December 2022, respectively. The BGSA is the student-run collective, interested in representing the academic, political, and social interests of graduate students in the Department of Biological Sciences. As a VP, I assisted in the arrangement of events, specifically: the Ethics and Professional Development seminar series. The goal of this event was to inform graduate students of the Ethics and Professional Development requirement set by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research to ensure the</p>	

timely completion of these courses prior to convocation/defense. As President, I directed and led meetings pertaining to the issues and interests of graduate students in the Department of Biological Sciences. I was the main point of contact between the BGSA and the Departmental Chair, facilitating collaboration between the BGSA and the department at large. Beyond my leadership responsibilities, I also served as a Graduate Student Representative in the department of Biological Sciences from April 2021 - December 2022. Here, I was a Biological Sciences Departmental Council voting member. I spoke on issues pertaining to the Biological Sciences graduate student body and provided meeting summaries to other Graduate Student Leaders (BGSA executives and R.E Peter Student organizers) on Departmental Council matters. Further, I volunteered as a Judge for the R.E. Peter Biology Conference (R.E. Peter) 2022. R.E. Peter is a student-run conference designed to showcase the diverse research conducted by Biological Sciences students at the University of Alberta and institutions across the province. I judged live presentations at the graduate and undergraduate levels. I also worked as a graduate Journal Reviewer for the Eureka Journal from January 2021 – January 2023. Eureka is a student-founded and student-run journal, offering student-scientists the unique opportunity to share their discoveries with the scientific community through a double-blind peer review process.

**President**  
**Report to GSA Council for the 15<sup>th</sup> April 2024 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
 From: Bishoi Aziz  
 Date: 12<sup>th</sup> April

Dear Council Colleagues,

I cannot imagine that two years have passed since I first joined the GSA board as an elected member. Serving graduate students over that period has been an honor for me. I hereby give my final report to our respected council.

**Onboarding the new GSA President and the new GSA DEOs**

- My main objective over the last month was to onboard the President elect, Haseeb Arshad, for a smooth transition of operations. That ranged from him shadowing me to the different committees and councils, to introducing him to the main leaders on campus, to one-on-one meetings to explain the responsibilities and duties of the President role. I am pretty confident that, with your support and guidance, the incoming President and his team will transform the GSA work and activities.
- At the end of the month, we planned a transitioning retreat between the outgoing and the incoming DEOs for an opportunity for focused training. This is the first time to have such a retreat in-place. Its objective is to make the new executives better equipped to start their roles effectively from day 1.

**New tuition proposal**

- As you might know, the tuition proposal came to the BoG in March. A large number of students attended the BoG open session to protest the tuition increases. Representatives of student bodies, academic and non-academic staff spoke against the tuition increase and how it continues to harm education in the university, with the acknowledgement of the financial precarity the university is facing. However, it has passed unfortunately as expected.

**Starting the fun activity volunteer team**

- We are having the first activity of the fun activity team. The last week of April, we are having a movie night, and 30 students have RSVPed so far. We hope to expand this team in the future to leverage the recreational resources available on-campus to foster a supportive and healthy environment for the graduate students at UofA.

**Starting the new GSA Vice-President Indigenous Relations**

- I am excited to let you know that we finalized the consultation process regarding the structure and duties of the proposed new GSA Vice-President Indigenous Relations role. We have now a By-law draft for the role that is under discussion in the GSAB and will come for a vote in the GSAB next week. I want to thank Benjamin Kucher and Tiffany Kung for spearheading this significant project that will tremendously help the GSA to represent the interests of indigenous graduate students and bridge the relationship between the GSA and indigenous communities.

Finally, I want to thank the GSA and the graduate students for giving me the opportunity over the past two years to represent them. That experience shaped me as a leader and taught me skills I couldn't have acquired in years. I hope I was able to efficiently advance the interests of the graduate students, giving a good image for our community.

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024 to 9<sup>th</sup> April 2024 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board and management meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

18 Mar	Canada Student Financial Assistance Program Meeting
19 Mar	PhD Minimum Guaranteed Funding Roundtable
19 Mar	ISDAC Education Student Consultation
19 Mar	GSA & DoS - Monthly
20 Mar	UofA - UofC touchbase re:ab-GPAC
20 Mar	GFC APC Meeting
20 Mar	GSA/UASU/BOG Chat
21 Mar	Meeting w/ J Smith, Chief of Staff, President's Office
21 Mar	Meeting w/ D Vethanayagam
21 Mar	GSA President ~ Provost
21 Mar	UofA Board of Governors Members only Dinner
22 Mar	UofA Board of Governors Meeting
22 Mar	Meeting w/ B Flanagan, UofA President
22 Mar	ab-GPAC discussion with Brownlee LLP
22 Mar	GSA Volunteer Team Kick-Off
26 Mar	GSA- Town Hall (Vice President Indigenous Relations)
28 Mar	Accommodating Growth Group A - Education and Services
28 Mar	YouAlberta Interview
8 April	PAWSOC
9 April	Meeting w/ V Yiu, Provost and VP Academic



**2023-2024 Vice-President Academic  
Report to GSA Council for April 2024**

To: GSA Council  
From: Rija Kamran  
Date: 10<sup>th</sup> April 2024

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope you are doing well. I can't believe it's the council for this academic year. I wanted to take this moment to thank you for your support and work this past year.

**19 March 2024- PhD Minimum Guaranteed Funding Roundtable**

I attended the PhD Minimum Guaranteed Funding Roundtable; this was an opportunity for the campus community to ask questions of the University administration. Dr. Verna Yiu and Melissa Padfield attended this roundtable alongside other members of University Governance. We were assured of the University's commitment to supporting the successful implementation of this project.

**19 March 2024 - IEGP: Areas of Focus Group on Graduate Programs**

I am representing graduate students on the Integrated enrollment growth planning (IEGP) working group with a focus on graduate programs. We are currently working to understand the potential places for growth enrollment in existing and new graduate programs. I am the graduate student member on this working group and continue to emphasize the need for additional support and funding as the University looks to grow the enrollment numbers.

**20 March 2024- Tracy, GSA President, VP Academic**

I met Dr. T Ravo, Dean and Vice-Provost of FGPS. We continued our discussion on the implementation plan for the Minimum Guaranteed Funding project. Dr. Ravo is continuing the consultation with the University Community. This proposal is coming to the GPS Council for a vote in April. I would like to encourage all graduate student members of the GPS council to make the meeting, so we get to vote for this very important proposal.

**20 March 2024- GFC Council on Student Affairs**

I attended the last COSA meeting of the academic year, and presented the council with the work completed by GSA over this past year. There were discussions and presentations from IST on google storage changes, launch of the new LMS, festival of teaching and learning amongst other updates as new student leaders join COSA.

**3 April 2024- Press Conference about the Growing Public Health Issue of Loneliness**

Along with other GSA DEOs I attended the press conference about loneliness as a public health issue. The presenters talked about statistics on the health effects of loneliness and potential remedies for it. They introduced the 'It starts with a Hello campaign' which is taking initiatives for providing prompts for conversations and connecting students to peers. We would have some of the posters from the campaign in our upcoming coffee breaks and in the GSA lounge.

Thank you for your engagement. Please feel free to reach out to me at [gsavpaca@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsavpaca@ualberta.ca) if you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions. Thank you.

**Rija Kamran**, Vice-President Academic 2023-24

**2023-2024 GSA VP Academic's Meetings Attended (Rija)**

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 18 March 2024 to 12 April 2024 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

18 Mar	Canada Student Financial Assistance Program Meeting
19 Mar	PhD Minimum Guaranteed Funding Roundtable
19 Mar	Meeting w/ a student
19 Mar	ISDAC Education Student Consultation
19 Mar	IEGP: Areas of Focus Group on Graduate Programs
21 Mar	COSA Meeting
25 Mar	Graduate Program Support Team
25 Mar	ISA/GSA Regular Meetings
27 Mar	GFC Committee on the Learning Environment
28 Mar	Meeting w/ a student
28 Mar	YouAlberta Interview
28 Mar	GFC Council on Student Affairs
2 April	GFC EXEC Governance and Procedural Oversight
3 April	Press Conference about the Growing Public Health Issue of Loneliness
8 April	Minimum Funding Implementation Group
8 April	GFC Executive Committee
9 April	LMS of the Future Advisory Committee Meeting
9 April	Meeting w/ a student
10 April	GFC Nominating Committee - Student Replenishment
11 April	GFC Programs Committee Meeting
11 April	GFC Caucus Meeting
12 April	GPS Council Caucus

**2024-2025 Vice-President External  
Report to GSA Council for the 15 April 2024 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Hamid Hassani  
Date: April 3, 2024

Dear Council Members,

As the Vice President External of the GSA, I am pleased to reach out with a report filled with positive updates and exciting developments from our recent endeavors.

ISDAC Education Meetings (19 and 20 March):

The ISDAC Education Committee met on March 19 and 20 to review final stages of various initiatives with the focus on student inclusivity and enhancing educational experiences. During the meeting, it was noted that there is currently no funding available to create new scholarships, sparking a discussion on whether both graduate and undergraduate students should be included in any potential future programs. The topic of graduate conferences was brought up to clarify if they are included in the existing financial plans under item 2.4. Concerns were raised about managing the growing number of students and the funding required to support them. The importance of creating a welcoming and inclusive campus was emphasized, as laid out in the Student Experience Action Plan (SEAP). This plan outlines strategies for building a community that supports student success and fosters relationships. It was mentioned that international students particularly value academic support and exposure to Indigenous cultures, although there has been a slight decline in their overall satisfaction. Again, there was also a push to increase student participation in global learning and education abroad programs, which have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels. I believe this will be the final set of ISDAC meetings, and the International Strategy and Plan will be out soon.

ab-GPAC Meetings (20 and 22 March):

We have two meetings regarding updating the latest stage of ab-GPAC and consultation with lawyers about its status. We had a long, productive meeting with James, UofC GSA president, about the ongoing issues with ab-GPAC and how we can direct our energy and effort to support students in other lobbies. We also discussed how we should join other organizations at the provincial and/or federal level. We discussed the importance of creating another provincial organization to advocate for the well-being of students, like ab-GPAC, but more compact without having too many staff members. The meeting with Brownlee LLP was mostly confidential and focused on the latest issues of ab-GPAC operations. Further steps were outlined to enhance our strategic alignment with legal recommendations and ensure compliance with upcoming regulatory changes.

**2023-2024 GSA VP External's Meetings Attended (Hamid)**

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 18 March 2024 to 12 April 2024 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

19 Mar	ISDAC Education Workshop
19 Mar	ISDAC Education Student Consultation
20 Mar	UofA - UofC touchbase ab-GPAC
20 Mar	ISDAC Education follow up
22 Mar	ab-GPAC discussion with Brownlee LLP

**2023-2024 Associate Vice-President Labour  
Report to GSA Council for Apr 2024**

To: GSA Council  
From: Muneeb Masood Raja  
Date: 9 April 2024

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope you are all doing well. I have attended several meetings between 18 Mar 2024 and 9 Apr 2024 which are listed in the table at the end. Here are the details of the meetings:

**Prairies Education Panel Discussion:**

This meeting took place at the PSAC Calgary Regional Office, aimed at determining the education needs of the academic section in the Prairie region. The agenda includes a series of sessions covering various aspects such as updates on recent developments in the academic sector across Canada, sharing of best practices among university members, discussions on current successes and challenges including membership engagement and collective bargaining, and insights from guest speakers representing universities from Ontario and the Atlantic region.

Additionally, it was focused on the importance and objectives of labor education, setting goals for the upcoming year, and exploring the role of union education in achieving these goals. On both days, participants engaged in collaborative discussions to clarify plans and education goals for the 2024/25 academic year, emphasizing the importance of encouraging membership participation in union education initiatives. Through this structured approach, the meeting addressed key educational needs and foster a collaborative environment conducive to achieving collective goals across the Prairie universities.

I'm committed to collaborating with PSAC to develop a comprehensive education plan for the entire year tailored for AVP Labour and faculty stewards. Additionally, we'll engage with other academic sector unions to gather valuable insights and ideas to enhance our educational initiatives.

**LRC Meeting:**

In March, the LRC met to finalize the GSA policy, which included the establishment of two new positions: outreach coordinator and chief steward. After receiving feedback from the LRC members and incorporating their suggestions, the policy was unanimously approved during the meeting. Additionally, discussions centered on fostering collaboration with other unions to demonstrate solidarity with those engaged in bargaining, strikes, or advocating for labor rights. Moving forward, we remain committed to promoting strong relationships and offering solidarity to unions in their pursuit of fair labor practices.

**Union Training (TA Gains in Academic Sector):**

The training was offered to all academically employed graduate students (AEGSs) aiming to cover current labour movements in the academic sector and the gains received due to collective labour action. Heading to bargaining, I believe this was a very relevant training and would also give us examples of the gains received by academic sector unions.

The training session was offered to all academically employed graduate students (AEGSs), with the objective of exploring into the ongoing labor movements within the academic sector and highlighting the significant achievements resulting from collective labor actions. As we prepare for upcoming bargaining negotiations, this training session proved to be hugely relevant. It not only provided valuable insights into the labor dynamics but also provided us with tangible examples of the favorable outcomes attained by academic sector unions through collaborative efforts. By gaining a deeper understanding of these past successes, we will be better equipped to strategize and advocate effectively for our collective interests during the bargaining process.

**Faculty Steward Meeting:**

The meeting was held to interact with faculty stewards and to ask if they want any help and support from the AVP Labour. Additionally, it acted as a relationship building exercise where participants interacted with each other. We also discussed how to increase engagement and improve our faculty steward network.

The purpose of the meeting was to engage with faculty stewards and offer support and assistance from the AVP Labour, fostering a collaborative environment for mutual aid. It also served as a platform for building and strengthening relationships among participants. Discussions centered on enhancing engagement and bolstering our faculty steward network to ensure effective representation and support.

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

Thank you,

Muneeb Masood Raja, Associate Vice-President Labour 2023-2024

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 18 Mar and 9 Apr 2024 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

18-19 Mar	Prairies Education Panel Discussion
19 Mar	Meeting with a student (confidential)
21 Mar	Labour Relations Committee (LRC) Meeting
21 Mar	Union Training (TA Gains in Academic Sector)
22 Mar	Union Breakfast
22 Mar	UofA GSA Labour Check-In
27 Mar	Faculty Steward Meeting
28 Mar	Meeting with faculty relations representative to discuss a student issue (confidential)
28 Mar	Alberta Academic Coalition for Action (AACA) Meeting
28 Mar	GSA Coffee Break
3 Apr	Press Conference about the Growing Public Health Issue of Loneliness
9 Apr	Meeting with a student (confidential)
9 Apr	People Strategy Committee Meeting

**2023-2024 Vice-President Student Services  
Report to GSA Council for 15 April 2024**

To: GSA Council  
From: Muhammad Haseeb Arshad  
Date: 12 April 2024

Dear Council Members,

I hope this report finds you with the best of health. For my meetings from 18<sup>th</sup> of March to 12<sup>th</sup> of April, I will use the following space to summarize some of the important ones.

- **Canada Student Financial Assistance Program Meeting (March 18<sup>th</sup>)**  
The Canada Student Financial Assistance Program meeting held on March 18<sup>th</sup> provided valuable insights into new policy updates regarding financial support for full-time students. It was announced with satisfaction that there's been a 40% increase in funding and an overall 50% increase in student loans for families under the updated policy. However, concerns were raised regarding credit screening for students over 22 years old and the eligibility of students who move provinces quickly for governmental loans. Notably, there will be a 6% increase in grants for graduate students with children under 12. Additionally, students with academic accommodations up to 60% of a full load will now be considered full-time students eligible for grants and loans, provided they furnish documentary evidence of their accommodations. It was clarified that the \$2500 assessment fee is reimbursable if the application is deemed eligible. We will plan to disseminate this information through newsletters and coffee breaks to ensure students can utilize available resources effectively.
- **Students Who Parent Working Group Conversation (March 18<sup>th</sup>)**  
In the Students Who Parent Working Group meeting on March 18<sup>th</sup>, Clint introduced the potential collaboration between the Dean of Students (DoS) and YMCA for subsidized child care services, sparking interest among the committee members. Additionally, the committee was briefed on the pilot program of adding lactation stations overlay to the UofA Maps, with plans to update the map in Fall 2024. Discussions also revolved around the upcoming student caregiver survey scheduled for April. A proposal to create another family corner was discussed, with a suggestion to include representatives from the Augustana or CSJ campuses on the committee. This initiative aims to ensure inclusivity and representation from all campuses.
- **U-Pass Administrative Committee Meeting (March 21<sup>st</sup>)**  
The U-Pass Admin committee meeting held on March 21<sup>st</sup> was concise, focusing on preparing discussion items for the upcoming quarterly meeting with the city. Among the topics raised was the issue of slow card readers on buses, highlighting a concern affecting the efficiency of the U-Pass system. Additionally, there was a discussion regarding the possibility of removing the loading fee from new arc cards for students. This concern stems from students already paying the complete assessment fee for the semester before purchasing the card. These matters will be further deliberated upon during the forthcoming meeting with the city to address student concerns.
- **Meeting with J Smith, Chief of Staff, President's Office (March 21<sup>st</sup>)**  
On March 21st, I had an introductory meeting with J Smith, Chief of Staff at the President's Office, as part of my transition meetings during March and April. The meeting primarily served as an opportunity for my formal introduction with J Smith. We briefly discussed the upcoming Board of Governors (BoG) meeting and the anticipated student protest outside the council chambers regarding the tuition fee proposal. We emphasized the importance of finding more effective ways to manage the university's operational budget and diversify revenue streams to alleviate inflationary pressures on students.
- **Meeting with D Vethanayagam (March 21st)**  
On March 21st, I, along with Bishoi, met with Dilini Vethanayagam to address concerns regarding faculty members' challenges stemming from the novices in the new college system being implemented by the

university. During the discussion, Dilini emphasized the importance of building strong relationships with BoG members to navigate such issues effectively. She candidly shared her insights and experiences, offering valuable guidance for engaging with the BoG moving forward. Overall, it was a fruitful conversation, and I intend to seek her support in navigating BoG matters in the future.

- **DOA Committee Meeting (March 27<sup>th</sup>)**

The final meeting of the year for the DOA committee took place on March 27<sup>th</sup>, focusing on reflecting on past events and planning for future improvements in student engagement. Highlights of previous events were discussed, along with considerations for enhancing student participation in upcoming activities. I discussed the idea of having permanent GSA's collaborative event for World's Hello Day with DOA's team and received enthusiastic support from Heather. Additionally, the meeting served as an opportunity to express gratitude and pay homage to volunteers and committee members who will be departing the group.

- **YouAlberta Interview (March 28<sup>th</sup>)**

On March 28<sup>th</sup>, we had a meeting with Prisa Bayat, a UofA blogger, for an end-of-year interview. The interview focused on both the outgoing and incoming teams of the GSA, aiming to highlight past achievements, experiences, and lessons learned, as well as discussing the new team's goals and motivations for the upcoming year. Prisa expressed interest in capturing the essence of each team's journey and aspirations. The interview has been published on the YouAlberta blog, and I encourage everyone to take a few moments to read it and gain insights into our team's perspectives and plans.

These were the highlights of the meetings that I have attended up until the submission of this report. I look forward to working with all the members of GSA Council. Please feel free to reach out to me at [gsavpse@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsavpse@ualberta.ca) if you have any concerns or would like to discuss any matters with me.

Thank you,

**Muhammad Haseeb Arshad,**

Vice-President Student Services 2023-2024

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 18 March to 12 April 2024 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

18 Mar	Canada Student Financial Assistance Program Meeting
18 Mar	Students Who Parent Working Group Conversation
19 Mar	PhD Minimum Guaranteed Funding Roundtable
19 Mar	ISDAC Education Student Consultation
19 Mar	U-Pass Meeting
19 Mar	GSA & DoS - Monthly
20 Mar	UofA - UofC touchbase re:ab-GPAC
21 Mar	U-Pass Administrative Committee Meeting
21 Mar	Meeting w/ J Smith, Chief of Staff, President's Office
21 Mar	Meeting w/ D Vethanayagam
21 Mar	GSA President ~ Provost
22 Mar	ab-GPAC discussion with Brownlee LLP
26 Mar	Meeting regarding GSA elections w/ DoS
26 Mar	Confidential: Prayer, Worship & Ceremony Space Support Grant Adjudication
27 Mar	DOA committee meeting
28 Mar	YouAlberta Interview
3 April	Press Conference about the Growing Public Health Issue of Loneliness
10 April	One-At-A-Time Therapy Open House (Drop In)

**2023-2024 Vice-President Student Life  
Report to GSA Council for the 15 April 2024 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Tiffany Kung  
Date: April 9 2024

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope everyone is having a smooth end of term! My last Council report of my term is attached below. I've included meetings up until the end of my term (May 1); since my successor, Benjamin Kucher, is attending meetings with me, these will be reported by him in his first report to Council in May. Thank you everyone for trusting me as your VP SL this year, and I wish everyone a fantastic summer "break"!

**(Mar 12&26) VPIR Town Hall**

Benjamin Kucher (IGSA Co-Lead) and I held two town halls seeking thoughts and feedback on the Vice President, Indigenous Relations position for the GSA. These were held on March 12 and March 26. No new feedback that was not previously discussed in targeted consultations was brought forward.

**(Mar 14) SGBV in WIL working group**

An interim report has been sent on to Carrie Smith and Karsten Mundel. The group discussed whether we should return to the Courage to Act workbook or proceed with the list of tools we currently had. Members were asked to re-review the workbook for next meeting

**(Mar 14) Meeting with Deb Eerkes, Sexual Violence Response Coordinator**

I met with Deb to discuss upcoming work for the next year, including Operation MuskOx, an upcoming "bystander prevention" project aimed at educating educators to protect ourselves from rape culture. More work on this will be done in the coming year, so expect to hear more on it in 2025. We also discussed the Sexual Assault Centre, which is undergoing restructuring. A new VP under the Dean of Students (DoS) will hopefully be filled over the summer. Funding is being secured, and work is going towards rebuilding the educational part of the UASAC

**(Mar 19) University of Alberta Safety & Security Committee (UASSC)**

The group met to discuss regular updates, where security reports were following expected trends, and infrastructure and communications work is progressing as planned.

**(Mar 19) GSA & Dean of Students (DoS)**

The President, VP Student Services, and I met with Ravina Sanghera and Tim Tang to discuss our work. Relevant to my portfolio, we discussed Crisis Supports, where Ravina assured that issues management was hiring a position to focus on supporting students in crisis. Work, although slow, is going toward getting the language into the calendar. Currently, more work is going towards the work regarding exams-per-day policy. The peer support program and YMCA parent program projects will be collaborations with the President next year; for more detailed updates, please see Haseeb's (VP Student Services) report.

**(Mar 21) Residence Advisory Council (RAC)**

The group heard an overview of residences, followed by a long discussion around rent rationalization headed mostly by folks from Residence Saint Jean (RSJ). Students voiced complaints around the rate rationalization and rental increases despite different external contexts (e.g., distance to University, access to supports). Campus Services seemed to suggest rent rationalization will nonetheless progress, though more consultation is expected to happen with the UASU and RSJ folks.



**(Mar 22) EDI Action Planning - Generative Practices for Institutionalizing EDI**

In cohort with Carrie and other members of the EDI Leads network, I facilitated the online portion of this working group intended to foster conversation toward the EDI action plan. An engaging conversation around EDI at the institution occurred, though unfortunately, few students were in attendance.

**(Mar 25) Biweekly meeting with Benjamin Kucher (IGSA President) RE: VPIR position**

Ben and I continued to meet throughout this month, though less often as the VPIR work came to a close. The VPIR proposal has been finalized from our end and reviewed by consulting bodies. The report will come to the Board on April 10 and 17 before coming to Council in May and June for final approval. I'm incredibly excited to see this work wrap up and the introduction of the new position in 2025!

**(Mar 25) GSA, Indigenous Graduate Students Association (IGSA), Supporting Aboriginal Graduate Enhancement (SAGE)pod and Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS)**

The group met briefly to discuss updates due to low attendance. SAGEpod and GPS will meet over the summer to plan initiatives and work for the coming year. The Indigenous Graduate Research Award is continuing forward, and the terms of reference were sent to the IGSA and GSA for information. Adjudication and advertisement will be handled through GPS as with all other GRAs, though the I-GRAs will be a scholarship rather than a research assistantship. The first round of applications are expected to be welcomed in late summer.

**(Mar 27) Gathering: IGSA, First Peoples House, and GSA**

The group met to discuss updates including the IGSA's successful tuition levy, their move to Education (due to Tory renovations), and their upcoming round of elections. The group discussed a planned event/panel where the IGSA, ISU (undergraduate), and other relevant bodies/people will host a panel discussion about the transition from undergrad to grad school. First Peoples House will refresh the idea on their end, while the IGSA and SAGEpod expressed interest in participating.

**(Mar 27) Dean's Advisory Council**

Although funding for course-based Master's was introduced, no discussion was had due to lack of attendance—an independent email will be sent out to the student who brought up the issue, and the GSA VPSL email will be cc'd on that response to hear about DoS' work in that area. The Campus Food Bank came to discuss the Rutherford Library and the Adopt-the-Pantry program. The group also discussed making the registration for student chapters of professional societies easier, and updating the DoS website to include members of DAC and photos. A potential name change may occur this year, and a round of feedback on improvements to the Council was given.

**(Mar 28) Regular One-on-One with Carrie Smith, Vice Provost EDI**

As my successor, Benjamin Kucher, had been named at this point, I invited him to this meeting to facilitate transition. We discussed work that had been done this past year and work to be continued on into next year, including the BGSA's continued need for an independent office (which, at Ben's suggestion, was also discussed later with GPS), the GSA's reading and discussion group on inclusive research, the EDI movie series that did not pan out due to construction at Myer Horowitz, the EDI action plan and steering group, and Carrie's roles and realms of responsibility.

**(Apr 2) Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) Advisory Council**

The group heard updates from Deb Eerkes on the Options Navigation Network, which is expanding and the introduction of an app for ONN navigators to improve anonymity of survivors. The SGBV in WIL working group progress was discussed as well as the workplace restoration for psychological and social safety projects. Operation Musk Ox (discussed above in the one-on-one with Deb Eerkes) was introduced, and the ongoing work around the sexual assault centre was discussed again (the University has enlisted the help of Possibility Seeds in restructuring the centre).

**(Apr 2) Meeting with an EDIC member RE: Campus Food Bank (CFB) collaborations**

A member of the EDIC met with Erin O'Neal from the CFB to discuss potential collaborations. We discussed the possibility of offering Triffo Hall or the GSA Lounge in Van Vliet as a free breakfast location and a location for snack shelving. Although the Rutherford pantry was discussed, as the GSA's grant to the CFB was already approved for the year (a sizeable amount, the exact number of which can be gained by asking Haseeb, the VP Student Services), it cannot be retracted and put towards maintaining the pantry for a week. The project also remains outside the EDIC's capacity, and so discussions around promoting the adoption of a pantry to student departmental organizations was suggested, which my successor, Benjamin Kucher, will spearhead. We discussed the Trick or Treat Drive and we agreed the CFB could put out a call for volunteers to the GSA which would then be communicated forward to grad students in general and EDIC members, and briefly discussed transition matters.

**(Apr 2) Transition meeting with UASU VPSL**

The group met to discuss collaborations and advice for the next year. We discussed the Consent Awareness week work that the UASU and GSA did together, and advice was given on collaborating with the UASAC and SVRC and starting earlier in the summer. The group discussed the EDI Movie series initiative now that Myer Horowitz was open. Other than that, thoughts regarding the past year, transition information, and introductions were shared to facilitate good relations with the UASU next year.

**(Apr 4) GSA Reading Group: Holding Space for Challenging and Contradictory Thoughts**

The last session of the GSA's reading and discussion group on inclusive research, facilitated by Jay Friesen and Lisa Prins was held on April 4. The session was fantastic, with an engaging discussion and activity session. Conversations have been had with my successor, Benjamin Kucher, around the possibility of continuing the group and improvements that could be made. As this was a group run by me and not the EDIC, the future of the group is entirely up to Ben's imagination, which promises an exciting year ahead!

**(Apr 4) Council of Residence Associations (CORA) meeting**

The group met to discuss transition and the residence improvement fund, neither of which were relevant to grad students this year due to the lack of a graduate students in residence (GSRA) association. I have discussed the GSRA with Ben and the hope remains to create a GSRA hopefully over the summer, but delays may push this further back.

**(Apr 4) GSA, Black Graduate Students Association (BGSA), and GPS**

The group met to follow up on discussions from the last meeting, since these meetings will be held regularly from now on. This included the BGSA's office space (which Tracy will look into), the possibility of creating an AGES-Black similar to the AGES-Indigenous or a B-GRA similar to the I-GRA—Tracy discussed the need for specific funding to create those scholarships which the BGSA mentioned they would look into. Tracy will bring the Associate Dean, Awards and Scholarships, and the Awards Team Lead to the next meeting. The group also discussed international student-specific problems including the lack of funding, incredibly high tuition rates, improving transition for international students, and other more general problems, including the inaccessibility of the GSMS portal, the creation of a body at GPS to connect students with industries as a work-integrated learning or co-op program, which can then also fund them. Tracy mentioned GPS is working on this and a proposal is being submitted to revitalize the Graduate Student Internship Program (GSIP).

**(Apr 8) Student Housing Stability Working Group**

The group met briefly to hear about the 5 Days of Homelessness student group and their work on campus. Updates were discussed briefly, due to low attendance. The plan to include SafeHouse with other resources in the GSA planner this upcoming year was discussed.

**(Apr 8) Regular One-on-One with Katherine Huisig, Associate Vice President Campus Services**

Benjamin Kucher joined this meeting to facilitate transition. We discussed important events and decisions from the past year including the tabling of JROC, the goals and intentions behind the GSRA, rent rationalization, and more.

Katherine described the scope of her role, which notably includes parking, and discussed the affordability crisis and Campus Services stance and work on affordability. Possible initiatives including filling empty residences at a discounted rate, providing free meal plan 'vouchers' to students experiencing food insecurity, rental subsidies through DoS, and more, were discussed. Please email me ([gsavpsi@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsavpsi@ualberta.ca)) for more details.

**(Apr 9) Transition meeting with Jay Friesen, Educational Curriculum Developer, GPS**

Jay Friesen, Benjamin, and I met to discuss the GSA's EDI reading group from this past year including lessons learned and ways to move forward. Thoughts to drop the "reading group" portion of the series and transition to a 2-part discussion series preceded by a movie or documentary screening was discussed. Benjamin will look into this further once his term starts to determine feasibility and interest, so stay tuned to hear more from his reports!

**(Apr 9) World Social Justice Day (WSJD) Working Group Feedback meeting**

The group met to discuss feedback from the WSJD event. The event was well-received, with Living Books and participants expressing a desire for the event to continue. Feedback was discussed, including requests from both sides to have more sessions per book and more sessions overall. The group discussed suggestions for next year's team and will continue the conversation over email due to time constraints.

**(Apr 9) Regular One-on-One with Deb Eerkes, Sexual Violence Response Coordinator (now Lead SGBV Response)**

Benjamin, Deb, and I met to discuss transition. We discussed work that had occurred over the past year including the SGBV advisory council, the SGBV in WIL working group, the original intention for a graduate student listening circle around SGBV, improving accountability measures in relationships with power differentials, the options navigation network, national consent awareness week, the University of Alberta Sexual Assault Centre (UASAC) and operation Musk Ox (discussed above).

**2023-2024 GSA VP Student Life's Meetings Attended (Tiffany)**

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 12 March to 1 May 2024 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

Mar 12	VPIR Town Hall
Mar 14	SGBV in Work Integrated Learning (WIL) working group
Mar 14	Regular One-on-One with Deb Eerkes, Sexual Violence Response Coordinator
Mar 15	GSA Awards Night
Mar 19	PhD Minimum Guaranteed Funding Roundtable
Mar 19	University of Alberta Safety & Security Committee (UASSC)
Mar 19	GSA & Dean of Students (DoS)
Mar 21	Residence Advisory Council (RAC)
Mar 22	EDI Action Planning - Generative Practices for Institutionalizing EDI
Mar 25	Biweekly meeting with Benjamin Kucher (IGSA President) RE: VPIR position
Mar 25	GSA, Indigenous Graduate Students Association (IGSA), and Faculty of Graduate and PostDoctoral Studies (GPS)
Mar 26	VPIR Town Hall
Mar 27	Gathering: IGSA, First Peoples House, and GSA
Mar 27	Dean's Advisory Council
Mar 28	Regular One-on-One with Carrie Smith, Vice Provost EDI
Mar 28	IGSA Beading event
Mar 28	GSA Coffee Break
Mar 28	YouAlberta Interview
Apr 2	Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) Advisory Council
Apr 2	Meeting with an EDIC member RE: Campus Food Bank collaborations
Apr 2	Transition meeting with UASU VPSL
Apr 2	Loneliness Press Conference
Apr 4	GSA Reading Group: Holding Space for Challenging and Contradictory Thoughts
Apr 4	Council of Residence Associations (CORA) meeting
Apr 4	GSA, Black Graduate Students Association (BGSA), and GPS
Apr 8	Student Housing Stability Working Group
Apr 8	Regular One-on-One with Katherine Huising, Associate Vice President Campus Services
Apr 9	Transition meeting with Jay Friesen, Educational Curriculum Developer, GPS
Apr 9	World Social Justice Day Working Group Feedback meeting
Apr 9	Regular One-on-One with Deb Eerkes, Sexual Violence Response Coordinator
Apr 11	SGBV in Work Integrated Learning (WIL) working group
Apr 11	Transition meeting with Lula Adam, EDI Strategic Initiatives Officer, DoS
Apr 12	GSA Moving Coffee Break
Apr 16	Meeting with Diana Kim, Student Engagement Programs Coordinator, University of Alberta International (UAI)
Apr 17	GPS Council
Apr 18	GSA Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon
Apr 19	GSA Anti-Fraud talk
Apr 22	Student Housing Stability Working Group
Apr 22	UASSC
Apr 22	Regular meeting between GSA & International Students Association (ISA)
Apr 23	EDI Action Plan Focus Group
Apr 23	EDIC Meeting

Apr 24	Days of Action (DoA) Committee Meeting
Apr 24	GSA Movie Night
Apr 25	Community Operations Coordination (COC) Meeting
Apr 26	EDI Plan Steering Committee Meeting
Apr 26	Regular One-on-One with Carrie Smith, Vice Provost EDI
Apr 26	GSA Spring Social

**GSA Deputy Returning Officer  
Report to GSA Council for the 15 April 2024 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Zain Patel  
Date: 12 April 2024

Dear Council Colleagues,

The report below serves as the written report that GSA Policy (Section D.POL.10.1.e.ii) stipulates the Chief Returning Officer (CRO) will provide following the GSA General Election. Given that the GSA Re-Election of Vice-President Student Life was conducted by the Deputy Returning Officer, they will be giving the report.

As per GSA Bylaw and Policy, there was extensive consultation with the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC) when issues with formal complaints and alleged breaches of GSA Bylaw and Policy were brought forward, and in some situations, these resulted in the DRO issuing penalties, the resulting decisions can be found [here](#).

We have kept a thorough record of all aspects of the GSA Election, GSA Election of the Associate Vice-President Labour, and Referenda and the GSA ERC have met to debrief and engage in its annual review of GSA Bylaw and Policy on elections.

You can learn more about the results and elected candidates [here](#).

I would like to thank GSA Chief Returning Officer Sophie Shi, GSA Elections Coordinator Monica Brzak, and all members of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee.

Best,

Zain Patel, Deputy Returning Officer

**GSA Nominating Committee**  
**Report to GSA Council for the 15 April 2024 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Violet Sun  
Date: 12 April 2024

Dear Council Colleagues,

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

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

Sincerely,  
Violet Sun, Chair of the GSA NoC

**Memorandum to GSA Councillors**

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

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

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

On behalf of the GSA NoC, I strongly encourage GSA Councillors (and Alternates) and Councillors-at-Large to consider the next round of vacancies, which will be circulated to GSA Council electronically and which are listed below. Questions can be directed to me at [qiuyu@ualberta.ca](mailto:qiuyu@ualberta.ca) or GSA Elections Coordinator Monica Brzak at [gsanomco@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsanomco@ualberta.ca).

### GSA Standing Committees

**1) GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (GSA ACB (Four (4) Councillor Positions)**

Information regarding the positions for four (4) GSA Councillors was circulated via email on 28 March and 5 April 2024 with a nomination deadline of 9 April 2024. **No nominations were received; these vacancies will be advertised again.**

**2) GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (GSA ACB (Three (3) Member Position)**

Information regarding the positions for three (3) GSA members was circulated via newsletter on 28 March and 5 April 2024 with a nomination deadline of 9 April 2024. **No nominations were received; these vacancies will be advertised again.**

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

Information regarding the positions for one (1) GSA member was circulated via newsletter on 28 March and 5 April 2024 with a nomination deadline of 10 April 2024. **No nominations were received; these vacancies will be advertised again.**

**4) GSA Nominations Committee (GSA NoC) (One (1) Member Position)**

Information regarding the one (1) vacancy for GSA members has not yet been advertised, will be soon.

**5) GSA Board and GSA Nominating Committee (GSAB/NoC) (Two (2) Joint GSA Councillor Positions)**

Information regarding the positions for two (2) GSA Councillors was circulated via email on 28 March and 5 April 2024 with a nomination deadline of 10 April 2024. **No nominations were received; these vacancies will be advertised again.**

### GSA Councillor-Elected Officers

**6) GSA Councillor-at-Large (GSA CAL) (One (1) GSA Member Position)**

Information regarding the position for one (1) GSA member was circulated via newsletter on 28 March and 5 April 2024 with a nomination deadline of 10 April 2024. **One (1) nomination was received; there will be a paper ballot vote (see Item 12.2 – Nominee for the GSA Councillor-at-Large).**



**GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC)  
Report to GSA Council for the 15 April 2024 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Andrew Poholka  
Date: 12 April 2024

Dear GSA Council Members,

Since the last GSA Council meeting, the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC) has been supporting the Chief Returning Officer (CRO) in all matters pertaining to the 2024 GSA Re-Election of Vice-President Student Life, (as per GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section I.POL.18.1, “the GSA ERC will advise the CRO on all matters pertaining to GSA General Elections, by-elections and referenda”). You can find more information about the 2024 GSA Re-Election of Vice-President Student Life in the DRO’s report.

The GSA ERC has met to debrief the 2024 GSA Election items and will be working on revisions of GSA Bylaw and Policy, Sections I and J.

Sincerely,  
Andrew Poholka, Chair of the GSA ERC

**GSA Executive Director  
Report to GSA Council for April 15 2024 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Lewie Moodley  
Date: April 15 2024

Dear Members of the GSA Council,

I hope you are well and enjoying the start of Spring. I am writing to provide you with updates on recent developments and forthcoming plans within the Graduate Students' Association (GSA).

To begin, I am pleased to inform you that our budgets for the fiscal year 2024-2025 have been formally approved and finalized. This achievement signifies a significant milestone in our financial planning efforts and ensures our ability to adequately support the various initiatives and programs critical to our mission.

Furthermore, we have now finalized our recent elections. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the newly elected members, whose commitment and enthusiasm will undoubtedly enrich the GSA's endeavors moving forward. As part of our ongoing commitment to operational excellence, we are preparing to implement a new software system for the review of grants and bursaries, slated for May 2024. The transition to the Good Grants system will be executed methodically throughout the month, with no disruptions to the existing student application processes.

In April, we have arranged to hold a coffee break in ECHA Room 2-140, providing an informal opportunity for networking and graduate student engagement. Additionally, we are organizing a Spring Social party, offering an evening of fun for graduate students to come together and celebrate.

On the front of our Health and Dental Care plan, I have been actively engaged in negotiations with Studentcare and other providers to secure a reduced premium for our members. Studentcare will be present at the April council meeting to address any inquiries pertaining to our healthcare offerings.

I wish to take this opportunity to express my sincerest gratitude to our current board members for their dedicated service and hard work over the past year. Their contributions have been instrumental in advancing the interests and concerns of graduate students across various facets of the university. Special recognitions are due to our outgoing President, Bishoi Aziz, and two of our outgoing Vice Presidents, Tiffany Kung and Hamid Hassani for their exemplary leadership and steadfast commitment.

Attached to this communication, you will find my weekly reports to the GSA Board for your perusal. Should you require any further clarification or information on the matters discussed, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Thank you for your continued support and collaboration as we navigate through this period of transition and growth.

Warm Regards

Lewie Moodley, Executive Director.

## Management Report to the GSA Board, 20 March 2024

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on **13 March 2024**.

### Strategic

- Work associated with the Collective Agreement (soliciting expressions of interest for the steward network, advising individual graduate student workers, and supporting the work of the GSA Labour Relations Committee, distribution of new agreement, outreach and strategic planning with PSAC).

### Executive Director update

- We are now closed until April 1 2024. We are taking on adhoc grants on a case by case format until April 1 2024. The new grants software will be implemented in May, we have selected the provider. The software will be hosted on the Good Grants platform.
- The General Election has been mostly finalized with the VP SL election to be re-run. The ERC has provided an updated timeline for this. ERC, ACB and the staff are working hard at all the work related to elections.
- The Mental health survey has reached over 800 students and has now closed. The analysis stage will begin on our findings. Analysis on these results has begun, winners of the prizes have been notified and awarded.
- Facebook Reach: +43.8% (vs March 5) Followers: +9 followers (current: 2046) Instagram Reach: +1.2% (vs March 5) Followers: +18 followers (current: 1220)Twitter/ X Followers: - 1 follower (1348)
- Awards night was a successful event with a lot of great feedback from students,guests and faculty.

### Management Report to the GSA Board, 27 March 2024

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on **20 March 2024**.

#### Strategic

- Work associated with the Collective Agreement (soliciting expressions of interest for the steward network, advising individual graduate student workers, and supporting the work of the GSA Labour Relations Committee, distribution of new agreement, outreach and strategic planning with PSAC).

#### Executive Director update

- Our new fiscal grants year will open April 1 2024. The new grants software will be implemented in May, we have selected the provider. The software will be hosted on the Good Grants platform. Our 2024-2025 GSSF funding has been confirmed by the University, we hope to receive the cheque in April.
- The General Elections are now closed and results are final. We thank the CRO, DRO, ACB and GSA staff for their hard work during this election season.
- The Mental health survey has reached over 800 students and has now closed. Analysis on these findings has begun, we will work on this report over the month of April into May.
- Facebook Reach: +67.1% (vs March 20) Followers: +3 followers (current: 2049) Instagram Reach: +8.3% (vs March 20) Followers: +9 followers (current: 1229) Twitter/ X Followers: - 2 followers (1346)
- Planning is under way for the Spring social, which promises to be a fun night.