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Item 1: Agenda

Wednesday, April 30, 2025

Held hybrid in 2-100 Council Chambers

6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

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

The GSA's confidentiality practices are outlined below and can be summarized as follows: information arising in a closed session of GSA Council or a committee, information about identifiable individuals, or information otherwise marked or indicated as confidential, needs to stay that way. Discussions that are off the record or confidential often involve personal information, information on negotiations, business information, or other information of a similar nature.

GSA SPEAKER:

Zain Patel in the Chair

GSA DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Amirah Nazir

CLOSED SESSION:

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

Time	Item	Page	Title	Presenter(s)
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	#	#		
6:00	-	1	Land Acknowledgement	Z. Patel, GSA Speaker
1 min	1	2-5	Approval of the Agenda for April 30, 2025 GSA Council	Z. Patel, GSA Speaker
1 min	2	6-20	Approval of the GSA Council Minutes of April 9, 2025 GSA Council	Z. Patel, GSA Speaker
2 min	3		Changes in GSA Council Membership	Z. Patel, GSA Speaker
5 min	4		Announcements	
	5	21-22 (Sepa rate) 5.0- 5.23	<u>PRESENTATION ITEMS</u> A. GSA Strategic Work Plan Update Presentation	H. Arshad, GSA President
15 min	6	23-25	<u>ELECTIONS</u> A. GSA Councillors-At-Large: a. Two vacancies b. Two nominations	A. Belosokhov, NoC Chair
5 min 1 hr	7	26 27-34 35-37 (Sepa rate) 7.0- 7.38	<u>ACTION ITEMS:</u> A. Governance Committee-Recommended Bylaw and Policy Revisions a. Outline of Issue b. Referenda B. GSA Budget & Finance Committee: Budget Approval a. Outline of Issue 3-Year Plan and 2025-2026 Budget b. 2025-2026 GSA Operating Budget (Including Capital Budget) (HD Estimated)	Z. Patel, GSA Speaker H. Arshad, GSA President

1 hr		38-52	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. GSA 2025-2026 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Narrative d. GSA 2025-2028 Restricted and Other Funding Budget e. GSA 2025-2028 Restricted and Other Funding Budget Narrative f. GSA 2025-2028 Labour Union Restricted Fund Budget g. GSA 2025-2026 Labour Union Restricted Fund Budget Narrative <p>C. Submitted Motions to Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Outline of Issue - Councillor-led Motion Procedure b. Outline of Issue - Bylaw Update Procedure c. Outline of Issue - Bylaw Update Procedure d. Outline of Issue - Standing Committee Attendance, Accessibility & Advertising e. Outline of Issue - Standing Committees & Confidentiality f. Outline of Issue - Impeachment & Vote of No Confidence Procedure g. Outline of Issue - AVP Labour Voting Rights 	N. Lamarche, EFS Councillor & Incoming AVP Labour
15 min	8	53-61 62-65	<p><u>INFORMATION PIECES</u></p> <p>Reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. GSA President: Haseeb Arshad <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. President's Report b. GSA Board Report c. GSA Budget & Finance Committee Report d. GSA Governance Committee Report e. GSA Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee Report B. Vice-President Academic: Rija Kamran C. Vice-President Student Life: None at this 	Unable to attend last meeting

		66-73 74-75 76-84 85 86-87	<p>time</p> <p>D. Vice-President Student Services: Saad Iqbal</p> <p>E. Vice-President External: Parman Mojir Shaibani</p> <p>F. Associate Vice-President Labour: Muneeb Raja</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">a. GSA Labour Relations Committee</p> <p>G. GSA Senator: Ola Mabrouk</p> <p>H. GSA Speaker: Zain Patel</p> <p>I. Chief and Deputy Returning Officers: Sophie Shi & Temi David</p> <p>J. GSA Nominating Committee Chair: Arseniy Belosokhov</p> <p>K. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Chair: Elsie Osei</p> <p>L. GSA Management</p>	<p>No report submitted</p> <p>No report submitted</p> <p>No report submitted</p> <p>No report submitted</p> <p>No report submitted</p> <p>No report submitted</p>
15 min	9		<p>Question Period</p> <p>1. Written Questions (May be submitted to the GSA Deputy Speaker before 4:00 PM on Thursday, April 24, 2024)</p> <p>2. Oral Questions</p>	
	10		Adjournment	

Item 2: April 9, 2025 Council Minutes

Wednesday, April 9, 2025

Held in-person in 2-100 Council Chambers

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

<p><i>The GSA and the University of Alberta reside on Treaty 6 territory and the homeland of the Métis. This territory is a traditional gathering place for diverse Indigenous peoples including the Cree, Blackfoot, Métis, Nakota Sioux, Anishinaabe, Dene, Ojibway, Saulteaux, Inuit, and many others whose histories, languages, and cultures continue to influence our vibrant community. In acknowledging this traditional territory and its significance for the Indigenous peoples who lived and continue to live upon it, we recognize its longer history that reaches beyond colonization and the establishment of European colonies and recognize the GSA's ongoing collective responsibility in working with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) peoples and what that means for the work of the GSA as it aims to practice the principles of being Good Relations with FNMI peoples, Nations, communities, and lands.</i></p>
<p><i>The GSA's confidentiality practices are outlined below and can be summarized as follows: information arising in a closed session of GSA Council or a committee, information about identifiable individuals, or information otherwise marked or indicated as confidential, needs to stay that way. Discussions that are off the record or confidential often involve personal information, information on negotiations, business information, or other information of a similar nature.</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">GSA SPEAKER: Zain Patel in the Chair GSA DEPUTY SPEAKER: Amirah Nazir</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">CLOSED SESSION: Discussion of matters pertaining to the business interests of the GSA will occur in Closed Session</p>

Time	Item	Title	Presenter(s)
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10:04	-	Land Acknowledgement	Z. Patel, GSA Speaker
1 min	1	Approval of the Agenda for April 9, 2025 GSA Council H. Arshad moved. S. Iqbal seconded. Motion PASSED unanimously.	Z. Patel, GSA Speaker
1 min	2	Approval of the GSA Council Minutes of March 24, 2024 GSA Council Z. Patel allowed 10 minutes for Councillors to read through the minutes before the approval. R. Kamran moved. P. Mojir Shaibani seconded. 27 for the motion. 1 against. 2 abstentions. Motion PASSED.	Z. Patel, GSA Speaker
2 hrs	3	<p>ACTION ITEMS:</p> <p>A. Motion 1: That the GSA Council APPROVE the Operating and Capital Budget (2025-2026), the Labour Union Dues Budget (2025-2026), and the Restricted and Other Funding Budget (2025-2026).</p> <p>H. Arshad gave a summary on the 2025-2026 proposed budget:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite having no expected increase in enrollment, which means no increase in funding from GSA membership fees, we have a balanced budget due to precise cuts to counteract increased expenses. Stable revenue is expected for the next three years. GSA fees almost entirely support the GSA budget as we do not have businesses that inflate our funding. • Stipends and salaries have increased due to mandated CPI increases. Governance and human resources have increased due to the new VP Indigenous Relations position and the Finance/HR Manager role moving from part-time to full-time to assist the IGSA and LRC with finance work. If the VPIR role is not filled, it was clarified that the funding will go to FNMI students in the form of a scholarship or grant. • Key changes include a membership fee increase by 1.5%, which is less than CPI. CPI is currently 2.2%, which is provided to us by the 	H. Arshad, GSA President

		<p>university. The part-time student fee has been increased by \$20 as they receive the same level of services as full-time students. This is consistent with other associations in Alberta.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have a projection of lower interest income. Our revenue comes from the membership fee, our interest income, some external funding and our revenue from our collaborative business venture (the Chop Leaf lease in Van Vliet). External funding has increased from our new MOU agreements. Our interest income is down to \$50,000 from last year’s \$164,000. Commercial revenue is down from \$40,000 to \$27,000. • Additional changes include the removal of the child care subsidy with the MOU that the GSA has signed with another childcare provider, who don’t require payment. The UASU still has a contract with Kids & Company, which should cover graduate students. There are only three graduate students currently using this service. • A new budget line was created for a GSA-organized conference, taken from a previous budget line that supported the Campus Food Bank. This budget line is no longer needed, as the CFB receives support directly from the DFU (mandatory fees). • A new budget line was created to support DEO strategic initiatives and renamed to incorporate the Indigenous Strategic Initiative fund, as the VPIR is one of the DEOs. The budget line was doubled from \$5,000 to \$10,000. Any DEO can use this funding with the approval of the Board. • The office recognition line has increased from \$1,000 to \$4,000 to align with actual spending. A new professional development budget line for the Associate Director and Finance Manager, and a parking allowance for NASA staff has also been added. H. Arshad added that under the NASA collective agreement, the GSA is contractually bound to support NASA union members in the event that they are running errands for GSA-related work. • There is an increase in external funding: FGPS funding has increased from \$5,000 to \$6,000 to support GSA outreach activities and CAGs conference attendance. The Dean of 	
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		<p>Students’ Office has increased funding from \$5,000 to \$8,000 for engagement activities, such as our orientation events. Funding from TD Bank will increase by \$1,000, to a total of \$12,500. H. Arshad is working with the TD Business Development Manager to see about increasing the funding support for the TD award that is given out at the annual GSA Recognition Awards. We also have an agreement with the new Health & Dental Plan provider, Ellement, to provide \$11,000 of funding, which will be allocated by the Board. With this increase in the engagement budget, we plan to increase the amount of gift cards given out as this is usually a successful way of increasing engagement at various events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The DEO training budget has been increased by \$2,000 again, on recommendations by the Vice Provost Indigenous Relations and Programming, to allow for training on Indigenous ways of learning and conflict resolution. ● Standing Committee expenses have increased by \$1,000 to support and show appreciation for the volunteers who sit on them; this funding will go toward providing them with refreshments and support for any activities. ● A new office line has been created for maintenance to make students feel more welcome and comfortable, particularly for when they are having to discuss difficult personal cases. ● The GSA Planner has been discontinued. ● Labour budget: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There has been a 40% decrease in interest income due to the interest rate cuts by the Bank of Canada ○ There is a partial salary allocation for the Associate Director and Finance Manager for their administrative and financial support to the labour union. There is no increase to their salaries, just part of their salaries will be coming from union dues for their union work and responsibilities, which is in line with Bill 32 and 70 regulations. H. Arshad stated that more than half of C. Roose’s work is union work and organization, which makes 25% a very conservative number. The Finance 	
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		<p>Manager must ensure proper bookkeeping for union work, so 10% of their salary will come from union dues to reflect this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There was a recommendation to reduce the Associate VP Labour stipend by \$7,000, so the new stipend is around \$33,000. ○ The outreach and education funds have doubled to \$10,000 on the recommendation of the current AVP Labour. ○ There is a modest increase in PSAC funding to help with grievance and bargaining sessions. They provide us with a chief negotiator. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● H. Arshad clarified the timeline of the AVP Labour stipend reduction approval process: he stated it was a long process that he began with the approval of the Budget & Finance Committee and GSA Board before it was brought to Council. He stated the decision was not made lightly and was made in consultation with many stakeholders within the organization. ● N. Lamarche asked if the meeting was being recorded, which was confirmed. He stated that he wanted to correct H. Arshad regarding 'if no student is found for the VPIR position, the stipend funding will go toward funding to FNMI students.' He raised concerns that the Indigenous Strategic Initiatives fund (ISIF) of \$5,000 was deleted despite existing bylaw obligations. N. Lamarche argued that merging the fund into the DEO Strategic Initiatives Fund diluted Indigenous-specific funding and emphasized the importance of Indigenous self-governance in financial matters. It was clarified that the line was not deleted, but had been renamed 'DEO Initiatives Strategic Fund' to allow all DEOs access to the doubled amount of funding of \$10,000. ● S. Louangxay, GSA Accountant, replied that the ISIF was temporary until last year's Indigenous GSA's Dedicated Fee Unit (DFU) referendum succeeded. It was explained that the Indigenous GSA and students now receive targeted DFU funding, 	
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		<p>and the DEO Strategic Initiatives Fund is accessible by all DEOs, including the VPIR.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● H. Arshad and S. Louangxay, GSA Accountant, will investigate N. Lamarche’s assertion that the bylaw stipulates the exclusive use of this funding by the VPIR. ● H. Arshad thanked N. Lamarche for the clarification and noted that he supports the funding going toward FNMI students, which will likely go to all Indigenous graduate students in the form of a scholarship. To reply to the Indigenous Strategic Initiative Line, he replied that the Board wanted to be able to use the line for all DEOs as the IGSA is already being funded by GSA fees. The line has been doubled and renamed, but the funding is still available for the VPIR to use. ● N. Lamarche clarified that the DEO initiative line is not restricted to only Indigenous students, which the ISIF had previously been and emphasized the importance of restricted funding for Indigenous initiatives. ● H. Arshad clarified that the line is for all DEOs’ initiatives as the funding is gathered from all graduate students, not just Indigenous students. The funding sent to IGSA is only from Indigenous students. He clarified that we understand and appreciate the responsibility to the demographic to ensure that we support them, particularly in the eventuality of not having the VPIR position filled. There are 350 Indigenous students, so they would receive over \$500 each. ● N. Lamarche agreed with the validity of the temporary line, but stated there should still be dedicated funding for Indigenous students. The DEO line can go to all minority students, which is great to have, but there should be strategic funding for Indigenous students, particularly as the university and GSA is working toward Indigeneity and conciliation. ● S. Iqbal, VP Student Services, clarified that there was no budget for ISIF in 2023-2024, but there was in 2024-2025 and asked S. Louangxay, GSA Accountant, how much was spent in the last year. 	
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		<p>S. Louangxay stated she would have to look into it. H. Arshad stated that it wasn't spent by the then VP Student Life, B. Kucher.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● N. Lamarche stated the ISIF aligns with government and university guidelines for reconciliation purposes, and should be maintained, particularly for Indigenous self-governance priorities. He asserted that the Board should not have a hand in financial decisions regarding FNMI funding or initiatives. ● S. Iqbal thanked N. Lamarche for his contribution, he agreed that self-governance should be an across-the-board priority for indigenous groups. It is an ongoing work, particularly for the VPIR. He stated that the creation of the VPIR is a positive step, and gaps will be addressed. Additions can always be discussed and implemented in consultation with the IGSA. ● A. Adigun asked for clarification regarding the ISIF - if it's in bylaw, he believes it should be retained. He asked regarding staff support of the IGSA, as there was a commitment for finance support. ● S. Louangxay, GSA Accountant, confirmed that a meeting was held last year in December with Hannah at IGSA to discuss supporting them with bookkeeping and the cost would be absorbed by the GSA. ● H. Arshad agreed with N. Lamarche and stated that his recommendations for Indigenous funding should be forwarded to BFC for discussion and incorporation into future budgetary changes. The BFC can restrict a portion of the DEO fund specifically for Indigenous initiatives as recommended by Council. ● N. Lamarche stated that it was a failure of the GSA and Council if this funding was not used in the last year. He suggested splitting the lines into DEO/Indigenous split into \$5,000 each. ● R. Kamran stated that we need to consult the bylaws and realign the budget with the bylaws, if required. ● S. Iqbal clarified that the renaming of the line was not due to the lack of its use in the last year, but to expand initiatives for all minority groups. He also clarified that it is not biased for N. Lamarche to speak on behalf of FNMI students. No one DEO can 	
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		<p>use all \$10,000 of the funding, but the Board will approve the use with full rationale and planning of the use of the funding. It will then be approved by majority or unanimity. There is a filtration system in place that ensures Indigenous initiatives are prioritized.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Abdul Hadi Syed asked after the zero projected increase in enrollment and a 15% increase in legal fees, as he believed legal consultation was only required for bylaw revisions as a one-time expense. ● H. Arshad replied that there is a zero-percent enrollment increase assumption due to federal government restrictions on international visas and the December report we received from the university. Our enrollment numbers have decreased from December to January, but we cannot project negative enrollment, so a 0% enrollment was projected instead. The enrollment over the next two years is a 1% increase projection. ● H. Arshad replied that the increase of 15% in legal fees was explained as necessary due to the anticipated costs of policy rewrites and an increase in grievance-related legal consultations. ● I. Khodabocus, Councillor-At-Large, asked if the IGSA has been consulted regarding filling the VPIR position. ● S. Shi, CRO, stated that she will respond to the question at the next Council session as the VPIR fulfillment is ongoing, and this special session must remain on the topic of the budget. ● A. Adigun raised a motion to recommend to BFC to restrict part of the DEO Strategic Initiatives Fund to redefine the ISIF under C.POL.5.2. H. Arshad clarified that the BFC cannot create new lines, but amendments and budget line restrictions can always be made with recommendations from Council. ● S. Ribiero asked after the two new budget lines for AD, FM and ED of \$14,000 for conference expense allowances on top of CPI increases. She clarified that she is not opposed to some expenses being covered, but as a student association, she is concerned that \$14,000 is not the best use of this money. ● S. Louangxay replied that there are professional certification standards mandating that the management staff meet certain 	
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		<p>professional development hours every year to maintain their positions; management are required to attend, requiring meals and hotel stays, which is an industry standard. Previously it was only the ED who received it and he had to share his remaining funding with the other management members. H. Arshad stated that it was previously overspent when it was just the ED budget line for conference travel. He stated that he understands S. Ribeiro's point and this change is for transparency purposes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A. Belosokhov, Councillor-At-Large, asked for clarification regarding the Council's role with the budget and three-year projection approval. Z. Patel clarified that the first motion is only approving the next year's budget and the second is to receive the three-year projection. H. Arshad stated that Council has the oversight responsibility and mandated the creation of the budget to the BFC, and acknowledged that the budget approval Council meetings were scheduled later than they should have been. If Council wants to make changes, BFC has the complete authority to make changes in the spending of budget lines, such as over or underspending by BFC vote. He stated that stipends can be over/underspent by BFC vote. BFC has Councillors sitting as members. Council opinions are taken into account for upcoming budgets. A. Belosokhov stated that he does not oppose the budget, and asked if we can approve the budget and work to change line spending later, if required. ● H. Arshad passed it over to C. Roose, GSA Associate Director, for the budget deadline to pass along GSA required fees to the university: the GSA submits a fee assessment to the Registrar's office for them to code the fees in to be collected in the fall. She has reached out to both offices and they have stated that mid- to the third week of April is required for them to work to get the fees in place. ● Our actual surplus will be calculated by the end of this month. ● N. Lamarche raised that the BFC voted on this budget and posited that he believes that the BFC will not vote to change the budget after they have approved it to forward to the Board and Council. 	
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		<p>He stated that the \$48,000 excess should be rerouted to the labour strike fund, but noted that we have access to the PSAC strike fund, but recommended that the GSA should have its own strike fund. He believes that the BFC has their own priorities and will not listen to the voices and priorities of the Council. He stated that he does not believe the BFC will give Council another chance to change the budget.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A. Adigun stated that it is his understanding that the standing committees answer to Council; we do not have to pass the budget the same way the BFC has presented it, we can make recommendations to BFC on behalf of graduate students, to show the graduate student body priorities. He would like to make some adjustments and recommendations, then the BFC can make adjustments on those recommendations, then the budget can be passed once that has been done. He does not agree with passing the budget in its current form. ● H. Arshad stated that we have \$100,000 in our strike fund - we do not have an explicit, restricted budget line for the strike fund, as it has never been raised as a recommendation by the LRC. The BFC will listen to Council and adjust the budget accordingly; governance practice mandates that they must adjust to Council's recommendations. He disagrees with N. Lamarche's position. The issue is the university deadlines. He stated that we are overcomplicating these issues; discussions can continue and fixes adjusted by BFC later, a budget needs to be passed, so we can inform the university of our required fees for collection in the fall. ● M. Raja, AVP Labour, stated that this is part of the BFC's mandate, but for clarity purposes, not all labour updates were suggested by the LRC. He sees N. Lamarche's point regarding having our own strike fund listed as restricted under the labour budget, but it has not been institutional practice. It should be the practice moving forward as the LRC would be the best body to discuss the labour budget. ● A. Belosokhov stated that he understands N. Lamarche's point and agrees with A. Adigun, but is concerned about the timing of 	
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		<p>the approval for the university. He asked if it was possible to amend the budget to approve it in this meeting. H. Arshad stated he wished he could confirm this, but unfortunately, the governance specialist stated that the council can only approve or disapprove, they cannot amend. This is the current structure that we have to work within.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● N. Lamarche reminded H. Arshad that the meeting was being recorded, so as not to misrepresent his words. He stated that the BFC would not approve any changes, not that they could not. To A. Adigun, he posited that the BFC could unilaterally ignore Council recommendations. They have a responsibility to change the budget according to Council’s concerns - he posited that this is not in bylaw or policy. ● H. Arshad raised a Point of Personal Privilege and apologized for mishearing N. Lamarche regarding BFC being unable to adjust the budget after they had initially approved it. He stated that the governance structure should be trusted, as it is the system we have to work within. The BFC has a fiduciary duty to the association and would be held accountable if they disregarded it for their own agendas. He raised the recommendation from a student of running a referendum regarding this issue to get academically employed students’ opinions to use as rationale for any adjustments. ● Abdul Hadi Syed asked for clarification regarding whether lines can be adjusted after approval and funding reallocated after the budget is approved. H. Arshad and the finance team confirmed this. Budget lines can be adjusted after approval. We are just voting on the overall budget lines and document that explains the rationale. The BFC cannot create budget lines, but can allocate the spending as required. ● A. Belosokhov asked N. Lamarche what he suggests in terms of changes. N. Lamarche stated that he doesn’t have the time to respond fully to this question, but that the AVPL stipend change would affect his ability to perform his duties in the role. 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A. Belosokhov clarified what happens afterwards if the Council votes against this version of the budget. GSA Associate Director C. Roose answered that she doesn't currently have that information, as she would have to go back to the Registrar's Office, but we run the risk of no fees being collected at all, meaning we would not be able to provide any GSA services come the fall. She clarified that this is not to stress Council into making a decision, but they need to be aware of the risks if discussion runs too long and passes the university's hard deadline. ● A. Adigun asked for clarification regarding the oversight mandate of the Council, why Council cannot make amendments itself and what governance specialist H. Arshad had consulted with. He raised that perhaps the Governance Committee should consider making this change. ● H. Arshad responded to A. Adigun regarding K.BYL.1.1 and 1.2 that states that the BFC and Board will forward recommendations to Council, which will approve or deny the budget and receive the three-year projection for information. He spoke to the university governance specialist from the university's General Council, who stated that the budget is outside of the Board's purview now as they approved it and forwarded it to Council, so it would have to go back to the BFC for review and recommendations. This is the same procedure that the university's Board of Governors uses. ● S. Iqbal checked a Point of Parliamentary Inquiry if Council still had quorum. Z. Patel confirmed. ● S. Ribiero reminded Councillors that we are part of the university's governance system and this discussion is not relevant to this special council vote. Standing Committees and Councillors are elected to represent graduate students and their departments, so they need to vote to represent all graduate students and their respective departments. She would recommend Councillors to not vote in favour of the Council if there are concerns. 	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● H. Arshad clarified that if the budget is not approved and no GSA fee is collected, the Council will not have completed its fiduciary duty. ● N. Lamarche raised a Point of Order due to H. Arshad speaking out of turn and accused him of threatening the Council. <p style="text-align: center;">19 votes against, 15 votes for. The Motion HAS NOT PASSED.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● S. Iqbal clarified that, as a member of the BFC, the BFC never had any intention of reducing financial supports for FNMI students. The wording of the ISIF being ‘no longer required’ in the narrative document is financial language, not to diminish the importance of Indigenous funding. It was never a focus of discussion that Indigenous funding should be removed. The ISIF was never removed, but expanded to include additional funding for the Board to use toward supporting additional minority groups and initiatives. He acknowledged N. Lamarche’s point of Indigenous self-governance and he commends any Indigenous student having to take on the burden of educating non-Indigenous students. ● S. Louangxay stated her concern at the budget not passing. We do not have a contingency plan bylaw to continue on the previous year’s budget, so we will be required to tell the university. If we miss the university’s hard deadline, we cannot collect GSA fees. ● H. Arshad clarified that he was not threatening Council regarding his comment on fiduciary duty, but a reminder to Councillors of their role. Councillors are meant to hold the Board accountable, but they also have their own fiduciary duty to represent all graduate students and bring their concerns to Council for discussion. H. Arshad stated he is worried regarding the status of the GSA if fees cannot be collected, as the Minister of Advanced Education would have to step in and assign an Administrator to take over the running of the GSA. 	
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		<p>B. Motion 2: That the GSA Council RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION the Operating and Capital Three-Year Budget/Business Plan (2025-2028), the Labour Union Dues Three-Year Budget/Business Plan (2025-2028), and the Restricted and Other Funding Three-Year Budget/Business Plan (2025-2028).</p> <p style="text-align: center;">31 votes for, 3 against. Motion PASSED.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A. Belosokhov stated that the BFC should review the budget based on Council recommendations and the Board can call for a second special meeting to get the revisions approved before the deadline. ● H. Arshad stated we will have a special council meeting as quickly as possible. ● D. Carleton asked what the next steps are. If there is not a special council meeting, it will be brought to the April 28th meeting. ● N. Lamarche reminded the Council that the BFC Chair is H. Arshad. He accused H. Arshad of coercion in stating the risk of the GSA dissolving if fees cannot be assessed. U of Regina dissolved because the executives were not held accountable. He stated that if Council had voted yes, we would be emulating the U of Regina. ● H. Arshad responded that it was never a threat, he acknowledged earlier in the meeting that the budget is late. It is public knowledge that he is the BFC Chair and the other members of the committee are members of the Council, but acknowledged N. Lamarche is entitled to his opinion. ● C. Roose clarified that when we are discussing contentious issues, we are not ever trying to make threats, but the situation that we face is that if a budget is not passed at some point in time, the university will not collect fees for us in the upcoming fall, so the GSA will then not have a budget for the fall. It's something we have to abide by within the university. She is going to go back to them to check if we have any leeway with them. 	
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		<p>Motion to adjourn. H. Arshad moved. P. Mojir Shaibani seconded. 18 for, 2 against. Motion PASSED.</p> <p>Attached document breakdown:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Outline of Issue 3-Year Plan and 2025-2026 Budget b. Cover Letter to GSA Council 2025-2026 GSA Operating Budget c. 2025-2026 GSA Operating Budget (Including Capital Budget) (HD Estimated) d. GSA 2025-2026 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Narrative e. GSA 2025-2028 Restricted and Other Funding Budget f. GSA 2025-2028 Restricted and Other Funding Budget Narrative g. GSA 2025-2028 Labour Union Restricted Fund Budget h. GSA 2025-2026 Labour Union Restricted Fund Budget Narrative 	
	4	Adjournment	

Item 5: Strategic Work Plan 2024-2025 - Message from the President

Message from the President

Over the past year, our Graduate Students' Association has worked hard to turn the ambitions set out in the Strategic Work Plan into tangible results. Thanks to the trust you placed in my team—and to the passion and persistence of countless volunteers, staff, and campus partners—we have moved from ideas to action in ways that are already improving graduate life at the University of Alberta.

Together, we secured more than **\$8.5 million in direct financial support**, including a brand-new Community Engagement Award that channelled **\$200,000 of GSA funds to course-based master's students**, with a further \$400,000 committed for the next two years. We finalised a re-engineered health and dental plan that will save students **\$400,000 over three years**, renewed the U-Pass—putting **\$3.4 million back in students' pockets**—and successfully advocated for **no tuition increase for international thesis-based students**. Each of these wins began with your feedback and your insistence that affordability must remain at the centre of our work.

But financial relief is only part of the story. We also helped **launched the pilot Graduate Peer Support Program**, published the first comprehensive **Graduate Mental Health Report**, doubled attendance at our GSA Social Hours, and laid the groundwork for a Peer-Connect Conference and Career Fair that will showcase graduate talent and create new career pathways. Our two-year **EDI Action Plan** and updated bylaws have set a clearer, more accountable course for the association, while our bargaining team has already tabled a full proposal package to improve working conditions for academically employed graduate students.

None of this progress would be possible without you. Whether you completed a survey, attended a town-hall meeting, or simply shared your lived experience with us, your voice shaped every decision we made. I am deeply grateful for the confidence you have shown in this executive team and for the tireless work of our councillors, committee members, and staff, who turned collective vision into concrete gains.

As my team's term concludes, I am heartened to know that a newly elected executive team is ready to carry this momentum forward. Their agenda remains ambitious, including but not limited to, securing stable scholarship funding, implementing a campus-wide food strategy, completing collective bargaining, and ensuring that our governance continues to reflect the diversity and creativity of the graduate community. I encourage you to lend them the same energy, creativity, and constructive scrutiny you showed my team—because the GSA's strength has always come from an engaged membership willing to push for bold ideas and hold its leaders to account.

Thank you for the privilege of serving as your President this past year. Working alongside you has been the most rewarding experience of my graduate journey, and I will continue to champion graduate students—this time from the sidelines—as an alumnus of the GSA. Together we have set a strong foundation; now, in partnership with the new executive, I am confident our association will reach even greater heights.

In solidarity and gratitude,

Haseeb Arshad
President, Graduate Students' Association
University of Alberta

Item 6: Nominees for GSA Councillor-At-Large Vacancies

GSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE (GSA NoC)
**GSA Councillor-at-Large By-Election (2 POSITIONS):
TWO (2) NOMINEES**

In the 2025 GSA General Election, three (3) out of ten (10) Councillor-at-Large positions were filled. In the following Council by-election, five (5) GSA Councillor-At-Large vacancies were filled. Consequently, there are currently two (2) GSA Councillor-at-Large vacancies for graduate students remaining. As per GSA Bylaw and Policy, GSA Council fills any remaining positions from nominations forwarded by the GSA NoC (Section I: Elections, GSA Policy, Elections, Section I.POL.16.3). The duties of GSA Councillors-at-Large are to attend all meetings of GSA Council, and “to provide additional voices on GSA Council from those offered by DEOs, Departmental Councillors, and the IGSA Councillor” (GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section C: GSA Council, GSA Policy, GSA Council, Section C.POL.3.3.b.iii).

These positions were advertised in the GSA newsletters of March 7 and 14 with a nomination deadline of March 21 2025. Two (2) nominations were received by the deadline and approved by the NoC.

There will be an electronic ballot vote held at the April 28 2025 GSA Council meeting.

If you and your alternate are unable to attend the April 28 meeting of GSA Council and would like to cast an electronic vote for this position, you must contact the GSA Administrative Specialist (gsaca@ualberta.ca) BEFORE 3:00 PM on Monday April 28 in order to cast your vote in advance of the GSA Council meeting.

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

- 1. Muhammad Faizan Tariq (Civil & Environmental Engineering)**
- 2. Anagha Devkota (Public Health)**

Jurisdiction:Section I: Elections, GSA Policy, Elections, Section I.POL.16.3

“In the event that any CAL positions are not filled by the end of the GSA General Election, or a CAL position is vacated prior to December 1 (or the next working day) GSA Council will be responsible for electing any remaining CALs. When electing any remaining CALs, the GSA Council will aim to elect graduate students from as broad a range of disciplines as possible. The GSA NoC will decide on procedures and then provide one 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. If the matter is urgent, GSA Council can hold this election electronically.”

The names and biographies received for the nominee(s) are **BELOW**. Biographies and resumes are presented as **received** (i.e. not edited).

1. Muhammad Faizan Tariq (Civil & Environmental Engineering)

<p>Statement of Interest</p> <p>I want to volunteer as a GSA Councillor at Large to strengthen our graduate student community and ensure everyone’s needs are heard. I’ve witnessed how supportive networks can elevate both well-being and professional growth, and I’m eager to contribute to that positive environment. My experiences in leadership and teamwork have prepared me to communicate effectively, organize initiatives, and advocate on behalf of my peers. Collaborating with fellow council members, I plan to address important issues like mental health support, professional development, and inclusivity. Through dedicated service, I aim to help create a more vibrant, welcoming community for all graduate students.</p>
<p>Bio</p> <p>Undergrad Volunteer Experience: Treasurer - NICE Student Council Director Finance - International Conference in Artificial Intelligence 2021</p> <p>I am a structural engineering major with a strong foundation in analytical problem-solving and teamwork. My rigorous academic training has taught me to tackle complex challenges methodically, while my professional experiences have sharpened my communication and leadership skills. In my volunteer roles, I’ve actively engaged in student advocacy, listening to peers and helping address their concerns. I am passionate about stepping into this position to raise student voices and ensure that every perspective is represented. I believe my blend of technical expertise, practical experience, and commitment to advocacy makes me a valuable asset to the team.</p>

2. Anagha Devkota (Public Health)

<p>Statement of Interest</p> <p>I have always been passionate about youth engagement and local governance, and I have actively volunteered in these areas. As a student at the university, I see a unique opportunity to directly influence policies that shape the graduate student experience. Beyond making a meaningful impact, these roles would allow me to develop valuable leadership, advocacy, and volunteer experience—key skills that will support my professional growth. Additionally, they provide a</p>
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platform to connect and collaborate with peers across academic disciplines, broadening my perspective and network.

Bio

I serve on the board of a local non profit organization as fundraising director, Nepalese Edmonton Canadian Society of Edmonton (NECASE).

I am deeply passionate about youth engagement and local governance, with a strong history of volunteering in these areas. Through my involvement in the Youth at the Table (Y@TT) program, as well as my work with the Youth Engagement Community of Practice and the Y@TT Alumni Committee at Volunteer Alberta, I have gained experience in providing strategic advice, recommendations, and operational support to stakeholders developing youth engagement programs across Alberta. Recently, I participated in the Results Canada fellowship program, which helped me further develop my leadership, communication, and advocacy skills while contributing to global poverty alleviation efforts through advocacy

As a Master of Public Health student pursuing an embedded certificate in climate change and health at the University of Alberta, I am a dedicated and passionate individual with a strong background in youth engagement, local governance, and advocacy. I bring a unique interdisciplinary approach to problem-solving and a strong foundation in analytical and critical thinking skills. My education has equipped me with a blend of physical sciences and business knowledge, making me well-suited for a role that requires the integration of both disciplines. My current academic focus in public health, combined with professional and volunteer experience, equips me with the skills to effectively contribute to this position.

Through my professional experiences, I have developed expertise in project coordination, data analysis, and evaluation. As a Sustainability Intern at the University of Alberta's Sustainability Council, I have gathered, organized, and analyzed data from both academic and operational sources to support sustainability rankings and event initiatives. In my previous role as a Program & Evaluation Assistant, I developed an evaluation framework for the organization's strategic directions, establishing key indicators to track and report results. I also conducted an environmental scan on the relationship between volunteer screening best practices and equity, diversity, and inclusion, identifying emerging trends using data from various sources. These experiences have sharpened my ability to manage multiple priorities, adapt to changing needs, and collaborate effectively with diverse stakeholders.

Beyond my academic and professional pursuits, I am deeply committed to community engagement and volunteer with several organizations in Edmonton, further enhancing my ability to contribute to this position

Item 7a: Governance Committee-Recommended Bylaw and Policy Revisions

Outline of Issue**Suggested Motion:**

That the GSA Council **APPROVE** the recommended changes to GSA Policy:

Recommended Changes to GSA Policy, Section D, F & K**Background:**

Implementing changes to our Referenda and BFC policies, procedures and definitions to streamline and update office and referenda processes.

Jurisdiction:**GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section A.BYL.1.2**

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

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section A.BYL.2.2

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

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section F.BYL.1.3

“GSA Standing Committees advise GSA Council and the GSA Board (GSAB) on policy relevant to their mandates, and have full authority to take actions set out within those mandates.”

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section F.POL.4.2.a

The mandate of the GSA Governance Committee is to *“advise GSA Council on matters of GSA Bylaw and Policy not in the purview of any other GSA Standing Committee, or other governance issues, and recommend changes to GSA Council.”*

Current Bylaws (deletions are noted as strikethroughs and changes/additions are noted in red font)	Rationale
<p>D.BYL.1.1d GSA Councillors and any GSA member appointed, elected, or delegated to any internal or external committee shall be recognized as GSA Officers.</p>	<p>By defining these individuals as officers, the bylaw grants the Appeals and Complaints Board (ACB) clear jurisdiction to hear complaints related to their performance or behavior. This promotes fairness, transparency, and integrity within GSA governance structures and ensures that all representatives are held to the same level of responsibility and oversight, regardless of their specific role or appointment route.</p>
<p>Referenda Asker Definitions “Asker” is defined as a GSA member(s) or a person acting on behalf of an external organization who wishes to initiate a referendum.</p>	<p>This change aligns with the Post-Secondary Learning Act (PSLA) of Alberta, which mandates that the GSA represents the interests of graduate students. By limiting the role of "asker" to graduate student group members, the GSA ensures that referenda reflect organized, collective student interests (PSLA, Section 95).</p>
<p>J.BYL.2.1</p> <p>A referendum on a clearly worded ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ question regarding any dedicated, on-going fee for a service, facility, or lobbying effort can be initiated by the GSA Board (GSAB) subject to a simple 2/3 majority vote at any meeting of GSA Council. Normally a referendum will be held in conjunction with the GSA General Election and election of the Associate Vice-President Labour, unless a question is determined to be of an urgent nature by the GSAB.</p>	<p>Remove on-going as approved referenda will no longer be perpetual. Remove descriptors.</p> <p>2/3 is consistent with other Bylaw changes and is generally the standard for any type of fee approval.</p>

<p>J.BYL.2.2 The required steps for a GSA member or a person acting on behalf of an external organization wishing to initiate a referendum will be outlined in GSA Policy on referenda.</p>	<p>Change in the bylaw based on the updated definition. Consistent with Definitions and J.BYL.4.2.</p>
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Current Policy (deletions are noted as strikethroughs and changes/additions are noted in red font)	Rationale
<p>Referenda Policy</p>	
<p>J.POL.7.1.a Membership in an officially recognized graduate student group stated in Section N: GSA Graduate Student Groups is required for referendum Askers. The Asker must provide evidence of their affiliation with a graduate student group when submitting a referendum request to the Chief Returning Officer (CRO).</p> <p>J.POL.7.1.b When submitting a referendum request to the Chief Returning Officer (CRO), the Asker must provide valid proof of their GSA membership, i.e., an enrollment certificate.</p> <p>J.POL.7.1.c The GSA Board shall have the authority to grant exemptions to the eligibility requirements stated in J.POL.7.1a, J.POL.7.1b.</p> <p>J.POL.7.1.d Requests for exemptions must be submitted in writing to the Board for consideration.</p> <p>J.POL.7.1.e The Board may consider exemptions based on, but not limited to, the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The critical nature of the proposed referendum to the graduate student body b) The Asker's demonstrated understanding of the referendum process and its implications c) Extenuating circumstances that prevent the Asker from meeting the standard requirements. <p>J.POL.7.1.f The decision of the Board regarding exemptions shall be final and shall be communicated to</p>	<p>This change aligns with the Post-Secondary Learning Act (PSLA) of Alberta, which mandates that the GSA represents the interests of graduate students. By limiting the role of "asker" to graduate student group members, the GSA ensures that referenda reflect organized, collective student interests (PSLA, Section 93).</p> <p>The eligibility exemption through the GSA Board opens the opportunity for all GSA members to initiate referenda, not just those affiliated with recognized graduate student groups.</p> <p>The inclusion of a board exemption clause provides necessary flexibility to address unforeseen circumstances or particularly critical issues. We need this approach to ensure the successful implementation of referenda such as the Campus Food Bank (CFB), which defy standard procedures but are crucial to the graduate student community.</p> <p>By clearly defining the Board's authority in granting exemptions and establishing</p>

<p>the applicant in writing within a timeframe specified in the GSA's operational policies.</p> <p>J.POL.7.1.g The Board reserves the right to revoke an exemption if the circumstances under which it was granted change significantly.</p>	<p>criteria for such exemptions, the policy promotes transparency and accountability in GSA governance. This approach guarantees the exercise of flexibility within a structured and equitable framework.</p>
<p>J.POL.7.2.a A clearly worded referendum question will address the following criteria (if applicable): description of any dedicated on-going fee, amount of fee, how long a fee will be collected (in accordance with J.POL.6.4), effective date (when a fee will start being collected), end date (when the fee will stop being collected), procedure for changing a fee, whether the fee can be rescinded, opt-out mechanism, and an accountability mechanism for the money collected. The criteria above provided are non-exhaustive and additional criteria may be required to draft a clearly worded referendum question.</p>	<p>Voters should have an option to opt out of non-mandatory dedicated fees.</p>
<p>J.POL.11</p>	
<p>J.POL.15 Referendum Duration and Renewal</p> <p>J.POL.15.1 Referenda approved by the GSA membership shall have a duration of three (3) years from the date of implementation.</p> <p>J.POL.15.2 To ensure continued funding and accountability, referendum askers must initiate a</p>	<p>This policy addition serves several important purposes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A referendum should not be perpetual unless there are extenuating circumstances. 2. It ensures that initiatives funded through referendum remain accountable to the graduate student population by requiring a renewal vote based on demonstrated performance.

<p>renewal process by the year that the current dedicated fee expires.</p> <p>J.POL.15.3 The renewal process shall involve:</p> <p>J.POL.15.3.a Submitting a detailed report to the GSA Board outlining the achievements, challenges, and financial management of the initiative during the first two years.</p> <p>J.POL.15.3.b Conducting a new referendum vote among the graduate student population.</p> <p>J.POL.15.4 The renewal referendum will be held during the GSA general election in the year of expiration.</p> <p>J.POL.15.5 The renewal referendum question must clearly state:</p> <p>J.POL.15.5.a The original purpose of the initiative.</p> <p>J.POL.15.5.b A summary of achievements and value added to graduate students' experience.</p> <p>J.POL.15.5.c The proposed continuation of the initiative for the subsequent years.</p> <p>J.POL.15.5.d Any proposed changes to funding or implementation, if applicable.</p> <p>J.POL.15.6 If the renewal referendum passes, the initiative will continue for the remainder of the original three-year term and an additional three years from that point.</p> <p>J.POL.15.7 If the renewal referendum fails, the initiative will conclude at the end of its original three-year term,</p>	<p>3. The three-year initial term with a second-year renewal vote allows for adequate planning and implementation while also providing a timely opportunity for review and adjustment.</p> <p>4. By requiring a detailed report and clear communication of achievements, the policy enables graduate students to make informed decisions about continuing support for initiatives.</p> <p>5. The policy allows for adjustments to be proposed during the renewal process, ensuring that initiatives can evolve to meet changing needs.</p> <p>6. This structure helps in maintaining financial stability by allowing initiatives to secure funding for subsequent years while also providing a mechanism for discontinuation if they no longer meet student needs.</p> <p>7. Regular renewal referenda keep the graduate student population engaged and informed about ongoing initiatives, fostering a culture of active participation in GSA affairs.</p> <p>8. The two-year wait period gives the Asker time to adjust their request, and it alleviates voter burnout of referenda questions.</p>
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<p>with a one-year wind-down period to ensure orderly closure of operations.</p> <p>J.POL.15.8 If the renewal referendum fails, the Asker must wait a minimum of two (2) years before consideration by the CRO.</p> <p>J.POL.15.8 The GSA Board shall have the authority to establish specific procedures and timelines for the renewal process, ensuring they align with the GSA's broader governance and election policies.</p>	
<p>J.POL.1516 Reporting</p> <p>J.POL.1516.1 The Chief Returning Officer (CRO) will draft a procedural report following each referendum. This report will outline major decisions, a summary of discussions and consultations with the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC), processes, issues, and recommendations for any future referendum. This report will be provided to the next CRO and Deputy Returning Officer, the GSA ERC, the GSA Board, and GSA Council.</p>	<p>Clerical Change</p>
<p>K.BYL.1.2 GSA Council will receive recommendations on the annual operating and capital budgets, along with a recommended three (3) year budget forecast and business plan, no later than its March regular meeting. GSA Council shall approve only the budget for the upcoming fiscal year. The three-year forecast and business plan shall be received as an information item. The Budget and Finance Committee shall review, recommend, and approve the draft budget and three</p>	<p>This clarification ensures that both the BFC and the GSA Board formally review, recommend, and approve the draft budget and the three-year forecast prior to their presentation to Council. This layered approval process aligns with best financial governance practices by ensuring due diligence, and shared accountability across GSA's decision-making bodies. It also clarifies that GSA Council's authority is to</p>

<p>(3) year forecast, followed by review, recommendation, and approval by the GSA Board, prior to presentation to GSA Council.</p>	<p>approve the upcoming fiscal year’s budget, while the multi-year forecast is presented for information only</p>
<p>K.BYL.1.3 In the event that the GSA Council does not approve an annual budget before the start of the fiscal year, GSA shall continue to operate in a manner consistent with the most recent annual budget approved by the GSA Council.</p>	<p>This new bylaw sets a clear contingency plan to ensure the continuity of GSA operations in the event that the annual budget is not approved by GSA Council before the start of the fiscal year. It reflects best practices in governance by establishing a fallback mechanism that protects the organization from administrative delays while respecting the Council’s budgetary authority.</p>
<p>K.POL.3.7.a Financial documents requiring signature, including but not limited to cheques, email disbursements, and investment instructions, require two (2) signatures: either any two (2) Directly-Elected Officers (DEOs) or any one (1) DEO and one (1) Director.</p>	<p>By allowing email-based authorization, the policy reduces reliance on physical cheques—saving time, administrative resources, and unnecessary costs associated with cheque processing.</p>
<p>K.POL.3.7.d The President and Executive Director will approve amounts below \$600 via email, with explanations provided by the Finance Manager and reported to the GSA Board in the management report. Electronic transfers should be used unless unavailable, in which case cheques may be used. Both approvers will provide electronic "signing authority" confirmation</p>	<p>This policy enables timely and efficient approval of disbursements under \$600 by allowing the President and Executive Director to authorize such payments via email. This process streamlines routine low-value transactions while maintaining proper oversight and documentation. It also ensures that financial controls remain intact through dual electronic "signing authority" confirmation and the exclusion of cash payments, which</p>

<p>for all disbursements. Cash payments are strictly prohibited.</p>	<p>mitigates risk and aligns with best practices in financial management.</p>
<p>K.POL.5.9.b Confidential material distributed during Budget and Finance Committee (BFC) meetings shall be shared with members through password-protected methods.</p>	<p>This policy establishes a clear and consistent protocol for handling confidential materials shared during Budget and Finance Committee (BFC) meetings. The inclusion of this policy also addresses existing ambiguity regarding the confidentiality status of BFC materials. It reinforces the importance of protecting budget drafts, financial projections, and other documents that may contain preliminary or sensitive data not intended for public circulation.</p>
<p>K.POL.5.2 Any recommended change to a budget line must first be discussed among the Finance Manager, the President, and the Executive Director (or delegate) prior to presentation to the BFC. Once consensus is reached, all members shall support the decision.</p>	<p>This policy ensures that any recommended increase to a budget line is thoroughly reviewed and agreed upon by key members of the finance team—namely, the Finance Manager, the President, and the Executive Director or their delegate—prior to being brought forward to the Budget and Finance Committee (BFC). Requiring consensus at this stage promotes alignment within the finance team, and ensures that proposals presented to the BFC are well-vetted and strategically justified. This approach minimizes the likelihood of prolonged or contentious discussions during BFC meetings, allowing the committee to focus its time on high-level oversight rather than operational deliberations.</p>

F.POL.2.4.a General GSA members may attend the open sessions of any standing committee meeting as a guest following approval from the Chair of the committee.

Allowing general members to attend open sessions promotes inclusivity, enhances trust in committee deliberations, and provides an opportunity for members to observe and better understand the GSA's operations.

At the same time, the requirement for prior approval from the Chair ensures that meetings remain orderly, manageable, and focused, while still enabling access where appropriate and is consistent with the existing practice.

Item 7b: Outline of Issue - GSA 2025-2026 Budget

Outline of Issue

Operating and Capital Budget (2025-2026), Labour Union Dues Budget (2025-2026), and Restricted and Other Funding Budget (2025- 2026)

AND

Operating and Capital Three-Year Budget/Business Plan (2025-2028), Labour Union Dues Three-Year Budget/Business Plan (2025-2028), and Restricted and Other Funding Three-Year Budget/Business Plan (2025-2028)

Suggested Action and Motion for the GSA BFC:

MOTION 1: That the GSA Council **APPROVE**, having also been approved and separately recommended by the GSA Budget and Finance Committee and GSA Board, the Operating and Capital Budget (2025-2026) (found in the attached material in the “2025-2026 Budget for Approval” column bordered in red on each page), the Labour Union Dues Budget (2025-2026) (found in the attached material in the “2025-2026 Budget for Approval” column bordered in red on each page), and the Restricted and Other Funding Budget (2025-2026) (found in the attached material in the “2025-2026 Budget for Approval” column bordered in red).

Background:

As was the case in previous years, given that the GSA Board is the “senior administrative authority” (GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section F.POL.3.2.a), the above-noted recommendation to GSA Council flows through the GSA Board. The GSA BFC’s review and advice on the three GSA three-year budget/business plans (operating, labour union dues, and restricted) will also be forwarded to GSA Council for the April 28 2025 meeting, flowing first through the GSA Board. GSA BFC members are, accordingly, invited to attend both the GSA Board meeting and the GSA Council meeting on April 28 2025.

Jurisdiction:

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section K.BYL.1.1:

“The Executive Director (or delegate), Accountant, Financial Manager, and the President, in consultation with the GSA Board and Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC), will draft an annual budget as part of a three (3) year, rolling budget and business plan, to be reviewed by the GSA BFC no later than the GSA BFC’s last meeting in the February prior to the April in which the annual budget will take effect. The GSA BFC will advise and recommend to GSA Council via the GSA Board (GSAB) on the annual budget. The

GSAB will forward the GSA BFC's recommendation with its own recommendation to GSA Council. "

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section K.BYL.1.2:

"GSA Council will receive a recommendation on the annual operating and capital budgets, together with a recommended three (3) year budget and business plan, no later than its March regular meeting."

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section K.POL.3.1:

"The overall mandate of the GSA BFC is to advise the President and management on the financial affairs of the GSA and to provide for the long-term financial health of the organization. Members are expected, by GSA Council, to rise above any local/departmental views or issues and to take into account the needs of the GSA as a whole."

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

"The GSA BFC will review and advise on the annual three (3) year rolling budget and business plan."

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section K.POL.3.5:

"The GSA BFC will make recommendations to GSA Council on the annual operating and capital budgets."

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section K.POL.5.1.a:

"In planning and managing its budget, the GSA will ... be open and transparent, encouraging comprehensive input and consultation from both the GSA Board (GSAB) and the GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC)."

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section K.POL.5.1.b:

"In planning and managing its budget, the GSA will ... take into account the GSA's vision, mission, and mandate, which are based largely on the GSA's duties as set out in the Post-Secondary Learning Act (PSLA), and be guided by the GSA Board Strategic Work Plan."

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section K.POL.5.1.c:

"In planning and managing its budget, the GSA will ... ensure the long-term viability and robust health of a fees-driven organization which delivers a range of services."

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section K.POL.5.1.e:

"In planning and managing its budget, the GSA will ... facilitate long-term planning by developing a three (3) year rolling budget and business plan for revenue and expenditure."

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section K.POL.5.1.f:

"In planning and managing its budget, the GSA will ... enable provision of the key financials, budget projections, information notes, and any other documentation required by GSA Council, the GSAB, GSA BFC, or the GSA's Auditor."

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section K.POL.5.1.j:

“In planning and managing its budget, the GSA shall ... propose to GSA Council a budget that represents all aspects of the GSA’s operations.”

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section K.POL.6.1:

“The Unrestricted and Restricted Operating Budget will be organized into broad budget divisions which are presented to the GSA BFC, the GSAB, and GSA Council in the fall, winter, and spring/summer terms reports and the annual three (3) year rolling budget and business plan.”

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section Q.BYL.4.3:

“Union dues collected will be held in a restricted GSA Labour Union Fund and used solely to support the GSA’s activities pursuant to the Labour Relations Code on behalf of academically-employed graduated students, including collective bargaining and representation of academically-employed graduate students ... the GSA will not use any amount of the union dues for purposes other than those described in GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section Q.BYL.4.3.”

Item 7c: Submitted Motions to Council - Outlines of Issue

Outline of Issue**Suggested Motion for GSA Council:**

That GSA Council **APPROVE** the below proposal for Councillor-led Motion procedure.

Background:

“The following motion shall be put to the GSA council at the March 2025 meeting. This motion directly proposes a change to the policies.

WHEREAS no current formal structure exists for the proposal of written motions,

AND WHEREAS the creation of a formal structure for the proposal of written motions would help ensure efficiency and clarity in the GSA structure,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT a structure for written motions be defined in the GSA policies (and made clearly available to the public through the website) as a requirement for putting forward a motion, in the following structure: all clauses are to be presented in the form of "WHEREAS" and "BE IT RESOLVED THAT," where any number of at least one of the former and at least one of the latter, in that order, and where any additional clauses of each be presented as "AND WHEREAS" and "BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT," and where any additional context that is relevant and useful to the discussion of the motion but not contained within the official scope of the motion itself or its component clauses, be added in an optional section entitled "CONTEXT," and that the written motion shall be preceded with a clear statement of which meeting the motion shall be presented at, and for the purposes of clarity shall also clearly state its function in the cases of direct changes to bylaws, direct changes to policies, and indirect proposals to change the policies or bylaws but are first charged to the governance committee to draft.”

Jurisdiction:

C.POL.5.2 Motions (formal proposals that GSA Council take certain actions), are normally accompanied by a Notice of Motion (advance written notice that a Motion will be presented and debated at an

upcoming meeting of GSA Council). Notices of Motion must Section C: GSA Council 14 be presented in time to be circulated with the first mailing of the GSA Council material, as described above.

C.POL.5.2.a To move a Motion, voting members of GSA Council must first be recognized by the Speaker. A Motion must be seconded; a second simply indicates that the seconder agrees that the Motion should be debated and not that the seconder necessarily favours the Motion.

C.POL.5.2.b During discussion and debate, voting members of GSA Council may:

C.POL.5.2.b.i Move an amendment to a Motion. Amendments to a Motion must be germane; that is, they must be closely related to the subject of the Motion.

C.POL.5.2.b.ii Move a Motion to Defer, which enables the discussion of a substantive issue to be put off to a later, specified time.

C.POL.5.2.b.iii Move a Motion to Table, which allows GSA Council to lay aside a Motion until some future time. This Motion is not debatable, except with respect to when the Motion will return to GSA Council.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Outline of Issue

Suggested Motion for GSA Council:

That GSA Council **APPROVE** the following changes to Bylaw according to the below stipulations.

Background:

The following motion shall be put to the GSA council at the March 2025 meeting. This motion directly proposes a change to the bylaws.

WHEREAS the current bylaw policy requires all motions to be put to the Speaker prior to the current GSA meeting,

AND WHEREAS any changes to the bylaws currently require two consecutive votes in two months with two-thirds majority each time to pass, creating inefficiency and slow change of process, which hurts the GSA's ability to implement new bylaws and improve the structure of the Bylaws,

AND WHEREAS the current system prohibits rapid response and actions from members on the Floor,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the governance committee be charged with drafting an amendment to the bylaws to grant the GSA council the power to present a motion at any regular GSA meeting without supplying said motion to the Speaker in advance, provided that such a motion be defined as a spoken motion (in contrast to a written motion, which shall be defined as any motion presented in writing to the Speaker in advance) and presented verbally to the floor, and that any spoken motion presented that does not create a change to the budget of one thousand dollars or more be voted upon at the same meeting, and that and that any motion dictating a change of one thousand dollars or more be presented at the same meeting, but voted upon at the following regular meeting. This motion shall act as the first of two votes to approve said bylaw, in order to not delay the process.

Jurisdiction:

F.POL.4 GSA Governance Committee

F.POL.4.1 Composition

F.POL.4.1.a The President, as Chair.

F.POL.4.1.b The Vice-President Student Life, as Vice-Chair.

F.POL.4.1.c Three (3) Councillors or recent former Councillors elected by GSA Council as voting

members.

F.POL.4.1.d The Speaker and Executive Director (or delegate) as non-voting members.

F.POL.4.2 Mandate

F.POL.4.2.a To advise GSA Council on matters of GSA Bylaw and Policy not in the purview of any other GSA Standing Committee, or other governance issues, and recommend changes to GSA Council.

F.POL.4.2.b Make any editorial changes (such as factual inaccuracies and other editorial issues) to the GSA governing documents as deemed necessary by the GSA Governance Committee (GSA GC).

F.POL.4.2.c As per a Motion approved by the GSA GC on 9 August 2013, and subsequently revised by the GSA GC on 29 February 2016, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the GSA GC have delegated authority to approve “purely editorial” changes. “Purely editorial” changes are defined as punctuation, italicization of Latin terms, capitalization, spelling, font, and renumbering.

F.POL.4.3 Meetings

F.POL.4.3.a Quorum is three (3) voting members including either the Chair or Vice-Chair.

Outline of Issue

Suggested Motion for GSA Council:

That GSA Council **APPROVE** the following changes to Bylaw according to the below stipulations.

Background:

The following motion shall be put to the GSA council at the March 2025 meeting. This motion directly proposes a change to the bylaws.

WHEREAS the current structure of the GSA bylaws forces a minimum of two months to change with two-thirds vote at each meeting, which acts to discourage motions for changes to the Bylaws,

AND WHEREAS all GSA councillors are expected to attend meetings, such that the presence of councillors is to be expected at each meeting and thus not expected to cause substantial change to the vote,

AND WHEREAS bylaw changes are required in order to improve the ability of the GSA to function and represent the student body,

AND WHEREAS a two-thirds majority is substantial enough that two of such votes need not be Required,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT henceforth, the governance committee be charged with writing an amendment to the bylaws to include that motions to amend the bylaws require only a two-thirds majority at a single council meeting, and need not be approved as well by a standing committee (though functional edits may be made by the governance committee in keeping with the motion's intention, meaning, and spirit, without breaking, changing, or violating its purpose, function, or form), only by the GSA council.

Jurisdiction:

Section Q: GSA Standing Committees, GSA Policy, GSA Labour Relations Committee, Section Q.POL.7.2.d
The GSA Labour Relations Committee will *"make recommendations to GSA Council with respect to GSA Bylaw and Policy on collective bargaining."*

Section A: Authority, GSA Bylaw, Authority, Section A.BYL.1.2

“These Bylaws ... may be amended by two (2) two-thirds majority votes of GSA Council held on seven (7) calendar days’ notice of Motion and no less than one (1) week apart.”

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

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

Outline of Issue

Suggested Motion for GSA Council:

That GSA Council **APPROVE** the following change to GSA Standing Committee attendance, accessibility and advertising.

Background:

The following motion shall be put to the GSA council at the March 2025 meeting. This motion directly proposes a change to the bylaws.

WHEREAS standing committees are expected to uphold the mission of the GSA,

AND WHEREAS the discussions of committees concern all GSA members,

AND WHEREAS transparency is key to the success of the GSA and the involvement of its Members,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT any GSA member may attend but not vote at the meeting of any standing committee except the ACB, without requiring invitation, and that all upcoming meetings shall be advertised on a dedicated page of the GSA website.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT relevant accessibility accommodations be made for students as needed to attend such meetings, including remote meetings.

Jurisdiction:

I.POL.16.1 A total of six (6) GSA members including at least one (1) Councillor elected by GSA Council, as voting members.

I.POL.16.2 The Chief Returning Officer and Deputy Returning Officer as non-voting members.

I.POL.16.3 The Executive Director (or delegate) as a non-voting member.

I.POL.16.4 Two (2) members from amongst the six (6) voting members of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC) will be elected by the GSA ERC to serve as Chair and Vice-Chair for the duration of their time on the GSA ERC or until they resign their positions. The members elected will be reported to GSA Council.

Outline of Issue

Suggested Motion for GSA Council:

That GSA Council **APPROVE** the following proposal to Standing Committee and confidentiality bylaw and policy.

Background:

The following motion shall be put to the GSA council at the March 2025 meeting. This motion directly proposes a change to the bylaws.

WHEREAS standing committees are expected to uphold the mission of the GSA,

AND WHEREAS secrecy and confidentiality when not needed to protect the privacy, health, and safety of individuals, contribute instead to the detriment of the GSA,

AND WHEREAS there are no bylaws or policies that mandate that standing committees be private, secret, or confidential in nature,

AND WHEREAS such secrecy discourages attendance from non-committee members,

AND WHEREAS the council and committees have a responsibility and expectation of transparency and representation to the graduate student body,

AND WHEREAS the GSA is expected to act with integrity, honesty, and in good faith,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the governance committee be charged with amending the bylaws to mandate all standing committees except the ACB to provide full meeting minutes in addition to the existing summaries, available on the GSA website to the public for all committee meetings within the last three years (to be removed from the website and available upon request after 3 years and deleted after 7), posted no later than 168 hours after the meeting's conclusion, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT all recommendations made to a committee must be made public in their totality in the same format as the minutes even if presented outside the scope of a meeting, including all recommendations made to the Budget and Finance Committee by any party, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT no standing committee except the ACB be permitted to hold a closed session or prohibit material from entering the public meeting minutes, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT no standing committee hold recess, remain in session, or otherwise extend a single meeting to last for over 24 hours.

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

H.POL.4.3 All GSA Standing Committee, GSA *ad hoc* committee, and GSA subcommittee members may be requested to sign and abide by confidentiality agreements regarding the information provided or matters discussed at the committee's meetings.

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.14.8.f The GSA ACB Chair will attend GSA Council and report briefly, in closed session, on Complaints concerning GSA Officer(s) that have been heard and decided.

Outline of Issue

Suggested Motion for GSA Council:

That GSA Council **APPROVE** the reintroduction and drafting of an impeachment and vote of no confidence procedure.

Background:

The following motion shall be put to the GSA council at the March 2025 meeting. This motion indirectly proposes a change to the bylaws to be drafted by the governance committee to present to the council at the next GSA council meeting.

CONTEXT: We need a means of holding our executives (and committee chairs) accountable. A method of removing them from office can present itself through two methods: impeachment or a Vote of No Confidence. The GSA has previously had a structure for impeachment and it was removed. This motion proposes that it be reintroduced with some changes that create an ethical system of accountability. The problem here lies in the nature of these two systems. A Vote of No Confidence that immediately removes a DEO from office is flawed because it places the power of removal in the hands of the council members, when that executive was elected by the graduate student body. However, a form of impeachment will either not remove the DEO from their position (and therefore lacks any purpose), will remove them from their position (and therefore is no different from a Vote of No Confidence), or will declare that individual unfit for office and then delegate the decision of their removal to a third party. The third party in this case would be composed of a smaller group of individuals, likely elected by the council, which further distances the process from the democratic system in a similar and more significant way than the Vote of No Confidence, and creates further risk of a lack of accountability. In order to function, this third party would need to be able to reject the removal of the DEO from their office, but this would violate the democratic will of the GSA. If this third party is assumed to agree with the GSA's Impeachment vote, then there is no purpose to their existence. Considering all of this, the following process is presented as an ethical and accountable approach that permits greater involvement from the graduate student body.

WHEREAS the GSA council and graduate student body has no means of holding executive officers accountable,

AND WHEREAS the ability to hold executive officers accountable is a required element of a functioning structure,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT that the governance committee be charged with drafting a bylaw that

shall be presented to the council, to introduce a process of Impeachment against any Directly Elected Officer (DEO) at any GSA council meeting, that shall pass at a 50%+1 majority, and that in the event of an Impeachment, the Impeached DEO be immediately suspended from their position until a Vote of No Confidence against the Impeached DEO is put to the GSA council, and that a Vote of No Confidence shall be declared against an Impeached DEO at the next regular GSA meeting that falls a minimum of two weeks in the future of the Impeachment, and that a Vote of No Confidence shall not be put to any DEO that has not been successfully Impeached, and that a second Impeachment vote shall not be put to the same DEO within any 60-day period (or two regular GSA meetings including cancelled regular meetings, whichever is greater), and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the governance committee also be charged with creating a bylaw that shall be presented to the council, to introduce a process for a Vote of No Confidence, where such a vote may be put to the council to immediately remove any GSA Council-Elected Officer from their post, or any non-executive Chair of committee from the role of Chair, or any Impeached DEO (in accordance with the above process) from their position, and the reason for their removal (including mention of an Impeachment) to be made available in council meeting minutes and archives, and that such a motion may be put forth no more often than once every three months (or three regular GSA meetings including cancelled regular meetings, whichever is greater) for the removal of any individual officer, and that such a motion may be put forth no more than once every three months by the same presenting individual regardless of whom it may target, and that such a motion shall pass at a rate of two-thirds majority by the GSA council, and that any successful Vote of No Confidence shall trigger a by-election for the vacant position, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the governance committee, in both of these charges, create such bylaws in keeping with the spirit of this motion, which is accountability and a proper democratic process, and that any changes made to either of these charges be made to improve the process rather than to change its intention.

Jurisdiction:

H.POL.14.1 Receipt of Complaints and Setting the Hearing Date(s)

H.POL.14.1.a Complaints about a GSA Officer(s) will be directed to the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (GSA ACB) Chair and copied to the Executive Director (ED) (or delegate).

H.POL.14.1.b Complaints may be made by any person(s).

H.POL.14.1.c Complaints about the performance or conduct of a GSA Officer(s) or about conflict of interest or commitment relating to a GSA Officer(s) must be in writing (ie not oral), and signed. They must provide a complete description of the circumstances that have prompted the Complaint, a list of any known witnesses the Complainant intends to call, and any suggested remedy or action.

H.POL.14.1.d Upon receipt of a Complaint, the GSA ACB Chair will confer with the ED (or

delegate), who will seek legal advice if necessary.

H.POL.14.1.e Where there is a Complaint about a GSA Officer(s), the GSA ACB Chair and Vice-Chair, in consultation with the ED (or delegate), will decide, normally within two (2) working days, if the GSA Officer(s) may be suspended with pay, as relevant, until the hearing is complete; as needed the President or Acting President, in consultation with the ED (or delegate) will decide on how Directly-Elected Officer(s)' duties will be carried out during a suspension.

H.POL.14.1.f The GSA ACB Chair and Vice-Chair, in consultation with the ED (or delegate), can dismiss a Complaint if it is unfounded, frivolous, or vexatious. This decision must be given in writing and is final and binding.

H.POL.14.1.g If the Chair proceeds with the Complaint, a hearing date(s) will be set.

Outline of Issue

Suggested Motion for GSA Council:

That GSA Council **APPROVE** the changes to the Associate Vice-President Labour voting privileges.

Background:

The following motion shall be put to the GSA council at the March 2025 meeting. This motion directly proposes a change to the bylaws.

WHEREAS the AVP Labour currently has no opportunity to vote on matters that concern the AVP Labour, including budgetary concerns.

AND WHEREAS the AVP Labour sits as a non-voting member in committees.

AND WHEREAS the AVP Labour functionally represents all graduate students and matters that concern all graduate students, regardless of their academic employment status,

AND WHEREAS the role of the AVP Labour is hindered through an inability to vote on relevant Matters,

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the governance committee be charged with amending to the bylaws to grant the AVP Labour an equal vote in all standing committees and all matters concerning the AVP Labour, and all matters that other VP roles are capable of voting on.

Jurisdiction:

B.BYL.3.1 All GSA members, except associate members, are eligible to vote and run in all GSA elections (excluding the election of the Associate Vice-President Labour, in which voting and nominations are restricted to academically-employed graduate students) and referenda.

D.BYL.2.2.g The Associate Vice-President Labour is responsible for labour-related matters concerning academically-employed graduate students (including collective bargaining), and leads the GSA's work as a union.

D.POL.4.8 Depending on the unique backgrounds and skills of Directly-Elected Officers (DEOs) (and **excluding** the Associate Vice-President Labour (AVPL)), they may be called upon to assist with special projects, new initiatives, or aspects of a colleague's portfolio.

D.POL.11 Associate Vice-President Labour

D.POL.11.1 Duties

- D.POL.11.1.a The Associate Vice-President Labour (AVPL) has overall responsibility for matters relating to academically-employed graduate students and oversight of the GSA's work as a union.
- D.POL.11.1.b The AVPL is the chief negotiator of the Collective Agreement (CA) with the University covering all academically-employed graduate students.
- D.POL.11.1.c The AVPL also negotiates other matters with the University related to academically-employed graduate students, including issues regarding interpretation of the CA.
- D.POL.11.1.d The AVPL, in consultation with faculty stewards, where appropriate, advises academically-employed graduate students and answers questions from them related to compliance with and interpretation of the CA, as well as works towards informal resolution of disputes where appropriate.
- D.POL.11.1.e The AVPL seeks resolution of grievances in accordance with the process outlined in the CA, in consultation with the GSA Labour Relations Committee (GSA LRC) and the Executive Director (ED) (or delegate) as needed.
- D.POL.11.1.f The AVPL collaborates with the GSA LRC on specific labour-related projects.
- D.POL.11.1.g The position of AVPL requires close contact with the ED (or delegate) on labour-related matters as they arise and regular weekly contact with the President, ED (or delegate), Executive Coordinator, and the other Directly-Elected Officers.
- D.POL.11.1.h The position of AVPL totals approximately twenty (20) to thirty (30) hours per week on average and may include evenings and weekends. This includes but is not limited to both time spent preparing for and attending formal meetings as well as time spent reading and responding to emails, participation in travel associated with conferences and advocacy opportunities, work done on various projects and initiatives, informal strategic and problem-solving meetings, etc.

D.POL.11.2 Committees

- D.POL.11.2.a The AVPL chairs the GSA LRC and leads the GSA Negotiating Team.
- D.POL.11.2.b The AVPL is a non-voting member of the GSA Budget and Finance Committee.
- D.POL.11.2.c The AVPL is a member of any University boards and committees related to workplace health and safety issues.

D.POL.11.3 Qualifications

- D.POL.11.3.a A background in law and/or business and/or labour issues is advantageous.
- D.POL.11.3.b Previous experience on the GSA LRC or with collective bargaining is advantageous.

D.POL.11.3.c The AVPL must be an academically-employed graduate student at the time of their election, or have been academically-employed within the preceding academic year.

Item 8a: GSA President Reports

**2024-2025 President
Report to GSA Council for the 30 April 2025, Meeting**

To: Council Members
From: Muhammad Haseeb Arshad
Date: 2025/4/29

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

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between Mar 25 to April 28, 2025 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

Date	Meeting
Mar 25	CASA GAC Meeting
Mar 25	Meeting with Ange Adrien and Haseeb
Mar 26	Monthly Meeting with T. Ravio
Mar 27	Meeting with A. Lam and M. Padfield
Mar 27	Meeting with the Provost
Mar 27	UofA La Bruyere-Eccles-MaLaren Dinner
Mar 28	UofA Board of Governors
Mar 28	GSA President / Associate Director Meeting
Mar 31	General Faculties Council
Apr 2-4	CASA AGM
Apr 3	Meeting with M. Padfield & A. Kumar
Apr 7	PAWSOC
Apr 9	Post Secondary Education Task Force
Apr 10	Celebrate Sustainability Awards Ceremony
Apr 11	GSA Volunteer Appreciation Lunch
Apr 11	LISSA/GSA Collaboration Meeting
Apr 11	New Majority / GSA Collaboration
Apr 12	ESA Metting with Edmonton Mayor
Apr 14	Meeting with President Flanagan & Chief of Staff
Apr 14	GSA EDIC Meeting
Apr 15	Teaching & Learning AI Subcommittee Meeting
Apr 16	GPS Council

Apr 23	Funding Panel: Student Input Session
Apr 25	GC Monthly Meeting
Apr 25	Engagement with Purpose Steering Committee
Apr 25	Haseeb/Melissa
Apr 25	GSA and UASU
Apr 28	IPR/GSA/IGSA Bi-Monthly meetings

Dear Council Members,

Writing this final report for the April meeting feels a bit surreal. When you elected an international PhD student far from home to lead the GSA, you gave me a chance I'll never forget. Thank you for that trust.

As the term winds down, I hope you pause to be proud of whatever you have tackled, whether getting a thesis draft done, powering through a mountain of exams to grade, or just keeping a daily routine on track. All of it counts, and all of it deserves celebrating.

Month after month, council members spoke for grad students with honesty and courage. Those conversations (sometimes messy, always worthwhile) made this job challenging in the best possible way. I will miss the day-to-day hustle here, but my drive to support students is not going anywhere.

This year was especially challenging for our whole team, yet we still made a real impact, and I am proud of every member. Saad showed unwavering dedication to student support. Rija kept our projects moving despite an intense academic and personal workload. Ben rallied early, backing for the team when it mattered most. Parman's resilience inspired me to push for vital external funding for graduate students, and Muneeb's ability to work as a team player set a high bar for us all. I am equally grateful to our current support staff (Grace, Brandy, Vanessa, Cindy, Dorota, and Seidy) whose steady help in good times and bad kept us focused on the work that mattered.

Here are some of the highlights from the past month

UofA's 2025-2026 Budget at Board of Governors:

The university's budget went to the Board of Governors for approval this month. We have repeatedly flagged how rising costs are squeezing graduate students, and the administration did respond in part by adopting a differential-tuition model. Still, that model is nowhere near what many struggling students would call acceptable.

One bright spot: the university set this year's tuition-offset fund at \$8.55 million. That pool now covers course-based students and shifts some money from purely merit-based awards into hybrid awards—the Turtle Island Award is one example. It's a step in the right direction.

To keep our advocacy rolling, I invited the incoming GSA President to sit with me through the open sessions of the board meeting. I also used the floor to question a 20 percent jump in parking-permit prices—well above inflation—and asked the administration to revisit that hike before year-end.

Looking ahead, we must keep pressing the university to find sustainable revenue sources instead of defaulting to quick fixes like higher tuition or service fees. I urge the next executive team to deepen talks with the Minister of Advanced Education, stressing that steady graduate-student funding is vital to Alberta's research and creative economy. We've made some gains, but the fight for a fair, transparent budget that puts affordability first isn't over.

Annual General Meeting Conference of CASA:

Parman and I attended CASA's Annual General Meeting, the last gathering of the year. Delegates reviewed progress on strategic initiatives, shared lessons learned, and fine-tuned policy language to strengthen our advocacy. We debated and passed several new measures, including the launch of a CASA alumni network, and approved next year's budget—always a lively discussion.

For the GSA, CASA continues to be a valuable partner. The national platform connects us directly to federal decision-makers and to student leaders across Canada, letting us build coalitions quickly. This year that Alberta network helped us push for stronger provincial funding, clearer MNIF rules, and meaningful consultation on legislation such as Bills 18 and 13. Federally, CASA's lobbying helped secure another year of the \$4,200 maximum student grant—an \$870 million non-repayable grants for students—and opened the door for us to present recommendations to the House Committee on Science and Research (SRSR).

Overall, the AGM reinforced CASA's role in amplifying graduate-student voices and gave us fresh momentum for the year ahead.

Collaboration with New Majority:

We partnered with New Majority to boost student turnout for the federal “Vote on Campus” program. Under our agreement, the New Majority hired four GSA volunteers to canvas graduate buildings, answer questions about voting, and point students toward the on-campus polling station. We were the only graduate students’ association in Alberta to secure this kind of collaboration and paid work for our volunteers.

From 13 to 16 April, we hosted the New Majority field team in our office, giving them a base close to the polling site. Together we reached hundreds of grad students who might otherwise have missed the chance to vote. Special thanks go to volunteers and to Jayde, Michael, and Amanda from New Majority for working with the GSA so well.

The project delivered two wins: paid opportunities for our members and stronger civic engagement on campus. It is a model worth repeating in future elections.

Jack Mintz Funding Panel: Student Input Session

I joined student leaders from more than twenty Alberta associations at the Mintz Funding Review “Student Input Session.” The discussion centered on how the current funding model of the province fails to keep pace with inflation, forces institutions to rely on tuition and Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees and leaves little room to address maintenance backlogs or invest in student supports. I pointed out that flat operating grants have effectively become cuts, while the Alberta Student Grant and other aid streams are not indexed to CPI. Real-property restrictions, slow program-approval timelines, and inconsistent rules between institutions were cited as additional obstacles to financial stability.

These funding pressures have tangible effects on students and teaching quality. Mental health and career services have been clipped, larger class sizes and over-reliance on sessional instructors have become the norm, and delays in course offerings are extending time-to-degree. International students, who already subsidize base operations through higher fees, face new federal restrictions, further endangering institutional budgets and prompting staff-cut directives of up to twenty percent in some universities.

Speaking for the UAGSA, I emphasized that predictable tuition caps and indexed financial-aid envelopes are essential to keeping graduate programs accessible. I highlighted the cascading impact of service cuts on research productivity and mental health and urged the panel to adopt a “total cost to degree” perspective rather than focusing solely on headline tuition. The group agreed to reconvene before the

formal Mintz hearing to refine shared data, correct ongoing misconceptions from earlier reports, and insist on student representation throughout the redesign process.

Looking ahead, I wish the incoming team to urge the Mintz panel to see this review as a chance to design a funding framework that safeguards quality without pricing students out of graduate study. As my term ends, I hope the incoming GSA team seizes this momentum—pressing both the province and our institution to index aid to inflation, and place student affordability at the heart of every budget decision. I wish them every success in carrying that message forward.

As I hand over this work, I'm proud of the progress we've made together, from rebuilding key policies to defending student affordability, and even prouder of the community that powered those wins. Our council has shown what's possible when grad students speak with one voice, and I'm confident that momentum will carry into the year ahead.

Though wrapping up is a bit bittersweet, I know the next President will keep the lines open and keep pushing for what matters to grad students at U of A. Reach out to me any time until 30 April 2025 and after that, Aashish will be your go-to guy. I am, however, always happy to help.

Wishing you all a spring filled with a little rest, some peace of mind, and plenty of color to recharge your batteries.

Sincerely,

Haseeb Arshad, President of the GSA

**GSA Board
Report to GSA Council for the 30 April 2025, Meeting**

To: Council Members
From: Chair GSA Board
Date: 2025/4/29

Dear Council Members,

The GSA Board (GSAB) reports regularly to GSA Council by listing its agenda items, motions/agreements, and main items of discussion. Motions of Agenda approval and approval of the Minutes are not included unless there are amendments made. Closed session items are not minuted. GSA Council members are always able to ask questions about items that were discussed in closed sessions. Open session Minutes are available upon request.

26 March 2025 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

UofA Consolidated Budget, DEO's Reports, Management Report.

Motions and Agreements:

Motion: That the GSA Board to APPROVE the attached summary of estimated expenses incurred through attendance at the Canadian Alliance of Student Association (CASA) Conference April 2-4, 2025, in Winnipeg, Manitoba). **RK MOVED; PS Seconded. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Motion: That the GSA Governance Committee RECOMMEND to GSA Board for approval, the recommended changes to GSA Policy: Recommended Changes to GSA Policy, Section D, F & K. **RK MOVED; PS Seconded. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Motion: That the GSA Board move to have a Special Council Session for the approval of the GSA 2025-2026 and 3-Year Plan Budget. **SI MOVED; PS Seconded. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

16 April 2025 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

TD Insurance Annual Review Presentation, Get Out to Vote Campaign, Code of Conduct Procedure, DEO's Reports, Management Report.

Motions and Agreements:

Motion: That the GSA Board, pursuant to its authority under GSA Bylaw Section A.BYL.3.2, APPROVE AND ADOPT the attached revisions to Section 8 of the Board Policy (Human Resources), thereby establishing a clear, structured framework for the recruitment, selection, and appointment of the Executive Director. **SI MOVED;** PS Seconded. **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

23 April 2025 GSA Board Meeting**Main Agenda Items:**

DEO's Reports, Management Report.

Motions and Agreements:

Motion: That the GSA Board to APPROVE the attached summary of estimated expenses incurred through attendance at the Canadian Alliance of Student Association (CASA) Conference May 12 - 16, 2025, in Ottawa, Ontario. **SI MOVED;** RK Seconded. **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Motion: That the GSA Board RECOMMEND TO GSA COUNCIL FOR APPROVAL, having also been unanimously and separately recommended by the GSA Budget and Finance Committee, the Operating and Capital Budget (2025-2026) (found in the attached material in the "2025-2026 Budget for Approval" column bordered in red on each page), the Labour Union Dues Budget (2025-2026) (found in the attached material in the "2025-2026 Budget for Approval" column bordered in red on each page), and the Restricted and Other Funding Budget (2025-2026) (found in the attached material in the "2025-2026 Budget for Approval" column bordered in red). **SI MOVED;** RK Seconded. **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Motion: That the GSA Board APPROVE AND RECOMMEND to GSA Council for information, the GSA EDIC Two-Year Action Plan Draft. **SI MOVED;** RK Seconded. **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

I am happy to answer any questions during the April meeting.

Sincerely,

Haseeb Arshad, President and Chair of the GSA Board

**GSA Governance Committee
Report to GSA Council for the 30 April 2025, Meeting**

To: Council Members
From: Chair GSA GC
Date: 2025/4/29

Dear Council Members,

I hope this report finds you well. I am pleased to provide an update on the final Governance Committee (GC) meeting for the term 2024-2025.

On April 25, 2025, the GC convened for my last meeting, where we completed a detailed line-by-line review of the proposed overhaul to the Governance Committee of our policy manual. The package replaces the old, executive-heavy composition with a skills-based slate of councillors, governance-trained members, and students-at-large. It also introduces annual gap-analysis and audit requirements so that bylaws and policies are updated on a schedule instead of in fits and starts.

Crucially, we agreed to remove the ACB from the list of standing committees. That change eliminates any perception that the ACB might influence the rules it is later asked to interpret, and it strengthens our conflict-of-interest safeguards across the association.

We also opened a discussion on a new, mandatory Code of Conduct that will apply equally to officers, councillors, and staff. Drafting the code has been slow work, but the committee finally has clear direction and hopefully will bring forward a full policy-and-procedure set in the coming months. I am encouraged by the committee's commitment to plug structural gaps and build a governance culture anchored in transparency and independence.

If you have any questions, please send me an email or I will look forward to answering your questions during the April meeting.

Sincerely,

Haseeb Arshad, President and Chair of the GSA GC

**GSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee
Report to GSA Council for the 30 April 2025, Meeting**

To: Council Members
From: Acting Chair GSA EDI
Date: 2025/4/28

Dear Council Members,

The EDI Committee met on April 14, 2025, to discuss several important initiatives aimed at advancing equity, accessibility, and inclusion within the GSA and the broader university community.

Over my last three meetings, one theme kept coming up: we want less talk and more action. The most recent GSA-run EDI survey also pointed to that gap, so I suggested we build a concrete roadmap instead of another discussion paper. I'm happy to say the committee has now drafted a two-year EDI Action Plan that spells out specific steps the GSA should take—and, just as important, assigns committee members to make sure each step happens.

Please look at the plan and send your feedback. The committee will be treating it as a living document that will evolve with campus needs, not a binder that gathers dust. This is a big milestone for the GSA and a clear sign that the committee is ready to move from conversation to meaningful, on-the-ground change, building a culture of care and a campus where everyone feels they belong.

If you have any questions, please send me an email or I will look forward to answering your questions during the April meeting.

Sincerely,

Haseeb Arshad, President and Acting Chair of the GSA EDI

Item 8b: VP Academic Report

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

To: GSA Council
From: Rija Kamran
Date: April 25, 2025

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

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between February 24, 2025 to April 23, 2025 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board and other internal committee meetings).

Graduate Program Support Team (Feb 24)
General Faculties Council (Feb 24)
ISVS Drop-In Hours (Feb 24)
CASA Year-In-Review Consultation (Feb 26)
CASA Year-In-Review Consultation (Feb 27)
GFC Executive Subcommittee on Governance & Procedural Oversight (Mar 3)
Standing Committee on Convocation (Mar 10)
GFC Budget Update Meeting (Mar 10)
LMS of the Future Advisory Committee Meeting (Mar 11)
Bi-Monthly Meeting with the Dean of Students (Mar 11)
GFC Executive Committee (Mar 17)
FGPS Caucus (Mar 17)
NAC Committee (Mar 17)
Meeting with a Student (Mar 19)
FPGS Council (Mar 19)
Graduate Program Support Team (Mar 24)
GSA Ambassador Program Working Group (Mar 24)
CASA Consultation Sessions (Mar 24)
GFC Executive Subcommittee on Governance and Procedural Oversight (Mar 24)

GOTV Drop-In Session (Mar 26)
GFC Council Caucus (Mar 28)
SGBV Advisory Council (Mar 28)
General Faculties Council (Mar 31)
Meeting with a Student (April 8)
GFC Nominating Committee (April 9)
GSA Volunteer Appreciation Lunch (April 11)
FGPS Caucus (April 14)
GFC Executive Committee (April 14)
FGPS Council (April 16)
Graduate Student Peer Support Training Pilot Plenary (April 22)
GFC Committee on the Learning Environment and Student Affairs (CLESA) (April 23)

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope everyone is having a smooth end of term. Thank you for trusting me as your VP Academic for the past two years. I am grateful to have had this opportunity. Please see my last council report attached. An update on some of the key initiatives I have been working on with the team will be detailed in the SWP update.

GFC Executive Subcommittee on Governance & Procedural Oversight (Mar 3, Mar 24)

I attended the GFC Exec Subcommittee GPO, we have made significant strides in the discussion around GFC composition that has been a standing item for many years now. This year we have gained clarity on this issue through consultations with a governance expert C Foy, to understand the importance of clear role definitions, skills-based governance, and treating governance reform as change management. Committee concluded this discussion by considering options for addressing unresolved questions around GFC composition, including maintaining the status quo, limiting appointed members, or creating an ad hoc review committee.

LMS of the Future Advisory Committee Meeting (Mar 11)

I am continuing to participate in the LMS of Future Advisory Committee as we continue to migrate from e-class to Canvas, the new LMS. As of early Winter 2025, about 30% of courses are now on Canvas and this will continue till later in the year. Some new updates include the option for instructors to enable self-enrollment for their courses. This functionality is currently being delivered through a [manual process](#)

triggered by sending an email request to eClass support with ongoing plans to streamline the workflow further. This is an example of one of the features that was requested. We also talked about additional ways to support the transition to Canvas as e-class goes to read only mode starting this Fall. If you have any concerns, questions or feedback, please feel free to pass them along to the VPA email.

Graduate Program Support Team (Mar 24)

I attended the GPST meeting. Committee discussed course changes in Civil Engineering (CIVE 668), Biomedical Engineering (BME 580), Physics (PHYS 567, PHYS 511, PHYS 512, PHYS 524, PHYS 530, PHYS 541, PHYS 580, PHYS 590) and minor changes in Education Policy Studies and some Bulk ELP submissions. If you would like to go over the details relating to any of these changes, please feel free to send an email to the VPA email.

Graduate Student Peer Support Training Pilot Plenary (April 22)

I attended the Graduate Student Peer Support Training Pilot Plenary; the purpose of this session was to identify core competencies and training opportunities for the volunteers/peers. The overall role of the volunteers will be to provide peer-to-peer active listening support for graduate students dealing with a range of challenges and helping graduate students navigate university resources and connect them with subject matter experts. The volunteers will be trained and supported to ensure they can foster a sense of community by serving as a point of contact to help direct graduate students to relevant supports and advice. The call for volunteers is now open, please reach out to me if you would like to know more about this position.

GFC Committee on the Learning Environment and Student Affairs (CLESA) (April 23)

I attended the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment and Student Affairs meeting. One of the biggest updates I would like to highlight is an upcoming editorial change to the University Calendar's Academic Regulations. This change will remove the deadline for students to request accommodation for absences from term work or final exams due to religious belief in compliance with the University's Discrimination, Harassment, and Duty to Accommodate Policy and The Alberta Human Rights Act (RSA 2000, c. A-25.5, s. 4), which recognizes religious belief as a protected ground. This was a key ask from the students and GSA was a proponent and advocate for this. The committee also received annual reports on Appeals and Compliance; and Sexual and Gender Based violence.

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

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

Item 8d: VP Student Services Report

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

To: GSA Council
From: Saad A. Iqbal
Date: Apr. 23, 2025

2024-2025 GSA VP Student Services Meetings Attended by Saad A. Iqbal

Below is a list of meetings I attended between March 19 and April 23, 2025 (not including weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

Date	Meeting
March 21	Pre- Panel Discussion - Homeownership: What Is It but a Dream?
March 24	The Future of WDSJ: Living Library or Something Else?
March 24	Saad/Hazel (GSA) Meeting with Katherine Huising (CS)
March 25	Meeting with CFB Staff (re: Help Your Shelf Store)
March 26	Days of Action Committee Meeting
March 26	DAAC Meeting
March 27	Panel Discussion - Homeownership: What Is It but a Dream?
March 28	Campus & Community Recreation & GSA Bi-Monthly Meeting
March 31	RAC Meeting
March 31	Final Student Group Mental Health Network Meeting
April 1	Co-Sponsor Updates SEAP

April 3	HCA Summit Planning Committee Meeting
April 3	Meeting with CFB Staff (re: Help Your Shelf Store)
April 3	Meeting with CFB Board Chair
April 7	PAWSOC Meeting
April 8	Saad/Kevin Meeting
April 8	DoS and AVP Coffee Hour (Sip and Synch)
April 11	GSA Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon
April 11	Meeting with a Student (Confidential)
April 14	Meeting with CFB Board Member
April 14	Saad (GSA) Meeting with Katherine Huising (CS)
April 14	CFB Board: Generative Discussion
April 21	Studentcare Updates with Robyn Paches

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope you're all doing well, in your academic, professional, and personal pursuits. As the current term ends, there are several positive updates that the current Executive Board will be sharing soon with the council and the general membership in the form of our Strategic Workplan Updates. This year, we achieved many milestones that will impact our graduate students' academic success and overall well-being. As a contributor to the SWP updates document, I feel confident that our general membership will find these updates to be promising and an affirmation of our collective commitment to improving the experiences of fellow graduate students. While many of the initiatives started in the current year have been completed, there are several which will be carried forward for the next Executive Board to consider and contribute accordingly. As I continue my role as the VP SSE for the second term, one of the most important responsibilities I would like to focus on is completing the work started in my current term and regularly updating the Council on the progress made. When you get a chance to review the SWP Updates, please share your feedback and suggestions related to any of the initiatives that fall under my portfolio.

To conclude the last month's engagements for the current term, below are the details of the meetings I have attended between March 19 and April 23, 2025:

Pre-Panel Discussion - Homeownership: What Is It but a Dream?

I attended a pre-panel discussion with Dr. Joshua Evans to talk about the key discussion areas for the panel. The purpose of this meeting was to go through the structure and prepare better. The details of the panel are mentioned below.

The Future of WDSJ: Living Library or Something Else?

This was a follow-up meeting after the WDSJ Living Library programming. Members discussed what the future of this Day of Action could look like. There were a couple of ideas that were brought forward. One of the directions this programming may take includes video/film formats. Other aspects such as communication strategies, food availability and potential venues were also discussed. I would be happy to share more details as the discussions progress.

Saad/Hazel (GSA) Meeting with Katherine Huising (CS)

This is a regular meeting that VP SL takes with Katherine Huising (VP of Facilities and Operations). Since I have been filling in this role until the recently elected VP SL joins the office, I joined the meeting along with Hazel to ensure a smoother transition. There are some key areas of priorities that we collectively discussed for the upcoming year. While the VP SL would be the main point of contact, I might be collaborating on a few initiatives. Hazel and I will share these details in the next year.

Meeting with CFB Staff (re: Help Your Shelf Store)

We have made some positive strides in realizing the hand-me-down store initiative (name suggestion: Help Your Shelf Store). This meeting was between two staff members at the Campus Food Bank and me, and we went through some ideas together. We have identified the *Rutherford Food Pantry* as a potential space for the store. We believe that the store can work better if we form partnerships with various offices on campus, including the CFB. In this meeting, we covered what our collaboration with the CFB may look like. More details are shared in a follow-up meeting below.

Days of Action Committee Meeting

In this meeting, members discussed reflections on the current year's programming related to the Days of Action. We also discussed suggestions for improving the Days of Action programming as well as follow-up on the recent Days of Action Events. The group is looking at improving some of the programming and exploring options such as "*Art with Impact*" and changing the way we observe the

World Day of Social Justice. As we move forward, I will be sharing the updates. Members also provided updates on the events and activities organized by other groups on campus such as rock climbing, meditative sessions, the Happiness Awards, poetry chapbook, podcasts, display of creative works and many others.

DAAC Meeting

In my last report, I shared that the DAAC meetings have concluded for this year. However, as opposed to the last meeting, the meeting on March 26 is in fact, the last meeting of this academic year. Members were given a presentation on the [SEAP Report to the Community](#). We also had some discussion items such as the DAAC Action Plan Primer, the Canadian Campus Wellbeing survey, and the Update on Student Advocacy Support. If Councillors want to get more updates on these items, please reach out to me. Towards the end of the meeting, we discussed our experiences of working with the DAAC and our suggestions and feedback for the next year.

Panel Discussion - Homeownership: What Is It but a Dream?

On March 27, I participated in the Panel Discussion on Homeownership as a panelist. I was accompanied by Lisa Glock, the UASU President, Emma-Leigh Snow, representative from the Indigenous Students' Union, Dr. Robert Summers, Professor and Director of the UofA's School of Urban and Regional Planning and a housing expert, and Dr. Joshua Evans, Associate Professor of Human Geography and Session Moderator. Our panel discussion focused on the skyrocketing real estate prices, declining rates in homeownership, inflation and other barriers to homeownership and the struggles of Millennials and Gen Zs, especially the students. We also talked about our own experiences and those shared by our fellow students at the UofA and tried to identify the drivers of the housing affordability crisis while also pointing to some solutions to address these issues. One of the many solutions we talked about, is to provide educational and awareness programs to students at the UofA including information on renter's rights, and financial literacy around housing affordability. This is perhaps a good direction that the GSA can work on in the upcoming years. I will be sharing more details in our upcoming council meetings.

Campus & Community Recreation & GSA Bi-Monthly Meeting

In this recurring meeting with the representatives from the CCR, we discussed some updates including data collection around the usage of CCR facilities by graduate students. The GSA has been advocating for this data for us to prioritize areas of improvement and streamline the access and usage of the CCR facilities. Due to privacy and security concerns, this process has taken some time, but the data will be available soon and help us in our future planning. We also discussed a potential collaboration with CCR for one of our social hours in the Fall term. This year, my portfolio along with others utilized collaboration

as a key to offer many events, activities, and programs that have greatly benefited the graduate students. To continue in this direction, we are looking at collaborating with the CCR to organize a social hour at the Wilson Climbing Centre. We also discussed other activities such as *Plants Night* and explored potential formal agreements between the GSA and CCR to collaborate on events regularly. Please look out for more details in the upcoming term.

Note: The CCR routinely hires students for several different positions. For this purpose, there is a page for career and employment options whose details can be found [here](#).

RAC Meeting

The Residence Advisory Committee meets to discuss avenues for improving the experiences of students who reside in on-campus housing facilities. This meeting (taken on behalf of the VP SL) focused on some regular updates regarding on-campus housing as well as the development of a new maintenance platform called *StarRez*. The portal will start working from May 1 this year and on-campus residents will be able to submit direct requests related to maintenance and other issues, significantly cutting down the processing times. Starting May 1, our incoming VP SL will continue taking these meetings.

Final Student Group Mental Health Network Meeting

This student group is an important network where members from various student groups share regular updates about mental health resources and programming. In our final meeting for this year, we discussed key takeaways from our experiences as well as ideas and conversations to improve the impact of various mental health-related programs and events that are organized by individual groups. Some of the useful insights generated from the meeting include making mental health events more accessible (in-person and hybrid options), culturally sensitive events, combining educational and social aspects, follow-up surveys, and finding ways to encourage participation. Also discussed were ways in which partner student groups can stay connected better and internal improvements for the network. The meeting also covered key updates from student groups including a brief overview of the GSA's focus areas and initiatives around mental health.

Co-Sponsor Updates SEAP

The Student Experience Action Plan 2023-24 report to the community is now available through this [link](#). There are 72 highlights of the initiatives that began in 2023-24 to enhance students' experiences. You can also watch a small video [here](#), that briefly explains some of the updates for the year 2023-24. The SEAP survey has recently concluded, and results will be shared after the analysis. In the upcoming term,

the GSA executives will be working on aligning some of our goals with the SEAP survey results. Our VP of Student Life will be mainly carrying out this role.

HCA Summit Planning Committee Meeting

Upon invitation from the HCA and the recommendation of the GSA President, I have joined the organizing committee of this year's HCA Wellness Summit to be held in June. In this meeting, members of the organizing committee went through all the presentation submissions and ranked them into the three different themes of the summit. Looking at the submissions, I can see that the summit will be very informative and a wide variety of topics to be covered. The presentations will be useful for a variety of stakeholders including students, staff, faculty and university administrations across Alberta. The Summit will take place in Calgary at the University of Calgary between June 18-19, 2025. More details and information about registration can be found [here](#).

Meeting with CFB Staff (re: Help Your Shelf Store)

This was my second meeting with CFB staff members to discuss the future of the Help Your Shelf (hand-me-down) Store. As mentioned previously, the potential space for piloting the initiative is the Rutherford Food Pantry. The idea is to utilize half of the space in the pantry to introduce clothing racks and storage spaces for other items donated for reuse. We also discussed other aspects such as volunteer engagement and potential partnerships. Since none of these have been finalized yet, I will share more details as we move forward after having consultations with potential groups and units on campus. However, I feel very confident that this year, we will be able to formally open the store for the campus community.

PAWSOC Meeting

In this recurring meeting, we received information about the usage trends of different facilities at the PAW Centre. Positive trends highlight an increased usage of multi-purpose rooms and some other venues. UASU VP SL asked if we could get statistics about which rooms are being used for which kind of activities. Data like this and general usage among the graduate students will be helpful for the GSA as well. The PAWSOC organizes a yearly visit for select member representatives from the USAU and GSA. However, I have also requested a formal visit at the beginning of our new terms for the Executive Board Members for 2025-26 to visit the Van Vliet and associated facilities to have a better understanding of them.

Saad (GSA)/Kevin (DoS) Meeting

In this recurring meeting with the Assistant Dean of Health and Wellness, we covered regular updates from the Wellness Supports and other units under the DoS. We also discussed ongoing collaborative

projects such as the Help Your Shelf Store and the Hydroponics Farm. While space allocation solves some of the issues for the Store, we are still looking at ways to realize the Hydroponics Farm Project, for which space and budget remain a key area of concern. It is, however, promising to see that Ravina Sanghera the DoS has taken a keen interest in the Hydroponics Farm. The DoS is open to exploring the project as a research initiative. Kevin and I have also now looped in the new Executive Director of the CFB, and our next meetings will cover further steps to be taken.

DoS and AVP Coffee Hour (Sip and Synch)

This is the second Dean's and AVP's Coffee Chat, with a slight change of name: Sip and Synch Session. Like our last session, this session was also productive, and we had many generative discussion points to talk about. Moving on, there is a suggestion to expand the coffee sessions and explore the possibility of having other UofA representatives and officers from units. We will work on this further and see how this can be realized. Some of the topics we covered include the need for additional Google Drive storage space for research-based graduate students, administrative help for international students especially around advising for course registration, support for the Campus Food Bank, and collaboration opportunities for different units on campus. At this time, we are going to move with a model of having two coffee chats in each of the Fall and Winter terms (total 4 chats) every year.

GSA Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon

We celebrated the work of our volunteers who showed their unwavering commitment to the GSA's events and activities and contributed through their time and dedication. The GSA outgoing/incoming Executives and the volunteers had a chance to socialize and share perspectives on some issues. The event was also helpful in promoting the Get Out the Vote campaign.

Saad/Hazel (GSA) Meeting with Katherine Huising (CS)

In this meeting, Katherine and I discussed potential areas for collaboration and interest. Hazel and I will be joining the CS for the move-in day as well as some social engagements for graduate residents on campus. We also discussed additional social events for graduate residents. Once Hazel starts the new role, she will be the main point of contact, however, I will also join her in these collaborations as needed.

CFB Board: Generative Discussion

Zak Kaal and I were recently voted to be the interim co-chairs of the CFB Board. Upon the recommendation of the GSA President and other CFB board members, I nominated myself for this position, in line with my role and commitment as the GSA VP SSE. Considering the nature of the work, Zak and I have chosen the co-chair model so we can continue to perform our individual responsibilities

while also ensuring our commitment to the CFB Board. Since this is an interim appointment, the Board Chair position will be formally filled after the AGM of the CFB. In our generative discussion session, we also discussed some important items related to the CFB administration and the internal workings of the CFB Board.

Studentcare Updates with Robyn Paches

I had a detailed meeting with Robyn from Studentcare. We talked about some updates from the current year's usage of the health and dental plan. We also discussed some feedback that the GSA has been receiving from our graduate members. There are some additional details from the meeting that need to be discussed with the GSA Board, before sharing them with the Council. Studentcare will likely attend one of our future meetings to update the council about the claims and usage of the health and dental plan.

Best Regards,

Saad Arslan Iqbal

GSA VP Student Services (2024-25)

Please email me at gsavpsse@ualberta.ca if you have any questions, concerns, suggestions, or feedback related to my portfolio or the initiatives.

Item 8e: VP External Report

**2025-2026 Vice-President External
Report to GSA Council for the April 2025 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Parman Mojir Shaibani
Date: April 30th, 2025

2025-2026 GSA VP External Meetings Attended (Parman)

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

Date	Meeting
April 2-4th	CASA AGM Meeting
April 11	VP International & Enterprise Search Meetings
April 12	ESA Meeting at Edmonton City Hall
April 16	Post-Secondary Education Task Force
April 16	Alumni Council Meeting

CASA AGM Meeting:

At the CASA Annual General Meeting, key policy changes were discussed that will shape the organization's future direction. These included updates to CASA's internal governance structure, changes to membership policies, and a review of CASA's approach to federal advocacy. The discussions aimed to ensure more inclusive and effective representation of students at the national level, while enhancing the organization's responsiveness to member institutions.

VP International & Enterprise Search Meetings:

While much of the discussion in these meetings remains confidential due to the sensitive nature of executive recruitment, it can be shared that the search committee is making steady progress in selecting a candidate for the new Vice President (International & Enterprise) position. This role

will be crucial in advancing the university's global partnerships and enterprise development strategy, and the committee is working diligently to ensure a strong, visionary leader is chosen.

ESA Meeting at Edmonton City Hall:

During the Edmonton Student Alliance (ESA) meeting held at City Hall, I brought forward a concern initially raised by our President about the lack of accountability for landlords, specifically in providing tenants with a minimum three-month notice before implementing rent increases. This was addressed in conversation with members of the City Council, including Karen Principe, Deputy Mayor and Ward Councillor, and Hani Quan, Director of Affordable Housing and Homelessness for the City of Edmonton. Both officials acknowledged the issue, expressed support, and Karen announced that the City would be looking into possible policy improvements to address the concern moving forward.

Post-Secondary Education Task Force:

The task force meeting focused on strategic and confidential matters, particularly surrounding ongoing and upcoming collective bargaining agreements. The discussion centered on the broader landscape of post-secondary education in Alberta, exploring how institutions can collaborate to strengthen their negotiating positions and advocate for sustainable funding, equitable policies, and improved working conditions across the sector.

Alumni Council Meeting:

The Alumni Council meeting provided a space to celebrate accomplishments and share final reports from various committees. Highlights included a major update on the "Shape the Future" fundraising campaign, which has already raised \$84 million toward its \$100 million goal focused on enhancing student success and experience. New alumni engagement initiatives were discussed, such as developing alumni personas to better tailor outreach and launching a global photo campaign encouraging alumni to share pictures in U of A apparel. Strategic planning tools were also introduced to track year-to-year progress on council goals. Upcoming events, like the 2025 Alumni Awards ceremony, were outlined, and a new award category recognizing contributions to reconciliation and decolonization is under consideration. The meeting emphasized the importance of mentorship, increasing visibility of alumni networks, engaging with recent grads, and expanding community connections through LinkedIn and off-campus events. Gratitude was extended to retiring council members, with plans to welcome new representatives in the coming term.

Item 8f: AVP Labour Report

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

To: GSA Council
From: Muneeb Masood Raja
Date: 24 Apr 2025

2024-2025 GSA Associate VP Labour Meetings Attended

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 25 Mar to 30 Apr 2025 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

Date	Meeting
25 Mar	Meeting with a PSAC Representative
25 Mar	GSA Social Hour
27 Mar	Meeting with a Student (Confidential)
31 Mar – 1 Apr	Bargaining
4 Apr	Meeting with FGPS
7 Apr	Union Lunch
11 Apr	GSA Volunteer Appreciation Event
14 Apr	Meeting with a Student (Confidential)
16 Apr	GSA Graduate Ambassador Program Meeting
22-23 Apr	Bargaining
24 Apr	DEO Transition Day
25 Apr	GSA and UASU Meeting
29 Apr	Meeting with the Chancellor

Dear Council Colleagues,

It was a pleasure and a true honor to serve as the GSA AVP Labour for the past two years. As I write this final report, I find myself filled with mixed emotions, both happiness and a touch of sadness. It is a happy moment because I can look back at what we've accomplished together, the challenges we've overcome, and the progress we've made in strengthening our collective voice. At the same time, I feel sad to step away from a role that has meant so much to me, and to say goodbye to the day-to-day collaborations, conversations, and shared goals that have defined this experience.

(Mar 31-Apr 1 & 22-23 Apr) Bargaining

Over the past month, the GSA negotiating team has been engaged in bargaining with the university over four days of negotiation. We have exchanged multiple proposals and counterproposals, reached agreement on several articles, and achieved some important gains. During our most recent meeting, the university also presented their monetary proposal.

Detailed discussions took place at the table around several key issues, including increasing the GTA/GRA cap, the appointment posting process, the dispute resolution procedure, and various types of leave, among others.

We will meet again in June and July to continue negotiations. Additionally, we expect the employer to respond to some of our outstanding proposals when we return to the table in June. Stay tuned for future updates.

Reflections on My Personal Experience and Perspectives

I would like to take a moment to share my experience and opinion serving as the AVP Labour and leading the GSA's work as a union over the past two years. This role has been both challenging and rewarding. I've made my share of mistakes along the way, but these mistakes have been a valuable learning opportunity. Despite a few setbacks, it has been an incredibly fulfilling experience, and we have achieved a great deal. At the end, I would also like to offer a few recommendations to help ensure the GSA continues to function effectively and avoids internal challenges. It's essential that we identify the root causes of these tensions and work collaboratively to resolve them, for the sake of the organization and those we represent.

Message for Incoming Executive Team

As you step into your new roles, it's important to understand the responsibility that come with your positions. Leadership within a student body is both a privilege and a duty and how you carry yourselves will shape the experiences of the graduate students you represent.

An important part of your role is to raise your voices when issues arise. Your silence in moments that demand a voice is not just a missed opportunity, it's damaging to the people who trusted you to represent them. When you remain quiet in the face of problems and injustice, you allow the status quo to continue unchallenged. Your voice has immense weight. Use it thoughtfully, but please use it and speak up, not just for the sake of speaking, but to ensure that decisions reflect the needs, concerns, and realities of those you serve.

Set your ego aside. Leadership isn't about being the loudest voice, it's about listening, collaborating, and letting others thrive alongside you. Power should never be used to dominate or control. Instead, it should be used to empower those around you and open doors for others.

Transparency - Graduate students deserve to know how and why decisions are being made, and they deserve to know the complete story, not incomplete information or misrepresented facts. Always hold ethics in the highest regard.

Be open to feedback, even when it's uncomfortable. Don't consider criticism as an attack, it's an opportunity for growth. Stay polite, even under pressure, and lead with empathy and humility. Anticipate what the council and your members truly need. Above all, maintain the highest level of professionalism. Treat others with respect, and never lose sight of why you're here, which is to serve students. Build trust among each other by showing integrity in your actions and being honest in all interactions.

Finally, always ask yourself - Is what I'm doing genuinely good for my members? Nothing is more important than fair and honest representation. Every action you take should reflect your commitment to the people who trusted you with this position. I wish you all the best.

Message for the GSA Councillors

You play a crucial role in ensuring effective decision-making, accountability and transparency within the organization. It is essential that you remain well-informed about the activities of the GSA to make the most informed decisions possible. While most decisions made by the board undergo thorough review and due diligence, it is vital that you actively engage with the process, ask questions, express concerns, and take a genuine interest in all matters brought before the council for approval. While the decisions and actions of the Executives should be carefully scrutinized, they should also be given the respect that comes with their position. A collaborative and respectful environment fosters better decision-making and strengthens the organization as a whole.

GSA Role as a Student Association and a Trade Union

Due to the GSA's dual role as both a student association and a trade union, there is a real potential for serious institutional challenges. The responsibilities tied to each of these roles can often conflict. To maintain clarity and prevent conflicts of interest, it's essential that union and association responsibilities

are handled by different representatives within the organization, with no interference in each other's operations. They should only be allowed to make recommendations to each other but the approval process must be from the representatives of the respective group within the organization.

The GSA has established a structure that ensures separate representation for the union and the association. However, the decision making is not completely separate yet, and we risk facing serious issues if we don't make the required changes within our organization soon.

At the same time, we must also recognize that under current legislation, the GSA holds exclusive authority to act as the bargaining agent for academically employed graduate students. As such, creating a completely separate organization for the union part of the GSA is not legally possible unless the legislation is amended to allow such a change.

Below are some relevant sections of Alberta legislation that support the above argument and, hopefully, will help clarify the situation:

Relevant Alberta Labour Relations Code Sections

58.4(1) (c) the graduate students association of a university is the bargaining agent for the academically employed graduate students of the university and has exclusive authority to bargain collectively on behalf of the academically employed graduate students and to bind them by a collective agreement

58.4(2) The graduate students association of a university is deemed for the purposes of this Act to be a trade union for the purposes of acting as bargaining agent for the academically employed graduate students at the university

Relevant Post Secondary Learning Act Sections

95(2) The council of a student organization may make bylaws governing

(f.1) in the case of a graduate students association, its role as bargaining agent for academically employed graduate students, which must require the association to ascertain and act on the wishes of the academically employed graduate students

(f.2) in the case of a graduate students association in its role as bargaining agent for academically employed graduate students, the charging of union dues and the amount of those dues

GSA President Conflict of Interest in Involving Themselves with Union Matters

The GSA President has a conflict of interest when it comes to influencing any union related decision and is inherently unable to act in the best interests of academically employed graduate students. Therefore, there must be no interference or decision-making regarding the union that originates from the GSA President under any circumstances. Also, the only individuals within GSA who are elected by the

academically employed graduate students (AEGSs) are the members of the GSA LRC (including AVP Labour). The role of the GSA as a trade union is to ensure that they are acting in the best interest of their members (AEGSs). Being a member of the university board of governors as per Alberta legislation means that you are acting as an employer of AEGSs and must act in the best interests of the university.

Here are the relevant sections from Alberta legislation and the GSA Bylaw and Policy.

Relevant Alberta Labour Relations Code Sections

58.4(1) For the purposes of this Act,

(a) the board of governors of a university is an employer while it is acting as the employer of its academically employed graduate students,

(b) the academically employed graduate students of a university are employees of the board of governors of the university, and

(c) the graduate students association of a university is the bargaining agent for the academically employed graduate students of the university and has exclusive authority to bargain collectively on behalf of the academically employed graduate students and to bind them by a collective agreement.

(2) The graduate students association of a university is deemed for the purposes of this Act to be a trade union for the purposes of acting as bargaining agent for the academically employed graduate students at the university

Relevant Post Secondary Learning Act Sections

95(2) The council of a student organization may make bylaws governing

(f.1) in the case of a graduate students association, its role as bargaining agent for academically employed graduate students, which must require the association to ascertain and act on the wishes of the academically employed graduate students

(f.2) in the case of a graduate students association in its role as bargaining agent for academically employed graduate students, the charging of union dues and the amount of those dues

Board of governors

16(5) The members of the board must act in the best interests of the university.

Relevant GSA Bylaw and Policy Sections

D.POL.5.1.j The President leads the GSA on bodies external to the GSA.

This includes: **D.POL.5.1.j.i** Membership on the BoG and General Faculties Council (GFC) and

D.POL.5.2.e The President is a member of the following University boards and committees:

D.POL.5.2.e.i The BoG, and any BoG Standing Committees on which the GSA has representation (which may be delegated to a Vice-President by the full BoG)

D.BYL.2.2.g The Associate Vice-President Labour is responsible for labour-related matters concerning academically-employed graduate students (including collective bargaining), and leads the GSA's work as a union.

D.POL.4.3 Elected Officers and candidates for elected office will abide by all GSA Bylaws, GSA Policies, and GSA Board (GSAB) Policies, including with respect to performance and conduct, conflict of interest, and conflict of commitment. Elected Officers cannot concurrently serve as executives in any other student group, student club, board, student association, departmental association, or any organization that may present a real or perceived conflict of interest. This ensures that elected officers can fully dedicate their time and efforts to the GSA without divided loyalties or potential biases. By preventing conflicts of interest, the GSA aims to maintain the highest standards of integrity, transparency, and fairness in its governance, thereby safeguarding the trust and confidence of its members. Any officer found in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in the GSA Bylaws

Note: Alberta Labour Relations Code and Post Secondary Learning Act is part of legislation. However, the GSA bylaw and policy is an institutional document. Legislation takes precedence in case there is a conflict between legislation and the GSA bylaw and policy.

GSA Budget Survey

I would like to share my views about the survey that was sent out to graduate students earlier in April. I was not involved in any consultation and in my opinion, it reads as biased and members cannot make an informed decision based on the information shared. I am supportive of getting input from members in any matter, but incomplete information can often be more harmful than no information because it can lead to misinformed decisions.

The context shared fails to provide members with the full picture. Here are some specific points:

AVP Labour (AVPL) Salary Adjustment

Background:

1. The AVPL represents approximately 3,500 academically employed graduate students (compared to around 8,100 covered by other portfolios). **My Response:** Representing fewer members doesn't mean the amount, quality, and/or impact is lesser compared to any other executive. I would recommend you all to please review the GSA bylaw and policy document and compare the duties of AVP Labour with other VPs. Additionally, there has not been any change in the workload, documented duties, and other commitments since the last couple of years.
2. The position currently receives approx. \$40,000 as stipend with benefits, which is almost three and a half times higher than the same position with the University of Calgary Graduate Student Association. **My Response:** Did we let members know that this stipend is the same as other GSA VPs? Did we share that the UofC GLU has (had) a completely different structure? Did we share that the UofC GLU is nearly half the size compared to us in terms of both numbers and budget?

Did we share that their UofC GLU has (had) fix executives within their union and that the total stipend that went to all their executives based on their 2024-25 budget was \$40000 and that this has increased from \$13200 in 2020-21 to \$40000 in 2024-25? De we compare the total GSA executive stipends with other GSAs across Canada? Based on my research, I have yet to find a GSA within Canada that spends more money on executives than us (not saying that the executives are overpaid).

3. In addition to fixed monthly stipend, the AVPL will receive extra compensation from PSAC for attending trainings, all bargaining sessions, and all conferences. This extra compensation is called "loss of pay" compensation. It's meant to make up for the hours they could have worked elsewhere (like as a GTA). The rate for this extra pay will be based on the hourly wage (at least \$48 per hour) for GTAs. The reason for this is that the AVPL isn't considered a salaried employee (meaning they don't get a set full-time salary), so they qualify for this kind of loss-of-pay reimbursement. **My Response:** Clarity – The hourly wage of at least \$48 per hour is not accurate. I have members that were paid way less than that. The explanation about the loss of pay is also not accurate in my opinion. Loss is pay is typically given by unions to their members to attend union events that may result in loss of pay from the employer. All members have access to trainings, and it is not exclusive to just the AVP Labour. Attending PSAC conferences is not mandatory for the AVP Labour. The only mandatory thing for AVP Labour that might result in a loss of pay are bargaining sessions. People who really understand the concept of loss of pay would not even put this point as a rationale for reducing the stipend. I have provide my rationale about this in a council meeting in the past as well.
4. The position also has the support of two other paid student positions (Chief Steward & Outreach Coordinator), as well as support from our service partner PSAC. **My Response:** The association added two VP positions within the last two/three years that spends almost \$40000 on each. Did we mention that and the fact that the stipend of other DEOs weren't reduced? Did we mention the rationale behind creating Chief Steward (CS) and Outreach Coordinator (OC) roles and that when they were created the AVP Labour stipend remained unchanged? The CS and OC positions are paid nearly 8 times less compared to a VP and the expected time commitment is also very less compared to a VP. Did we mention this? PSAC support has been in place for several years now, but they do not assist with day-to-day operations. Instead, they provide specialized support to ensure we fulfill our responsibilities as a trade union, including access to a negotiator, strike fund, grievance support, education support, and so on. It's very similar to how the GSA has access to a lawyer, finance team, and other specialized help.
5. A proposal suggests reducing the AVPL salary by \$7,000, redirecting the saved funds into the GSA strike fund. This would help ensure we're better prepared for future bargaining. **My Response:** Did we mention that we have access to the PSAC strike fund? Did we mention that the labour budget surplus? Did we mention what the \$7000 corresponds to in regard to dollar amount for each member (2-3 dollars each)? Did we mention the amount of savings we have in our labour fund to potentially contribute to a strike fund? By the same logic, we should be reducing the stipend of all GSA Executives and spending it on members directly.

I wanted to restrict my opinion based on the points shared in the survey. Therefore, I have not provided any further details.

Comment about the question asked - **Do you support reducing the AVPL salary to help fund the strike reserve?***

The provided context in the survey not only asks a biased question but provides multiple reasons as to why you should say yes. The way how this part of the survey reads almost forces members to vote yes. I ask you all this, do you expect a member to say no to this question provided the information shared with them? I wouldn't expect them to say no to it. I truly believe that a complete picture should have been presented with perspective from both ends. It was very clear that there is a difference of opinion in this matter, and providing perspective from one side lacks transparency.

Staffing Costs for Union Work

Background:

1. The Associate Director and Finance Manager help with the GSA's union-related work. One proposal is to cover a portion of their salaries directly from union dues to avoid increasing the membership fee beyond the standard CPI of 2.2%. **My Response:** I don't have the complete information currently to provide any comment on this.
2. Another option: hire entirely new staff dedicated to union matters, which would likely necessitate a further increase in union dues, which are separate from the membership fee (potentially indexed to inflation/CPI for future years). **My Response:** Why do we think that we would have to **likely** increase union dues? The Union budget is expected to increase above the current CPI because of negotiations. There are likely other factors that will potentially further increase union dues. I don't anticipate that we will have to increase union dues.

I support covering a portion of the Associate Director and Finance Manager's salaries with union dues, provided that they dedicate at least an equivalent amount of time to union-related work. I believe this would enhance the organization's efficiency by saving both the union and the association money. However, the rationale currently provided is biased.

I wish I had been consulted to provide the full context and ensure the most accurate form of the survey is sent to members, especially given that many points are related to the union. In its current form, I have disassociated myself with this survey and also conveyed it to the board on Apr 23.

Recommendations

Here are some recommendations that can help the GSA avoid conflicts within the organization and ensure that the best interests of all graduate students, including academically employed graduate students, are better met:

1. Reviewing the responsibilities and documented duties to balance the workload and propose bylaws to rebalance the workloads among different DEOs.
2. Increased accountability to ensure that all DEO positions are focused on bringing new initiatives and working the expected hours.
3. A comparison of our budget with GSAs across Canada, not just the University of Calgary GSA to suggest improvements and remove inefficiencies.
4. Any major changes proposed related to union matters must be approved by the LRC. This should also be incorporated into the GSA bylaw and policy. While it may go through the governance structure but only for informational purposes. Final approval should rest with the council.
5. The entire Labour budget should be drafted and approved by the LRC after consultation with the finance or relevant team.
6. AVP Labour must be given a voting right wherever a vote is to be conducted that involves union matters.

Note: I apologize if I made any mistakes in what I said. However, I made sure to do my due diligence.

I sincerely apologize if any of my actions during my two terms were not appropriate. It was never my intention to do so. I truly value the work we do together. I would really appreciate any feedback from the respected council members related to any labour related matters.

In Solidarity,

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

Item 8i: GSA CRO Report

Dear GSA Council,

In the past month, we held the By-Election of the Vice President Indigenous Relations. Unfortunately, it was unsuccessful and the position remains vacant.

At this time, I do not have any immediate updates about any future elections for this position. In the coming weeks, I hope to work with IGSA's new executive team to discuss the next steps with this position.

If you have any questions, please contact gsa.elections@ualberta.ca.

Sophie Shi
GSA Chief Returning Officer

Item 8L: GSA Management Report

GSA Management
Report to GSA Council for April 30 2025 Meeting

To: GSA Council
From: Cindy Roose
Date: April 28 2025

Dear Members of the GSA Council,

I hope this report finds you well. I am pleased to provide you with an update on the various initiatives and activities currently underway within the Graduate Students' Association.

DEO job shadowing has been ongoing since mid-March with the incoming DEOs set to take office on May 1, 2025. In May and June, the DEOs will participate in several workshops to assist in their onboarding process and ongoing training. The schedule is being developed now. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the current GSA Board for their efforts and dedication over this past year. Leadership is not always easy but leading in student government can give you skills that you can apply in your future roles.

The GSA Spring Social was held on April 23, 2025. The event was held at the Edmonton Valley Zoo and was a great way to cap off the current semester. Planning is underway for orientation programming, which will welcome graduate students to campus this fall.

Preparation is underway for the annual audit of GSA 2024 - 2025 finances. Our Finance Manager, Dorota Dziekan-Kryjak and Accountant, Seidy Louangxay will work with a local firm to provide the necessary materials to complete this work.

The office has been supporting the work of several standing committees including the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (EDIC), Budget and Finance Committee (BFC), and Governance Committee (GC). These committees have been drafting work plans and reviewing potential changes to bylaw and policy. The staff have been helpful in coordinating meetings, providing research support, and ensuring these committees have enough members and resources to work effectively.

Sincerely,

Cindy Roose, Acting ED

Management Report to the GSA Board, April 23 2025

Please note that the April 2nd and April 9th, 2025 Board meetings were cancelled so this report is combined for the remaining meetings in April.

Strategic

- Developing a timeline for work on next year's GSA Board Strategic Work Plan. A short survey is out to students this month to gather feedback on priorities.
- DEO transition schedule and planning 101 scheduling by portfolio, etc., is being developed, and an onboarding/training schedule for incoming DEOs is being finalized.
- The HR Manager will be drafting operational policies over the summer.
- The GSA will hire a summer student for an 8 week period running from June - July.
- The Labour Bargaining team is meeting this week to continue negotiating monetary proposals with the employer.

Operations

- April 1st was the first day of the new fiscal year for grants 2025 - 2026.
- The Grant Coordinator is pre-approving about 100 grant applications so once we get the green light on funds, she can process those.
- Award recipient payments are scheduled to go out on May 9th, 2025.
- There are lots of department elections going on but few candidates running for positions.
- Spring Social is April 23, 2025 at the Edmonton Valley Zoo.

Social Media

Facebook

Reach: +0.9% (April 8-22)

Followers: -3 follower (current: 2054)

Instagram

Reach: -29.6% (April 8-22)

Followers: +10 follower (current: 1543)

Twitter/ X

Followers:-4 followers (1289)
