

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

[Item 1: Agenda](#)

[*Report Legend](#)

[Item 2: GSA Council June 23 2025 Minutes](#)

[Item 5a: Nominees for GSA EDIC Vacancies](#)

[Item 5b: Nominee for GSA Deputy Speaker](#)

[Item 5c: Nominee for GSA Elections & Referenda Committee](#)

[Item 8a: Governance Committee-Recommended Bylaw and Policy Revisions, Section F](#)

[Item 8b: Governance Committee-Recommended Bylaw and Policy Revisions, Section J](#)

[Item 8c: Governance Committee-Recommended Bylaw and Policy Revisions, Section K](#)

[Item 8d: GSA Third-Party Review](#)

[Item 9a: GSA President Report](#)

[Item 9b: VP Academic Report](#)

[Item 9c: VP Student Life Report](#)

[Item 9d: VP Student Services Report](#)

[Item 9e: VP External Report](#)

[Item 9g: GSA Senator Report](#)

[Item 9j: GSA Nominating Committee Chair Report](#)

[Item 9k: GSA Elections & Referenda Committee Chair Report](#)

[Item 9L: GSA Management & LRC Report](#)

[Back to Top](#)

Item 1: Agenda

Wednesday, July 16, 2025

Held hybrid in 2-100 Council Chambers

5:00 PM - 8:00 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, Saukteaux, 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

CLOSED SESSION:

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

Time	Item #	Page #	Title	Presenter(s)
5:00	-	1	Land Acknowledgement	Z. Patel, GSA Speaker

1 min	1		Approval of the Agenda for July 16, 2025 GSA Council	Z. Patel, GSA Speaker
1 min	2		Approval of the GSA Council Minutes of June 23, 2025 GSA Council	Z. Patel, GSA Speaker
2 min	3		Changes in GSA Council Membership	Z. Patel, GSA Speaker
2 min	4		Announcements	
10 min	5		<u>ELECTIONS</u> A. GSA Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee: a. Three vacancies b. Five nominations B. GSA Elections & Referenda Committee: a. One vacancy b. One nomination C. GSA Deputy Speaker: a. One vacancy b. One nomination <u>ELECTION DISCUSSION ITEM</u> A. Update on ACB Vacancies & NoC Filling Procedure	A. Belosokhov, NoC Chair
15 min				
20 min	6	Attac hed separ ately	<u>PRESENTATION ITEMS</u> A. GSA 2025-2026 Strategic Work Plan Presentation B. GSA VP Indigenous Relations: ERC Action Plan Update C. GSA Board Presentation on Clarifying Misinformation	A. Kumar, GSA President E. Osei, ERC Chair A. Kumar,
20 min				
30				

[illegible]

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> d. GSA Governance Committee Report B. Vice-President Academic: Chen Okafor C. Vice-President Student Life: Hazel Kemuma <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. GSA Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee Report D. Vice-President Student Services: Saad Iqbal E. Vice-President External: Niloufar Mir Fallah F. Associate Vice-President Labour: Nathan Lamarche <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. GSA Labour Relations Committee G. GSA Senator: Hussain Alhussainy H. GSA Speaker: Zain Patel I. Chief and Deputy Returning Officers: Wajid Ali & Temi David J. GSA Nominating Committee Chair: Arseniy Belosokhov K. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Chair: Elsie Osei L. GSA Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. GSA Labour Relations Committee 	<p>Currently suspended</p> <p>DNS</p> <p>DNS</p> <p>Submitted late, but included</p>
	10		<p>Question Period</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Written Questions (May be submitted to the GSA Speaker before 4:00 PM on Tuesday, July 15, 2025): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Question from N. Morley, Earth & Atmospheric Sciences Councillor: GSA Bylaw and Policy, section K.BYL.1.2 states, "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." As we found out during the latest budget proposal, the university requires a finalized budget by early May, effectively leaving Council with two regular sessions to approve the budget. Two regular sessions does not provide Council with much time to work with the Board and BFC to resolve a contentious budget, and failure to pass a budget during the regular April meeting would have a disastrous impact on the financial viability of the GSA. Are there any external 	

			<p>reasons why the bylaws stipulate a March deadline? Or is this an internal deadline that can be amended to provide Council with more time to collaborate with the Board and BFC to resolve any budgetary issues?</p> <p>2. Oral Questions</p>	
	11		Adjournment	

***Report Legend**

NRS: No report submitted

NMS: No meeting scheduled

Item 2: GSA Council June 23 2025 Minutes

Monday, June 23, 2025

Held hybrid in 2-100 Council Chambers

5:00 PM - 8:00 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, Saukteaux, 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

IN ATTENDANCE:

Council-Elected Officials:

- GSA Deputy Speaker: Amirah Nazir
- Acting Chief Returning Officer: Temi David
- Senator: Ola Mabrouk

Departmental Councillors:

- Laura Enekegho, Biochemistry
- Fleur Issac, Biological Sciences

<p>GSA Executives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GSA President: Aashish Kumar • VP Academic: Chen Okafor • VP Student Services: Saad Arslan Iqbal • VP External: Niloufar Mir Fallah • VP Student Life: Hazel Kemuma • AVP Labour: Nathan Lamarche <p>Councillors-At-Large:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jeff Akhagbosu 2. Ashif Rahman 3. Anagha Devkota 4. Julianna Durham 5. Mohamadali Tofigh 6. Muhammad Faizan Tariq 7. Rishabh Dagur 8. Haroun Elyasir <p>Standing Committee Chairs & Vice-Chairs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arseniy Belosokhov, NoC Chair <p>Guests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Junqin (Mark) Wang, ACB Candidate • Ismail Nasirudeen, ACB Candidate • Wajid Ali, CRO Candidate • Mohammad Hamza, BFC Candidate • Sophie Shi • Tamara Dube • Ping Lam Ip • Evan Vienneau • Shasta Johnsen-Sollos • Margaret Ridder • Andrea DeKeseredy • Patricia DeKeseredy • Nour Armoush • Mackenzie O'Neill • Karlene Dunne • Jack McKoen • Jacob Schweda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gurparkash Singh, Biomedical Engineering • Nissi Djangmah, BGSA • Selin Simsek, Business MBA • Nancy Wang, Business PhD • Solomon Hussein, Cell Biology • Shamsheer Ahmad, Chemistry • Iain Smith, Computing Science • Michelle Bey, Dentistry • Andy Zhang, Digital Humanities • Devinder Pal Singh, Economics • Ajibola Adigun, Educational Policy Studies • Jennie Burton, Elementary Education • Colin Hamnett, History, Classics & Religion • Zoe Wagner, Human Ecology • Tamara Semeria Maitret, Laboratory Medicine & Pathology • Dalia Cristerna Roman, Linguistics • Lillian Low, Medical Genetics • Qi Feng Lin, Medical Microbiology & Immunology • Emma Heidebrecht, Neuroscience • Seth Peyton, Oncology • Toqa Abdelwahab, Ophthalmology • Thomas Hammond, Pharmacology • Joshua Barden, Philosophy • Daniel Carleton, Physics • Mohaddeseh Pakzamir, Physiology • Emily Ward, Psychiatry • Vi Tran, Public Health • Cassandra Cowan, Rehabilitation Sciences • Juan Andrés Luchsinger Rivera, Resource Economics & Environmental Sociology • Celine Beaulieu, Sociology • Ivan Ma, Surgery <p>Alternate Departmental Councillors:</p>
--	---

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daniel Gye • Cameron Scott • Ben Goodyear • Alvaro Arce-Borkent • Roland Street • Eric Lepp • Avani Tiwari • Timothy Nessim • Jiayi Dai • Patrick Erickson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andy Cheng, Cell Biology • Sohrab Hejazi, Chemical & Materials Engineering • Karen Fraser, Human Ecology • Vincent Yu, Library & Information Studies • Si Ning Liu, Paediatrics • Ahmed Abdelfattah, Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences • Hussain Alhussainy, Political Sciences • Angely Claire Suerte, Psychology • Amir Shamsi, Rehabilitation Medicine • Matt Ball, Renewable Resources • Pulkit Kumar, Surgery
---	---

Time	Item #	Title	Presenter(s)
5:05	-	<p>Land Acknowledgement</p> <p>Councillors were instructed to complete the attendance form via QR code and use a witness for confirmation. Only submissions through the QR system will be considered valid proof of attendance.</p>	Z. Patel, GSA Speaker
1 min	1	<p>Approval of the Agenda for June 23, 2025 GSA Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Z. Patel, GSA Speaker, noted that, as we have many guests this session, all questions and comments from guests must go through their departmental Councillors to address Council. Guests will be asked to leave the room/meeting during the Closed Session for confidentiality purposes. • Z. Patel reiterated the importance of good faith, open dialogue and debate, and respect in these sessions. He reminded all present to maintain a professional and respectful environment. He emphasized repeated concerns raised by Council members, Executives, and staff about disrespectful interactions, noting that respect is a basic expectation. • Z. Patel raised that there have been several proposals for amendments. 	Z. Patel, GSA Speaker

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C. Cowan moved. H. Kemuma seconded. • Z. Patel raised his proposed motion to the agenda: it is available in the updated second mailing. It calls for a third-party review for the recent Vice-President Indigenous Relations by-election and subsequent events. • At 10:40AM that day, Z. Patel received a notification that pending an ACB investigation and hearing, the AVP Labour, N. Lamarche, has been suspended. N. Lamarche argued that the complaint was not signed and so, in his opinion, not binding. Z. Patel called for a 5-minute recess to review the ACB bylaw and policy at 5:17PM. • At 5:24PM, the session returned. Z. Patel determined that it is not in his mandate to rule on ACB rulings, so he will uphold the ACB's ruling and N. Lamarche will be a guest for this session. • I. Smith, Computing Science Councillor, raised a motion to overturn this ruling of upholding the ACB's ruling. A. Cheng, Alternate Cell Biology Councillor, seconded. 14 votes in favour of upholding the ruling. 13 votes against upholding the ruling. The motion PASSED and the Speaker's ruling was upheld. • A. Adigun, Educational Policy Councillor, moved to add the Speaker's third-party investigation action item to the agenda. C. Hamnett, History, Classics & Religion Councillor, seconded. 30 votes in favour. 1 voted against. Motion was initially announced as NOT PASSING. Z. Patel announced later that the result was misannounced. Motion for the third-party investigation was redone for clarity: C. Cowan moved. D. Carleton seconded. 37 votes in favour. Motion PASSED unanimously. • Another motion was raised to bring up the DEO reports to after the Election portion and before the Closed Session. A. Kumar moved. C. Okafor seconded. 36 voted in favour. 2 voted against. Motion PASSED. • The final motion was to add a Discussion Item regarding the VPIR election events. A. Kumar moved. C. Okafor seconded. 34 votes in favour. 1 votes against. Motion PASSED. <p>Approval of the amended agenda: 37 voted in favour. 4 votes against. Motion PASSED.</p>	
--	--	--	--

1 min	2	Approval of the GSA Council Minutes of May 26, 2025 GSA Council A. Kumar moved. C. Cowan seconded. 36 votes in favour. No votes against. Motion PASSED.	Z. Patel, GSA Speaker
2 min	3	Changes in GSA Council Membership Incoming: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nissi Djangmah, Black Graduate Students' Association • Shamsheer Ahmad, Chemistry • Juan, Resource Economics and Environmental Sociology • Thomas Hammond, Pharmacology Outgoing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A. Nazir, Deputy Speaker, stated this is her last Council and wished the Council the best. 	Z. Patel, GSA Speaker
2 min	4	Announcements	
10 min	5	<u>ELECTIONS</u> <p>A. GSA Appeals & Complaints Board (5 vacancies):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Three nominations Successful candidates: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Cassandra Cowan Ismail Nasirudeen Mark Wang <p>B. GSA Chief Returning Officer (1 vacancy):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> One nomination Successful candidate: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Wajid Ali <p>C. GSA Speaker (1 vacancy):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> One nomination Successful candidate: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Zain Patel <p>D. GSA Senator (1 vacancy):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Two nominations 	A. Belosokhov, NoC Chair

		<p>b. Successful candidate:</p> <p>i. Hussain Alhussainy</p> <p>E. GSA Budget & Finance Committee (1 vacancy):</p> <p>a. Three nominations</p> <p>b. Successful candidate:</p> <p>i. Mohammad Hamza</p>	
		<p><u>DISCUSSION ITEM</u></p> <p>A Kumar moved. C. Cowan seconded.</p> <p>37 voted in favour. 1 voted against. Motion PASSED.</p> <p>A. GSA Vice-President Indigenous Relations By-Election Events Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Speaker opened the discussion by acknowledging the highly sensitive nature of recent events. He reminded the Council that professionalism and respect were expected and required. Members were cautioned against personal attacks and urged to focus on constructive dialogue. • A. Kumar, GSA President, expressed concern about the ERC's actions during its June 3 meeting. Without the Acting Executive Director present, the ERC, following advice from the CRO, attempted to delegate authority to the IGSA to appoint a GSA Vice-President Indigenous Relations (VPIR). He stated this was a significant breach of GSA policy and bylaws, as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A full committee vote of the motion did not occur. • The motion was later rescinded. • No documentation of bylaw or policy could be provided to support the decision. • A. Kumar stated he sought legal counsel to ensure he was interpreting GSA rules correctly and emphasized this wasn't about blame, but about preserving accountability and due process. • S. Iqbal, VP Student Services, asked N. Lamarche, AVP Labour, to not record him without his consent. N. Lamarche noted that this is a recorded meeting and asserted that he can record without permission and share. A. Adigun, Educational Policy Councillor, raised a Point of Order that all discussion should go through the Speaker. • M. Tariq, Councillor-At-Large, asked for clarification regarding the 	

		<p>meeting recording. Z. Patel stated that the meetings are open, and are recorded for record-keeping.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E. Osei, ERC Chair, acknowledged that mistakes were made. The ERC had not properly voted on the motion and did not formally grant the IGSA authority to appoint a VPIR. E. Osei noted the urgency to fill the position and a misinterpretation of policy, but conceded that the process was flawed. She emphasized that the ERC was not against the nomination of any specific candidate but stated that the confusion stemmed from contradictory bylaws and policies. She also referenced negative emails and personal attacks directed at her and noted that tensions had grown to an unmanageable level. • Councillors voiced concerns over: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contradictions between policy and bylaw definitions for how the VPIR position should be filled. • Whether the IGSA was permitted to appoint or only nominate a candidate. • The damage done to Indigenous representation and trust. • Whether the ERC's conduct amounted to "election fraud." • C. Cowan, Rehabilitation Medicine Councillor, thanked E. Osei for her context. She asked what prevented the ERC from changing the bylaw. E. Osei stated that the plan was being arranged, but the situation evolved too quickly to respond to. She stated that the ERC minutes reflect the ERC's plan to revise the bylaws and policies. • E. Osei clarified that the ERC's role is advisory and that decisions ultimately rest with the CRO. She shared that the ERC was motivated by urgency and good intent, noting repeated efforts to fill the VPIR position, which had gone vacant through two election cycles (the general election and a by-election). She referenced miscommunication and a lack of procedural clarity, acknowledging that the ERC did not conduct a formal vote and that its attempt to delegate authority was flawed. She added that the process can be remedied with the ERC holding an emergency meeting to move forward with a nomination rather than an appointment and a plan to change the bylaw that prevents further steps from being taken. • A. Cheng, Cell Biology Alternate Councillor, thanked Elsie for her account. They clarified that the bylaw states that if there is no 	
--	--	---	--

		<p>candidate in a by-election, the position must remain vacant for a year. The policy lists additional steps to be taken, which conflicts with the bylaw.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N. Lamarche attempted to raise a Point of Order. Z. Patel noted that N. Lamarche is a guest for this meeting and does not have speaking privileges. An argument ensued and Z. Patel called for a 3 minute recess to check the transcript at 7:18PM. He called the meeting back to order at 7:21PM. After reviewing the recording, he quoted that he cannot rule over ACB decisions and so, must uphold them, leaving N. Lamarche as a guest. N. Lamarche raised that E. Osei had been allowed to speak. Z. Patel explained that Committee Chair members have speaking privileges in Council. • Another Councillor noted that “appointment” and “nomination” were being conflated and emphasized that the IGSA’s role, according to existing policy, was to nominate a candidate, not appoint one. They expressed concern that these distinctions had been ignored, resulting in a procedural breach. • A Councillor asked whether the position would have been handled differently if it were for a role like VP Student Life. They suggested that bias may have contributed to the irregular treatment of the VPIR position, and challenged others to reflect on potential discriminatory attitudes. • I. Smith, Computing Sciences Councillor, suggested Council recommending to the ERC to change the bylaws to allow for the nomination of a candidate to the position, as the bylaws currently state that the position must remain vacant. E. Osei agreed. • E. Osei continued that if the ERC see any bylaw and policy that conflicts or doesn’t make sense, they work with the CRO/DRO to make changes for the benefit of graduate students. Their recommendations are then forwarded to the Governance Committee, Board and Council, so it’s a group effort to make improvements. • I. Smith then asked if there have been amendments as of yet. E. Osei stated that with the internal conflicts, they have not been able to focus on their work to improve the bylaws and policies. • A. Adigun raised the distinction between bylaws and policies: 	
--	--	--	--

		<p>bylaws are taken from the Post-Secondary Learning Act, which is law. Bylaws take precedence over policy, as we are mandated by law to follow them. He clarified that E. Osei's policy example is for subsequent by-elections in the same election cycle, as a member of the Governance Committee. He asked S. Shi, the outgoing CRO, if the VPIR by-election candidate gave their reasoning for their withdrawal from the by-election.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Z. Patel gave S. Shi permission to respond to the question. S. Shi responded that the candidate voluntarily withdrew due to concerns about their ability to fulfill responsibilities while located on a satellite campus. She emphasized that no barriers were placed on the candidate's eligibility by the ERC or GSA staff. • M. Bey, Dentistry Councillor, asked Council what we can do to resolve this issue. • E. Osei responded that she doesn't believe that it is within the Board's mandate. She stated that she deserves a public apology and that the ERC will have an emergency meeting to pass a motion to allow the IGSA to nominate a candidate to Council. Council will then make the final decision as per the election policy. • A. Kumar stated his remorse that E. Osei had to go through disrespect through this situation. It is not how an organization should function. He stated that the disrespect they have witnessed is racism. C. Okafor echoed this sentiment. • Z. Patel noted that we reached the end of the meeting time, but raised that it is an option for Council to vote to instruct the ERC to have an emergency meeting to create an Action Plan for filling the VPIR election. A. Cheng moved. • A. Kumar raised a Point of Order: the PSLA stated that DEOs need to be elected by the graduate student body. Z. Patel recommended that the IGSA nominates a candidate to Council and then a General Election would be run. • A. Cheng moved. C. Hamnett, History, Classics & Religion Councillor, seconded. <p>35 voted in favour. No votes against. Motion PASSED.</p>	
30 min	6	<p><u>CLOSED SESSION</u></p> <p>All guests will temporarily leave the room for this confidential discussion.</p>	
30 min	7	<p><u>INFORMATION PIECES</u></p> <p>Reports:</p>	

		<p>A. GSA President: Aashish Kumar</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> As submitted A. Kumar acknowledged the toll that recent events had taken on both himself and the broader Executive team. He spoke frankly about the stress of navigating conflicting expectations from Councillors, the student body, and staff. As an international student, he described the additional emotional and cultural burdens that came with the role, especially in times of crisis. A. Kumar reiterated that he had always aimed to act in the best interest of graduate students while upholding policy and process. He expressed disappointment in what he perceived as a pattern of public misrepresentation and attacks on his character and those of fellow Executives. While thanking his colleagues for their continued support, he also cautioned Council against allowing personal agendas to override institutional responsibility. A. Kumar called for greater empathy, unity, and professionalism moving forward, and reaffirmed his commitment to student advocacy grounded in mutual respect. Z. Patel reminded A. Kumar to stick to his report and leave the later discussion to the Discussion Item period President's Report & Board of Governors Report <p>B. Vice-President Academic: Chen Okafor</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> As submitted C. Okafor addressed Council to clarify a quote of his that had circulated widely and was described by others as anti-Indigenous. The quote, "<i>Frankly, I am getting tired of hearing it,</i>" was taken from an email C. Okafor had written in response to a message from Benjamin Kucher, the former President of the Indigenous Graduate Students' Association (IGSA). C. Okafor expressed regret that the line was taken out of context and stated he wanted Council to hear the full story directly from him. He explained that the email from B. Kucher had the subject line: "<i>Formal indictment of the GSA executives: systemic harm toward Indigenous graduate students and the Indigenous community at the University of Alberta.</i>" The email accused GSA Executives of racism and of being anti-Indigenous. C. Okafor stated he found the tone of the 	
--	--	---	--

		<p>email "not very kind, nor professional," especially since he and B. Kucher had never met before. C. Okafor read from his own response, which began with a greeting and an assertion that introducing oneself by issuing threats was inappropriate. He clarified that the tone of the accusations was inflammatory, and stated: <i>"Frankly, I am getting tired of hearing it, and I would ask that you please stop."</i></p> <p>d. C. Okafor emphasized that this statement was not meant to dismiss legitimate concerns, but rather to push back against what he saw as a broad and damaging mischaracterization of the entire Executive team. He went on to explain that in the same email, he had described his own support of Indigenous inclusion, referencing his recent nominations of two Métis individuals to the General Faculties Council ad hoc committee. He clarified that those were nominations - not appointments - made in good faith.</p> <p>e. Following additional email exchanges where emotions escalated, C. Okafor said he tried to de-escalate the situation by writing back: <i>"Dear Benjamin, perhaps we got off on the wrong foot. I am not looking to go to war with you. I hear your concerns, and while I may not agree with everything you have said, I hope we can find mutual ground at some point. Let's agree to dial down the rhetoric. There is much work to be done on my part, on behalf of all graduate students—Indigenous students included. Please know that feuding with you is the last thing I want to do. Have a good night."</i></p> <p>f. C. Okafor told Council that he later offered to meet with Benjamin for a one-on-one conversation to foster understanding, but B. Kucher declined, citing a lack of time. C. Okafor concluded by urging Council to view his quote in its full context and reiterated that his intentions had always been to support all graduate students while maintaining a respectful tone, even during difficult conversations.</p> <p>C. Vice-President Student Life: Hazel Kemuma</p> <p>a. As submitted</p> <p>b. She used her speaking time to reflect on the challenges faced in her first two months in office. Speaking not only as a VP but as a colleague and student, she expressed her belief in the potential for a functional, accountable, and</p>	
--	--	--	--

		<p>respectful student government.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. She described the first two months of her term as marked by significant dysfunction and strain. Weekly board meetings, meant for coordination and accountability, often lacked full and transparent updates from certain members. She pointed to a lack of clarity regarding academic employment issues, noting that while this wasn't part of her portfolio, she should still be able to offer basic information to students and direct them accordingly. d. H. Kemuma expressed concern over the tone and hostility within internal communications, emphasizing that failure to uphold respectful conduct led to fear and stagnation. She admitted to being afraid of being misrepresented, of her words being twisted, and of speaking honestly. As an advocate, she said this fear compromised her ability to serve students effectively. She called on the Council to take responsibility for ensuring ethical leadership and to protect volunteers and future leaders of the Association. e. She asked the Council directly: <i>"What are you doing as Council members? What are you doing to safeguard the volunteers who have volunteered their work on GSA who are not getting paid? What are you doing for the other people who are not getting a stipend?"</i> f. <i>"Are you prepared to hold Hazel accountable when she's wrong? I am Hazel, by the way, in case I did not say."</i> g. A. Cheng, Cell Biology Alternate Councillor, interjected, stating: <i>"Let's not beat around the bush, I think it's very clear who you're addressing and what issue you're speaking of. For the sake of everyone here, can you clarify what issue you're referring to, who your words were directed toward, and what your role is on Council?"</i> h. H. Kemuma began to clarify, but the conversation was cut short by a Point of Order from A. Adigun, Educational Policy Councillor, who reminded the Council that the topic would be addressed in the scheduled discussion item later in the meeting. The Speaker ruled in favour of continuing the reports and revisiting the matter during the designated time. <p>D. Vice-President Student Services: Saad Iqbal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. He highlighted several initiatives: 	
--	--	---	--

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June 27 Summer Collaboration Event: Coordinated with ISVS, the Campus Food Bank, and other partners. The event included a free barbecue, a multicultural flag-bearing ceremony, and opportunities to raise awareness about food insecurity. • Support for Student Parents: He directed Councillors to a resource link in his report detailing services for student parents, including access to the new Lactation Pod in SUB. • Mental Health Initiatives: He promoted Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) sessions offered by the Dean of Students Office, with dates throughout the year. • Healthy Campus Alberta Summit: He attended in Calgary, where he emphasized the importance of student associations acting as bridges between students and university administration. <p>b. S. Iqbal reiterated that student organizations must foster partnerships across campus to support shared goals and ensure graduate student wellbeing.</p> <p>E. Vice-President External: Niloufar Mir Fallah</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. As submitted b. N. Mir Fallah recommended all guests to review the materials package for the full reports. <p>F. Associate Vice-President Labour: Nathan Lamarche</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. GSA Labour Relations Committee b. Due to his suspension, N. Lamarche was unable to address the Council. <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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. S. Shi read her report: she is graduating next semester, so she will not be continuing as CRO. She has also resigned from the position early to ensure she can make her program deadlines. She has held the position since the second month of her graduate program and finds it 	
--	--	---	--

		<p>bittersweet to leave the position. She thanked all the graduate students that she's been able to meet through this position and those through the GSA elections. She has grown professionally and personally through this position, and she appreciates the support she's received throughout her five years of service.</p> <p>b. Z. Patel thanked S. Shi for her service to the GSA.</p> <p>J. GSA Nominating Committee Chair: Arseniy Belosokhov</p> <p>a. A. Belosokhov encouraged Councillors and guests to apply for the GSA's open vacancies listed on the website here</p> <p>K. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Chair: Elsie Osei</p> <p>L. GSA Management</p> <p>a. As submitted</p>	
30 min	8	<p><u>PRESENTATION ITEMS</u></p> <p>A. GSA 2025-2026 Strategic Work Plan Presentation</p>	A. Kumar, GSA President

30 min	9	<p><u>ACTION ITEMS:</u></p> <p>A. That the GSA Council <u>APPROVE</u> the formation of an <i>ad hoc</i> committee and call for a third-party review of the University of Alberta Graduate Students' Association, subject to the "Terms of the Motion" outlined herein.</p> <p>B. 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 <p>C. That GSA Council APPROVE the Governance Committee-Recommended Bylaw and Policy Revisions, Section F: First Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Outline of Issue: Section F b. Section F Revisions <p>C. That GSA Council APPROVE the Governance Committee-Recommended Bylaw and Policy Revisions, Section J: First Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Outline of Issue: Section J d. Section J Revisions <p>D. That GSA Council APPROVE the Governance Committee-Recommended Bylaw and Policy Revisions, Section K: First Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. Outline of Issue: Section K f. Section K Revisions 	<p>Z. Patel, GSA Speaker</p> <p>N. Lamarche, AVP Labour</p> <p>A. Kumar, GSA President</p>
15 min	10	<p>Question Period</p> <p>1. Written Questions (May be submitted to the GSA Speaker before</p>	

		<p>4:00 PM on Thursday, June 19, 2025):</p> <p>a. Question from N. Morley, Earth & Atmospheric Sciences Councillor: GSA Bylaw and Policy, section K.BYL.1.2 states, "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." As we found out during the latest budget proposal, the university requires a finalized budget by early May, effectively leaving Council with two regular sessions to approve the budget. Two regular sessions does not provide Council with much time to work with the Board and BFC to resolve a contentious budget, and failure to pass a budget during the regular April meeting would have a disastrous impact on the financial viability of the GSA. Are there any external reasons why the bylaws stipulate a March deadline? Or is this an internal deadline that can be amended to provide Council with more time to collaborate with the Board and BFC to resolve any budgetary issues?</p> <p>2. Oral Questions</p>	
	11	<p>Adjournment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Z. Patel suggested two options: adjourn and defer motions to July Council or motion to vote for a special meeting, which requires 10 Councillor requests or a motion by the GSA Board. • Council agreed to automatically defer the motions until the July Council meeting. • Adjourned 8:09PM 	

Item 5a: Nominees for GSA EDIC Vacancies

GSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE (GSA NoC)

GSA EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE (GSA EDIC) (THREE (3) POSITIONS FOR GSA MEMBERS): FIVE (5) NOMINEES

Information regarding the positions for three (3) GSA members was circulated via the GSA newsletter on May 30 and June 6 with a nomination deadline of June 13. Five (5) nominations were received and approved by the GSA Nominating Committee.

The GSA EDIC “works to ensure that the GSA reflects the principles of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) for all its members in the interests of enhancing the graduate student experience and ensuring the existence of a welcoming environment and cohesive community for graduate students on campus” (GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section F.POL.5.2).

There will be an electronic vote held at the July 16 2025 GSA Council meeting.

If you and your alternate are unable to attend the July 16 meeting of GSA Council and would like to cast an electronic vote for this position, you must contact the GSA Elections Coordinator (gsaca@ualberta.ca) BEFORE 3:00 PM on July 16 in order to cast your vote in advance of the GSA Council meeting.

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

- 1. Sandra Fahl (Civil and Environmental Engineering)**
- 2. Annalisa Gyanfosu (Civil & Environmental Engineering)**
- 3. Marzie Jalilehvand (Art and Design)**
- 4. Catherine Mar Pineda (Civil & Environmental Engineering)**
- 5. Shivani Sonkar (Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Science)**

Jurisdiction:GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section F.POL.5.1.c

“The GSA EDIC is composed of “a minimum of seven (7) and up to nine (9) GSA members elected by GSA Council as voting members. The GSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (GSA EDIC) Chair, in consultation with the GSA EDIC Vice-Chair and the Chair of the GSA Nominating Committee, can decide to increase the number of GSA members on the GSA EDIC.”

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

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

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

1. Sandra Fahl (Civil and Environmental Engineering)

Statement of Interest
With my participation on this committee I would like to work with the instances at the University of Alberta that are able to change circumstances for marginalized groups. I would like to tell people that EDI are not just meaningless phrases. Behind every say in decisions of University governance bodies are real students which need to be represented. I am able to relate to those students because of my own personal experience. I am also interested to hear the stories of other students and represent their opinions in the committee.
Bio
<p>I have severed on various governance bodies of my former University RWTH Aachen for a duration of five years. Starting as “week of welcome” organizer, I later became elected president of the mining club and then elected member of the general student council. While representing students university wide, I was elected as deputy member of the University senate. In the two years serving in this position I only missed one meeting. Although, I was only a deputy member, I was the only student representative from my faculty and one of the few females. I led several committees of the university senate. My main task was to coordinate the other student representatives and ensure that our voices were heard in the committees. I sat on election committees for new professors in my department and university wide committees for the selection of scholars. Always I tried to include a more diverse perspective. Apart from this, I worked part-time in the students’ union social counselling department and always loved to hear personal stories from the students I represented. For a long time, I still had regular office hours in the mining club to be in touch with students and hear their opinions. In addition, I worked in the quality assurance of study courses with a special focus on EDI and the implementation of these principles at the accredited Universities. This work took me to several German Universities and to the RUDN University in Russia.</p> <p>When I am not busy with my research or volunteering I like reading and doing various sports. Archery and swimming are some of my favorites. I am a good listener and like to help other people. During my work with the mining club I showed that I am a valuable team member. I have several years of experience in student governance. However I am willing to learn new things and to understand the various needs of students at the University of Alberta. I would like to focus on marginalized groups as I am severely disabled myself. During my work as a peer counselor at the Students Union I worked a lot</p>

with other disabled and otherwise marginalized students. I would like to help these students to feel welcome and included at the University of Alberta.

2. Annalisa Gyanfosu (Civil & Environmental Engineering)

Statement of Interest

I am motivated to serve on the EDI Committee because I believe that meaningful change happens when those who have experienced systemic barriers take an active role in dismantling them. As a graduate student from an underrepresented community, I have navigated challenges that have given me firsthand insight into the barriers that can prevent full participation in academic life. My personal experience has taught me that representation matters, but it must be paired with action. I want to contribute to creating an environment where all graduate students, regardless of their background, identity, or circumstances, can thrive academically and personally. This means not only addressing incidents of discrimination when they occur, but proactively working to identify and eliminate structural barriers that prevent equity.

This lived experience has shaped my understanding that effective EDI work requires proactive advocacy, not just reactive responses. I am particularly motivated by the advocacy aspect of this role, especially given recent issues like the university's decision to cut funding to affiliated daycares demonstrate how seemingly administrative decisions can disproportionately impact marginalized communities, especially women and low-income families. I want to help ensure that the GSA takes strong positions on such issues and works collaboratively with other associations such as the academic association AASUA, the non-academic association NASA, and the postdocs association PDFA to create meaningful change.

What excites me most about this opportunity is the potential to bridge different perspectives. As an Engineering student, I would bring representation from a faculty that is currently unrepresented on the committee, helping to ensure that EDI initiatives address the unique challenges faced across all disciplines. My background allows me to understand both the technical and human sides of systemic issues, which I believe is essential for developing effective solutions. I am committed to listening to the diverse voices within our graduate student community and translating those insights into concrete actions that advance equity, diversity, and inclusion at the University of Alberta.

Bio

Current Volunteer Positions:

VP Graduate Students - Society of Petroleum Engineers University of Alberta Chapter

VP Student Health - Civil & Environmental Engineering Graduate Students Association'

My volunteer experience spans leadership roles, community advocacy, and student support across multiple organizations. My experience with the Campus Food Bank has been particularly formative in understanding equity issues, as both an office volunteer and outreach volunteer. I support the Supplementary Grocery Program and assist food-insecure members of the U of A community through weekly shifts. In my advocacy-focused outreach role, I have engaged in client, campus, and community outreach, and served as the liaison between food bank staff and outreach volunteers, providing regular

updates on our team's progress. From 2023 to 2024, I served as Operations Officer at YEWGlobal, a youth empowerment NGO, where I led a team of 16 volunteers to ensure smooth project execution and effective program delivery. I've also contributed to the Sponsors for Educational Opportunity (SEO) Africa program by reviewing intern applications, mentoring two interns, and participating in outreach initiatives including school donations and community clean-up exercises. Currently, I serve as a mentor through the BIPOC and Allies Student's Association at the U of A, where I support an undergraduate student in navigating academic and personal challenges. During my undergraduate studies, I served as an academic committee member of the Petroleum Engineering Students Association, coordinating academic workshops and tutoring sessions that significantly improved student performance, and as an executive member of the Women in Engineering club, I organized professional development events and established partnerships with industry professionals and other student organizations to expand our reach and impact.

I am a black international graduate student in Engineering who combines lived experience of systemic barriers with proven leadership in creating inclusive environments. My academic training has equipped me with data analysis and research skills that are essential for evaluating EDI program effectiveness and identifying institutional barriers. I can translate complex policy issues into actionable recommendations and use evidence-based approaches to develop solutions. At the Campus Food Bank, I directly serve food-insecure community members weekly while leading outreach efforts that have expanded program awareness across campus. My work here has given me direct experience in advocacy and supporting marginalized community members, helping me understand how institutional decisions impact vulnerable populations. As Operations Officer at YEWGlobal from 2023 to 2024, I managed 16 volunteers and ensured successful delivery of youth empowerment programs across Ghana, strengthening my ability to lead diverse teams and coordinate complex programs within multicultural environments. My mentorship of two SEO Africa interns in 2022 resulted in both securing full-time positions, and I currently mentor an undergraduate student through the BIPOC and Allies Student's Association at the U of A, helping her navigate academic and personal challenges as a student from an underrepresented background. This mentorship experience demonstrates my proven ability to successfully support underrepresented students in overcoming systemic barriers and achieving concrete outcomes. Professionally, my experience as a Marketing Officer at Databank Group, an investment firm in Ghana, strengthened my project coordination and strategic communication skills while coordinating marketing campaigns to attract deposits. Notably, I led outreach initiatives to underserved communities and schools, teaching financial literacy and investment planning, which deepened my understanding of how to make complex information accessible to diverse audiences and address systemic inequities in financial access.

What sets me apart is my understanding of how the University of Alberta's Access, Community and Belonging (ACB) framework must be implemented to create tangible change, recognizing that exceptional student experiences can only be achieved by systematically addressing barriers to access and belonging. Having navigated barriers as someone from an underrepresented background, I understand how policies like recent daycare funding cuts disproportionately impact graduate students, particularly women and low-income families. I bring both the advocacy skills to challenge inequitable decisions and

the collaborative leadership experience to build partnerships across the university. I am committed to moving beyond awareness-raising to implementing systemic changes that create tangible improvements for all graduate students.

3. Marzie Jalilehvand (Art and Design)

Statement of Interest
<p>I am passionate about creating inclusive and welcoming environments, especially for students navigating new academic and cultural landscapes. As an international graduate student and a mother, I have personally experienced how identity, language, and cultural background can impact one's sense of belonging and access to support. These experiences have deepened my understanding of equity and inclusion and strengthened my desire to advocate for underrepresented voices.</p> <p>Volunteering on the GSA EDI Committee aligns with both my personal values and academic interests in design for social good. I believe in the power of inclusive dialogue and diverse perspectives to shape better policies, services, and campus life. I hope to contribute my lived experiences and creative problem-solving skills to the committee's efforts, while also learning from the community and working collaboratively to support meaningful change.</p>
Bio
<p>Previous Volunteer Experience:</p> <p>Festival of Undergraduate Research & Creative Activities (FURCA) 2025: Poster Presentation Judge</p> <p>Conversation Club in-person, faculty of Education: Session facilitator</p> <p>The Yardbird Suite: Edmonton's Premier Jazz Venue: Front of house and bar volunteer</p> <p>I'm a graduate student in Visual Communication Design with over a decade of experience working in collaborative, multidisciplinary teams as a designer and project lead. My background has equipped me with strong communication, problem-solving, and organizational skills, as well as the ability to listen, adapt, and support inclusive dialogue.</p> <p>I'm a thoughtful and empathetic person who values different perspectives and works well in group settings, always aiming to contribute positively and respectfully. I've also volunteered in educational and cultural spaces, which has strengthened my understanding of community needs. I believe these experiences, combined with a genuine commitment to equity and inclusion, would allow me to support the committee's goals effectively.</p>

4. Catherine Mar Pineda (Civil & Environmental Engineering)

Statement of Interest
<p>As an international student, a woman, and a member of the LGBTQ+ community, I have experienced both the challenges and the transformative power of inclusive spaces. Throughout my academic journey, I've learned how much representation, support, and understanding matter—not just for academic success, but for personal well-being and belonging. I want to contribute to creating and strengthening those kinds of spaces for others.</p>

Volunteering for the EDI Committee feels like a natural way to give back to the university community while continuing to learn and grow. I'm passionate about listening to diverse voices, amplifying them when needed, and helping turn shared values into meaningful action. Whether it's through planning inclusive events, reviewing policy, or simply being present to support others, I'm excited to contribute to a more equitable environment for students, staff, and faculty.

I also see this opportunity as a way to connect with others who care deeply about social change and justice. Together, I believe we can continue fostering a campus where people feel safe, empowered, and valued for who they are.

Bio

During my time as an undergraduate student, I participated in organizing food and supply drives for communities affected by natural disasters in Mexico. These initiatives involved collecting non-perishable goods and coordinating donation logistics with local organizations. I also took part in activities aimed at supporting children in orphanages, helping organize collections of toys, clothes, and food to be delivered during the holiday season.

These experiences taught me the importance of community engagement, empathy, and collective action—values that deeply align with the mission of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. They also strengthened my organizational and communication skills, and reinforced my commitment to supporting underserved and marginalized populations.

I'm a PhD student in Environmental Science with a background in biotechnology. My journey has taken me across disciplines and countries, giving me a broad perspective on the barriers that many students face—whether it's navigating cultural differences, feeling unseen, or lacking support systems.

Academically, I've worked as both a research assistant and a teaching assistant, experiences that have sharpened my communication, collaboration, and leadership skills. I've supported students not just in coursework, but also through the quiet challenges that often go unspoken. Professionally, I've been involved in interdisciplinary projects where listening, empathy, and adaptability were key to making progress.

In the past, I've volunteered in community-driven initiatives back home—such as organizing donation drives for families affected by natural disasters and supporting orphanages through food, toy, and clothing collections. These experiences taught me the value of compassion in action and the impact of working together for a greater purpose.

I believe my lived experiences, academic insight, and personal dedication to equity and care would be an asset to the EDI Committee. I'm here to listen, learn, and contribute meaningfully to a more welcoming campus for everyone.

5. Shivani Sonkar (Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Science)

Statement of Interest

With this position I can enhance the student experience on campus, make them feel inclusive. I feel like human being is a social animal, and this position on the committee would allow to meet people, give them a good environment where they can learn, and grow together.

Bio

Current Volunteer Position:

AFNS GSA Sports VP

I am currently serving as sports VP for AFNS GSA, where i have organized several events like yoga classes, and other fun gatherings. In addition as a GSA member, i was prone volunteer with other events as well, such as career event, Academic information session, trivia bowl, a quiz event.

I am Shivani Sonkar, a PhD student in the Department of Agricultural, Food and Nutritional Science at the University of Alberta. My academic background is rooted in interdisciplinary research, and I'm currently working on food safety and disinfection. This work reflects not only scientific curiosity but also a deep commitment to public health and community well-being.

Alongside my academic pursuits, I have taken on leadership roles within the AFNS Graduate Students' Association, including serving as VP of Sports. These roles have allowed me to organize inclusive events, support student wellness, and foster a strong sense of belonging among peers from diverse backgrounds. I've consistently advocated for accessibility and cultural representation in student programming.

I would bring a strong foundation in community engagement, cross-cultural communication, and a sincere passion for promoting inclusive academic environments. I'm eager to contribute to initiatives that celebrate diversity, challenge inequities, and amplify the voices of underrepresented graduate students.

Item 5b: Nominee for GSA Deputy Speaker

**GSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE (GSA NoC)
DEPUTY SPEAKER (ONE (1) POSITION FOR A GSA MEMBER): ONE (1) NOMINEE**

Information regarding the position was circulated via the GSA newsletter on May 30 and June 6 with a nomination deadline of June 13. One (1) nomination was received and approved by the GSA Nominating Committee.

There will be an electronic vote held at the July 16 2025 GSA Council meeting.

If you and your alternate are unable to attend the July 16 meeting of GSA Council and would like to cast an electronic vote for this position, you must contact the GSA Administrative Coordinator (gsaca@ualberta.ca) BEFORE 3:00 PM on July 16 in order to cast your vote in advance of the GSA Council meeting.

Nominees for this position are listed in alphabetical order by last name. 'None of the Candidates' will also be considered a nominee.

Speaker

- 1. Laith Khatib (Biological Sciences)**

Jurisdiction:

Section D.BYL.3.1.d

"The Speaker, Deputy Speaker, CRO, and DRO will be elected by a simple majority vote of GSA Council."

Section E.POL.3.2.a

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

Section E.POL.3.2.b

"Prior to forwarding the names of nominees for GSA Council-Elected Officer positions, the GSA NoC will review the resumes and bios received with reference to eligibility criteria as set out in GSA Bylaw and Policy and will forward the names of nominees who meet the eligibility criteria to GSA Council."

Biographies and brief resumes of the nominees for Deputy Speaker are BELOW. Biographies and brief resumes are presented as received (i.e. not edited).

1. Laith Khatib (Biological Sciences)

Statement of Interest
I want to volunteer as Deputy Speaker because I enjoy helping meetings run smoothly and making sure every voice is heard. Good decisions come from clear rules and respectful debate, and I like guiding groups toward that goal. I have the time to attend all Council and Board meetings, and I care about keeping the process fair, open, and welcoming for every graduate student.
Bio
<p>Volunteer Experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wayfinder, University of Alberta Hospital (Jan 2025 – present) – greet and escort patients and visitors, arrange wheelchairs when needed, and assist anyone with mobility or language barriers, ensuring a welcoming first point of contact • Vice President Events, Good Ally Program Student Association (Sept 2023 – Apr 2024) – planned fundraising and awareness events for Indigenous communities, partnered with True North Aid on “A Taste of Indigenous Canada,” and organized a campus-wide Reconciliation Walk • Co-Organizer, Run to Red Deer charity run (Aug 2022 & Aug 2023) – marketed the event through social media, created educational materials with the Canadian Mental Health Association, and helped raise more than \$8,500 for mental-health programs • Volunteer Coordinator, Taste of Edmonton (Aug 2023) – recruited volunteers to fill 180 ticket-seller shifts, scheduled training, supervised sixteen ticket booths during the two-week festival, and supported fundraising that generated roughly \$16,000 for Phi Gamma Delta • Volunteer Coordinator, Edmonton Elks (May 2023 – present) – organized eighty bag-check shifts, led a team of five recruiters, and contributed to raising more than \$5,000 for Phi Gamma Delta

- Executive Secretary, Phi Gamma Delta Fraternity (Jan – Dec 2023) – managed committee chairs, ran a \$10,000 scholarship competition, and maintained community partnerships while upholding fraternity bylaws and university policy
- Vice President Social, Interfraternity Council (Jan – Dec 2022) – coordinated major inter-organizational social events, enforced event requirements, and resolved conflicts by interpreting council bylaws
- Volunteer Technician, Istishari Arab Hospital, Ramallah (May – Aug 2019) – prepared and sterilized clinical lab equipment, processed microbiology samples, and assisted with data analysis while maintaining strict safety protocols

I am eager to serve as GSA Deputy Speaker because my academic and volunteer record shows a consistent focus on clear communication, careful procedure, and inclusive discussion. As a Senior Graduate Teaching Assistant I mentored new TAs, proof-read assessments, and coordinated exam logistics, all of which required me to keep complex tasks on schedule while treating every stakeholder with respect. In earlier GTA roles I explained laboratory protocols and enforced safety rules in a way that balanced authority with approachability, skills that translate directly to guiding Council debate and clarifying motions from the Chair.

Beyond the classroom I have managed large, mission-driven teams. As Executive Secretary for Phi Gamma Delta I delegated work to committee chairs, oversaw a ten-thousand-dollar scholarship competition, and ensured our events followed fraternity bylaws and university policy. Serving as Volunteer Coordinator for Taste of Edmonton and the Edmonton Elks involved recruiting more than two-hundred volunteers, matching them to shifts, and resolving conflicts quickly so that public-facing operations ran smoothly. These experiences sharpened my ability to digest large quantities of operational information then present concise, neutral briefings to decision makers, a key responsibility for the Deputy Speaker when assisting the Speaker and advising Council.

My research background reinforces this analytical approach. I received an Alberta Innovates Studentship to design and run an independent project in the Allison zebrafish lab, and I regularly present findings to diverse audiences for critique. Interpreting experimental data trains the same

critical thinking needed to review governance documents and flag policy issues that merit Council attention.

Finally, I understand the commitment the role demands. My academic program is flexible enough for me to attend every Council and GSA Board meeting from July through June, and I am prepared to remain strictly neutral during all elections and referenda. I will bring proven facilitation skills, policy awareness, and a collegial spirit to help the Speaker keep our Council proceedings efficient, fair, and transparent.

Item 5c: Nominee for GSA Elections & Referenda Committee

GSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE (GSA NoC)

GSA ELECTIONS AND REFERENDA COMMITTEE (GSA ERC) (ONE (1) POSITION FOR GSA MEMBERS): ONE (1) NOMINEE

Information regarding the position was circulated via the GSA newsletter on May 30 and June 6 with a nomination deadline of June 13. One (1) nomination was received and approved by the GSA Nominating Committee.

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

There will be an electronic vote held at the July 16 2025 GSA Council meeting.

If you and your alternate are unable to attend the July 16 meeting of GSA Council and would like to cast an electronic vote for this position, you must contact the GSA Administrative Coordinator (gsaca@ualberta.ca) BEFORE 3:00 PM on July 16 in order to cast your vote in advance of the GSA Council meeting.

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

1. Tabish Said Abbasi (Civil and Environmental Engineering)

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

Jurisdiction:

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

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

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

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

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

1. Tabish Said Abbasi (Civil and Environmental Engineering)

Statement of Interest
<p>I am interested in volunteering with the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee because I value the importance of fair, transparent, and inclusive democratic processes within the graduate student community. As a graduate student myself, I recognize how crucial it is for students to have confidence in the systems that represent their voices. I believe that by contributing to the integrity and smooth operation of GSA elections and referenda, I can help foster a stronger, more engaged student body. Additionally, this role aligns with my interest in governance, accountability, and community service, and I see it as an opportunity to give back while gaining valuable experience in organizational procedures and collaborative decision-making.</p>
Bio
<p>I have been actively involved in various volunteer roles that reflect my commitment to supporting and empowering communities. At the University of Alberta, I volunteered with the Pakistan Students' Association, where I assisted new international students with their relocation process. My responsibilities included helping them find housing, open bank accounts, and access essential services such as food banks. This experience allowed me to engage directly with students, understand their challenges, and provide practical support during their transition. Additionally, I have volunteered with several mosques in both Calgary and Edmonton. My work there involved helping with event organization, community outreach, and logistical support for religious and cultural activities. These experiences have strengthened my communication, coordination, and problem-solving skills, and have deepened my appreciation for collaborative service. I am eager to bring this same sense of responsibility and dedication to the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee.</p> <p>I am currently pursuing a Master's degree in Environmental Engineering at the University of Alberta, and I bring over five years of professional experience in engineering roles, including project coordination, team collaboration, and problem-solving in fast-paced environments. My academic background has strengthened my analytical thinking and attention to detail-skills that are essential for ensuring the integrity and accuracy of electoral processes. In addition, my volunteer experience with the Pakistan Students' Association involved supporting new students with relocation, banking, and accessing essential services, which honed my interpersonal and organizational skills. I have also volunteered at several mosques in Calgary and Edmonton, contributing to event coordination and community outreach. These combined experiences have prepared me to work effectively within a team, manage responsibilities diligently, and uphold the fairness and transparency required for this committee.</p>

Item 8a: Governance Committee-Recommended Bylaw and Policy Revisions, Section F

Outline of Issue

Suggested Motion:

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

Recommended Changes to GSA Policy, Section F

Background:

This change formalizes current procedure for the public attending GSA Standing Committee meetings. 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.

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 Policy (deletions are noted as striketroughs and changes/additions are noted in red font)	Rationale
<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.</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>

Item 8b: Governance Committee-Recommended Bylaw and Policy Revisions, Section J

Outline of Issue

Suggested Motion:

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

Recommended Changes to GSA Policy, Section J

Background:

Implementing changes to our Referenda bylaws and policies, procedures and definitions to streamline and align with the PSLA and best practices.

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 striketroughs and changes/additions are noted in red font)	Rationale
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.	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).
J.BYL.2.1 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.	Remove on-going as approved referenda will no longer be perpetual. Remove descriptors. 2/3 is consistent with other Bylaw changes and is generally the standard for any type of fee approval.
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.	Change in the bylaw based on the updated definition. Consistent with Definitions and J.BYL.4.2.

Current Policy (deletions are noted as striketroughs and changes/additions are noted in red font)	Rationale
Referenda Policy	

<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 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>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 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</p>	<p>Voters should have an option to opt out of non-mandatory dedicated fees.</p>

<p>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>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 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>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. 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. 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. 5. The policy allows for adjustments to be proposed during the renewal process, ensuring

<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, 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>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>
J.POL.15.16 Reporting	Clerical Change

<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>	
--	--

Item 8c: Governance Committee-Recommended Bylaw and Policy Revisions, Section K

Outline of Issue

Suggested Motion:

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

Recommended Changes to GSA Policy, Section K

Background:

Implementing changes to our BFC and financial bylaws, policies and procedures to formalize, streamline and align with best practices.

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>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.</p> <p>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 (3) year forecast, followed by review, recommendation, and approval by the GSA Board, prior to presentation to GSA Council.</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 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>
Current Policies (deletions are noted as strikethroughs and changes/additions are noted in red font)	Rationale
<p>K.POL.3.7.a Financial documents requiring signature, including but not limited to cheques, email disbursements, and investment instructions, require two</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>

(2) signatures: either any two (2) Directly-Elected Officers (DEOs) or any one (1) DEO and one (1) Director.	
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 for all disbursements. Cash payments are strictly prohibited.	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 mitigates risk and aligns with best practices in financial management.
K.POL.5.9.b Confidential material distributed during Budget and Finance Committee (BFC) meetings shall be shared with members through password-protected methods.	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.
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.	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.
--	---

Item 8d: GSA Third-Party Review

Suggested Motion

That the GSA Council **APPROVE** the formation of an *ad hoc* committee and call for a third-party review of the University of Alberta Graduate Students' Association, subject to the "Terms of the Motion" outlined herein.

Background (see Speaker's Letter from June 23 2025 Council Mailing)

Over the past months, the integrity of our organization has been questioned on a variety of fronts, including various complaints raised concerning the conduct of GSA executives, members who volunteer for our committees, and the staff we employ to support the work of the organization. I clearly recognize and fully acknowledge the seriousness and gravity of these issues. I also think it is important that we be aware that the sentiments that have arisen have the potential to be interpreted as inflammatory, especially when a proper, thorough investigation of all the claims and allegations has not been conducted. The seriousness of the various complaints brought forward recently by various parties demand judicious consideration and action, in a manner that is in adherence with established legal standards of procedural fairness and which includes a chance to hear from the various parties.

These issues, some of which have been presented in the form of a motion that may have reached your email inbox or which may be presented at the upcoming Council meeting are of a serious nature and demand investigation by an unbiased party. I don't believe it is appropriate that the operations of the GSA be impacted before a thorough assessment of the situation(s) at hand can be completed. I am not discounting that there may be structural issues within the GSA's governing documents (Bylaw, Policy, and Board Policy) that may need to be refined or even reformed, nor am I dismissing the idea that there may be more serious issues at play within the organization. What I am asserting is that it is inappropriate for Council to not engage in a comprehensive, unbiased, and fair review of these matters before any decisions are made.

I stress again my fear that, without this commitment to an unbiased review, the organization is potentially opening itself up to various liabilities such as lawsuits. Simply put, Council meetings are public venues and associated materials are also public and available on the GSA website. Without a thorough and impartial investigation of claims made against specific individuals associated with the organization, sharing those claims publicly without them being in some way verified is a potential legal, financial, and reputational risk. Third-party reviews are not uncommon for student associations across Canada - this has happened to the University of Alberta GSA before. In 2009-10, the GSA contracted an external consultant following a series of allegations against DEOs, complaints by staff to NASA and staff resignations, as well as intervention by the University of Alberta administration. The Provost at the time stepped in and, as noted, an external consultant was brought in to restore and rebuild the GSA. **I firmly believe an unbiased, neutral review of the organization and the various associated allegations will be necessary to pave a path forward for the organization in a fair manner.**

As Speaker of the GSA, I am expected to remain neutral and unbiased in any and all affairs pertaining to the GSA and its governing Council. I take that responsibility seriously. **To this end, to resolve the matters that have been raised in an unbiased manner and to conduct a thorough investigation into the allegations being made, I suggest that a motion be moved and voted upon by the Council calling for a third-party review.**

This will be a complex endeavour, but I believe a necessary one if we are to meaningfully engage with the issues presented and move forward. I cannot say for certain what the review will encompass, but this will be something that takes time and may be expensive. Though this solution sounds extreme, it is a necessary step to resolving the issues at hand, avoiding future scrutiny and the potential for lawsuits. In the interim, however, we must ensure that the business of the organization continues as it is essential for a variety of reasons including for the graduate students we serve and represent.

I ask the GSA Council to reflect and consider the claims being made and the circumstances which we

face in order to find the best path forward.

Terms of the Motion

In passing this motion, the GSA Council agrees to a call for a **top-down and end-to-end, unbiased, third-party review by an appropriate legal entity** (ideally a legal firm, consulting company or independent consultant with a demonstrated understanding of the business, culture, and history of student associations within Alberta and Canada) selected by the GSA Council via majority vote based on the processes outlined hereafter. **The review will encompass any and all affairs and concerns pertaining to the GSA within the last six (6) to twelve (12) months** with a focus on recent events.

The GSA Council will first form an *ad hoc* committee hereby titled “Third-Party Review Committee” or TPRC, naming at least three (3) to five (5) GSA Council members who are NOT Directly-Elected Officers (DEOs) or Council-Elected Officers (CEOs) or a member of a GSA standing committee and have not held such roles in the last twelve (12) months. Candidates, before and after they are selected, **MUST** exhibit neutrality throughout the entirety of the process. Members of the TPRC will be selected in accordance with GSA Nominating Committee guidelines. **Ideally, a council election to appoint the TPRC members will be run as soon as possible.**

The TPRC will be responsible for engaging a third-party reviewer (ideally, as previously stated, a legal firm, consulting company or independent consultant with a demonstrated understanding of the business, culture, and history of student associations within Alberta and Canada), to research and review various appropriate entities (consulting with local entities such as University of Alberta Students’ Union or the University of Alberta administration for potential candidates) and develop a Request for Proposals (RFP). The RFP will pose questions including:

- Could the reviewer conduct the review?
- How would the reviewer approach the review?
- How long could the review take?

- How much would the review cost?
- Has the reviewer interacted with the GSA before? If so, how could they guarantee neutrality and impartiality throughout the review process?
- Any other questions deemed appropriate or necessary by the TPRC.

The TPRC will select and solicit proposals from **three (3) legal or consulting firms or independent consultants** wherein the proposal addresses the questions posed in the RFP.

Upon selection of three (3) third-party entities, the TPRC will circulate and present the proposals to the GSA Council. Candidates may also be invited to present their proposal if possible. **GSA Council will vote and select one (1) third-party reviewer to conduct the third-party review. Selection of the reviewer by GSA Council should ideally occur within one (1) month of forming the TPRC.**

This process should occur without the support of GSA staff, DEOs or CEOs, and members of Council should understand that it may be a considerable investment of time for those that volunteer as the work will not be supported by staff resources other than funds from the GSA. **It is strongly recommended that the TPRC consult and ask for recommendations from local entities such as the University of Alberta Students' Union, the GSA's current auditor, the GSA's current legal representation, and the University of Alberta to streamline the process for selecting a legal or consulting firm or consultant.** The costs associated with the third-party review will be covered by the GSA's Legal Fund and Contingency Fund in compliance with GSA Bylaw and Policy and by the approval of GSA Council (in consultation with the GSA Budget and Finance Committee, the GSA Finance Team and accountant if necessary). As previously mentioned, GSA Council will have the opportunity to review the proposals and the proposal should include cost estimations.

Once the GSA Council selects a third-party reviewer, the TPRC will inform them and initiate the review process as soon as possible. Depending on the terms of the review outlined and agreed upon by the TPRC and third-party reviewer, parties may be bound to a confidentiality agreement or non-disclosure

agreement. During the review process, the TPRC will serve as a liaison between the third-party reviewer and the GSA Council, and the TPRC may provide updates on the status of the review to the GSA Council, should the third-party reviewer permit it. The extent/scope of these updates will be at the discretion of the third-party reviewer.

Upon completion of the third-party review, the TPRC will invite the third-party reviewer to the next scheduled GSA Council meeting (or request a Special Meeting if necessary) to present the findings of the review and what recommendations to enact. A written document of the review will be circulated to GSA Council members at least five (5) working days prior to the meeting. The GSA Council will be permitted to ask questions following the presentation. The presentation and question period MAY NOT occur in an *in camera* session (i.e. closed session). **GSA Council will be bound by the findings of the third-party review and embark on work to enact any recommendations therein.**

Upon completion of the third-party review and its presentation to the GSA Council, the TPRC may be dissolved provided there are no pending actions or business.

Upon formation of the TPRC, GSA Officers (DEOs and CEOs), GSA Staff and GSA Council members who are NOT part of the TPRC MUST NOT intervene or interfere with any step of the review process so as to preserve the unbiased, neutral nature of the third-party review. Any breaches will be dealt with in accordance with GSA Bylaw and Policy and on the advice of the selected third-party entity.

Concurrent with the activities outlined previously, effective immediately (i.e July 16 2025) and until completion of the third party review, **the GSA Council will agree to continue with routine GSA Council business**, wherein “routine” business is strictly defined as:

- Monthly GSA Council meetings (and Special Meetings where necessary)
- The receipt of quarterly financial reports and the annual audit for information purposes
- The receipt of strategic work plan updates for information purposes

- The ratification of election results after the General Election or by-elections
- The approval of the annual GSA operating budget and forecast
- Information presentations by GSA members, community members, and stakeholders
- Matters related to collective bargaining and labour operations
- Council elections to fill vacancies on council or standing committees
- Approve changes to bylaw and policy based on approved suggestions or advice from Governance Committee or other standing committees based on the respective committee's mandate
- This may be refined upon consultation with the selected third-party reviewer, should it be necessary.

Concurrent with the activity described in the preceding motions, effective immediately (i.e July 16 2025) and until the completion of the third-party review, **the GSA Council will agree to suspend all non-routine GSA Council business**, wherein "non-routine" business is strictly defined as:

- Significant amendments to GSA Bylaw and Policy and/or changes to the governance structure/protocols of the organization that have not gone through the current established mechanisms and structures (i.e. through standing committees, Governance Committee and GSA Board) as per the standing committee mandates granted by the GSA Council.
- Major initiatives such as the introduction of new fees etc. requiring the formal approval of GSA Council that do not involve the call for a referendum
- Any other activities NOT described as "routine" business that do not contradict established legal frameworks such as the PSLA or LRC, but this may be refined upon consultation with the selected legal or consulting third-party reviewer, should it be necessary.

A summary of the timeline to form the TPRC and select the third-party reviewer is below:

Suggested Timeline

- July 16 2025 - Motion proposed to GSA Council
- July 18 2025 - Open call for nominations for the TPRC
- On or around August 8 2025 - Potential deadline for nominations

- August 2025 Council Meeting (or earlier) - Council votes to appoint TPRC members
- August 2025 - TPRC solicits proposals, with assistance from UASU, GSA legal counsel, and University of Alberta administration as needed.
- September 2025 Council Meeting (or earlier) - Distribution of RFPs to GSA Council and selection of the third-party reviewer
- Within a week of the September 2025 meeting, the third-party review should commence.

Jurisdiction

B.BYL.3.5 All GSA members of the GSA must exercise shared responsibility in monitoring the performance and conduct of GSA Officers, and monitoring for potential conflicts of interest and/or conflicts of commitment among GSA members, as defined in Section H: Performance, Conduct, Responsibilities, and Attendance, and the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board.

C.BYL.1.1 The mandate of GSA Council is to fulfill all responsibilities listed in Section 95 of the Post-Secondary Learning Act.

C.POL.4.3.b Substantive agenda items are circulated to GSA Council members at least one (1) week prior to the date of the meeting on instruction of the Speaker. Substantive items received after this will be added to the agenda at the discretion of the Speaker. Reports for information are circulated the Friday (or Thursday, in the event of a holiday related closure of the GSA office) before a Monday meeting.

C.POL.4.3.c Changes to the agenda made at meetings require a two-thirds majority vote.

C.POL.4.4.a Special meetings of GSA Council will have specific and limited agendas and may be called when important matters arise for decision either between regular meetings or at a time when pressure of business would not allow them to be adequately disposed of at a scheduled meeting. Procedures governing scheduled meetings will apply to special meetings.

C.POL.4.4.b With reasonable notice (when possible five (5) working days), special meetings will be called by the Speaker following receipt of any of the following:

C.POL.4.4.b.i A Motion of GSA Council at any GSA Council meeting,

C.POL.4.4.b.ii A Motion of the GSAB, or

C.POL.4.4.b.iii A request to the GSAB made by ten (10) or more members of GSA Council.

C.POL.4.4.c Any request for a special meeting of GSA Council as noted above will specify the intended purpose of that meeting, and all business at the meeting must, unless otherwise mandated, be restricted to the specified purpose of the meeting.

C.POL.5.2 Motions (formal proposals that GSA Council take certain actions), are normally accompanied by a Notice of Motion (advance written notice that a Motion will be presented and debated at an upcoming meeting of GSA Council). Notices of Motion must be presented in time to be circulated with the first mailing of the GSA Council material, as described above.

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

C.POL.5.2.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.

F.BYL.1.1 GSA Council may delegate its powers to GSA Standing Committees through committee mandates.

F.BYL.1.5.a GSA Council may from time to time create ad hoc committees to address issues that are outside the purview of GSA Standing Committees.

F.POL.2.9.a GSA Council may, at its discretion, form ad hoc committees to address issues that are outside the purview of any GSA Standing Committees.

F.POL.2.9.b Terms of reference, including mandate, will be given to the ad hoc committee by GSA Council.

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

F.POL.3.2.b The GSAB is the discussion forum for the GSA Officers and Directors.

L.BYL.1.1 The administration of the GSA Legal Defence Fund will be governed by GSA Policy.

Motion Change Log

- July 3 2025
 - Change 1: Removed specific mentions of timing, now “as soon as possible”.
 - Change 2: Third-party reviewer could now encompass independent consultants, potentially relieving high costs associated with legal or consulting firms.

Item 9a: GSA President Report

**2025-2026 President
Report to GSA Council for the 11th July 2025 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Aashish Kumar, President
Date: 11 July 2025

2025-2026 GSA President Meetings Attended (Aashish Kumar)

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 28th June 2025 to 11th July 2025 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

Date	Meeting
24 June 2025	Teaching and Learning AI Subcommittee Meeting
24 June 2025	Meeting with Health and Dental care providers
24 June 2025	DEO Training Session
25 June 2025	Accommodate golive ceremony
25 June 2025	Emergency Bursary discussion
26 June 2025	Tracy Raivio, GSA President and VP Academic
26 June 2025	Aashish Kumar and Maleeka Thomas (CASA)
26 June 2025	GSA Career Fair Discussion with FGPS
27 June 2025	GSA/SU Presidents and VP Academics
2 July 2025	NASA Collective Agreement Discussion
7 July 2025	ED Hiring Committee Meeting #2
8 July 2025	Melissa Padfield and Aashish Kumar GSA President
8 July 2025	Bill Flanagan and Aashish Kumar GSA President
10 July 2025	CASA General Committee Information Session
10 July 2025	GAC (Graduate Advisory Committee) Info Session
10 July 2025	ED Hiring Committee Meeting 3#
11 July 2025	Isaac Van Dyne, Bill's Chief of Staff

Dear Council Colleagues,

Multicultural Day Event Celebration

I am thrilled to share the tremendous success of the Multicultural Day Event Celebration! This event exceeded all expectations, drawing an unprecedented number of attendees and showcasing the vibrant diversity of our graduate student community. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to the dedicated staff who worked tirelessly behind the scenes, as well as to our Vice Presidents Student Life, Student Services, and External, whose collaborative efforts and commitment were instrumental in making this event such a resounding success. Their diligent planning, promotion, and on-the-ground coordination turned this into one of the standout events of the year.

Over the past few weeks, I have participated in several key meetings and initiatives that are important to the GSA and its members. I am pleased to provide the following update:

Health and Dental Care Plan Negotiations

Negotiations with the health and dental care providers are progressing positively. I am satisfied with the direction things are moving in, and we will continue to advocate strongly for the best possible outcomes for graduate students.

NASA Collective Agreement

I have recently been made aware that the collective agreement with NASA is up for renewal. At this stage, I am not fully satisfied with the current terms and am in the process of learning more about the agreement. I will continue to work closely with our team and stakeholders to push for a more favorable outcome for graduate students.

Executive Director Hiring Committee

The ED hiring committee has been operating smoothly. I am pleased to report that the process has been fair, transparent, and diligent in its evaluation of potential candidates.

Building Access Proposal

I have submitted a proposal aimed at improving the building access process for all students at the University of Alberta. Please find the proposal attached to this report. I will be meeting with relevant stakeholders to explore further improvements and ensure a seamless experience for our student body.

Please find the brief proposal:

1. Executive Summary

Graduate students often require after-hours access for research, laboratory work, and study sessions. The current email-based workflow—handled solely between students, Program Coordinators, and Utilities & Operations—is fragmented, lacks transparency, and can take weeks. The GSA proposes that Utilities & Operations integrate

after-hours access requests into the university's Freshservice platform. This centralized, automated system will enable students to submit, track, and receive status updates in real time, reducing turnaround to 24 hours and improving overall process visibility and security.

2. Background & Stakeholder Context

- **Current Stakeholders:** Students, Program Coordinators, Utilities & Operations (U&O) and others.
- **Existing Workflow & Pain Points:**
 1. Student emails Program Coordinator to request after-hours access or access to rooms.
 2. Coordinator requests a photo of the student's OneCard via email.
 3. Coordinator forwards the photo and requests to U&O by email.
 4. U&O programs card access and notifies the Coordinator.
 5. Coordinator informs the student—often days or weeks later.
- **Challenges:**
 - Multiple manual email hand-offs with no tracking.
 - Students have no real-time visibility into request status.
 - Administrative burden leads to delays and occasional oversights.

3. Problem Statement

The current process is entirely email-driven and lacks a centralized tracking mechanism. These gaps result in unpredictable wait times, low transparency, and inconsistent turnaround times.

4. Proposed Freshservice Solution

Integrate after-hours access requests into a dedicated Freshservice service module:

- **Service Portal:** Students log in, fill out a request form, and upload OneCard images (if required).
- **Automated Routing & Approval:**
 - **Step 1:** Program Coordinator verifies eligibility and approves the request in Freshservice.
 - **Step 2:** Ticket auto-routes to Utilities & Operations for final approval and programming of access credentials.
- **Real-Time Status Updates:** Automated notifications at each stage—Submitted, Coordinator Approved, and Access Activated.
- **Reporting & Audit Trail:** Dashboards tracking volume, processing times, and compliance metrics for continuous improvement.

5. Benefits

- **Faster Turnaround:** 24-hour approvals versus current multi-week delays.
- **Enhanced Transparency:** Students can track progress in real time, reducing inquiries.
- **Reduced Administrative Load:** Automated notifications and routing eliminate repetitive emailing.

6. Resource Considerations

- **Licensing:** Covered by existing IT subscriptions.
- **Variable Costs:** None—leverages the current Freshservice license and university infrastructure, resulting in zero additional per-request expenses

7. Conclusion & Call to Action

By leveraging Freshservice automation, Utilities & Operations can streamline after-hours access requests into a 24-hour, transparent, and efficient process.

I look forward to continuing this work with the Council's support and will provide further updates as these initiatives progress.

Item 9b: VP Academic Report

**2025-2026 Vice-President Academic
Report to GSA Council for the July 2025 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Chen Okafor
Date: July 11 th , 2025

2025-2026 GSA VP Academic Meetings Attended (Chen Okafor)

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between June 19th to July 11th (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

Date	Meeting
June 19 th	GFC Programs Committee
June 19 th	Proposed DSAI Graduate Certificate Consultation
June 19 th	Spring Convocation
June 20 th	GSA/CCR Tour
June 23 rd	IPR/GSA/IGSA Bimonthly Meeting
June 24 th	Phone Call with a Student
June 26 th	Meeting with Tracy
June 26 th	GSA Career Fair Discussion
June 27 th	GSA/SU GFC Discussion
June 27 th	Meeting with a Student
July 2 nd	NASA Collective Bargaining Meeting
July 7 th	ED Hiring Committee Meeting
July 7 th	GMeet: Pre-meeting: GSPS Pilot Program Volunteer Interviews
July 7 th	GSPS Interviews
July 8 th	GSPS Interviews
July 9 th	GMeet: Graduate Student Peer Support Program Working Group
July 10 th	GSA President: One on One
July 10 th	ED Hiring Committee Meeting
July 10 th	Meeting with a Student
July 11 th	VP Academic Walk-In Hours

Dear Council Colleagues,

On Friday, July 11th, I will be hosting my first ever walk in hours at Triffo Hall (1-49). I am looking forward to assisting graduate students on a wide variety of subject matter related to their academics. I have also been attending over the past month meetings on a whole host of issues, from GFC Programs to meeting with the GPS dean to the Graduate Student Peer Support (GPS) program regular sessions. Please find the list of meetings I have attended and a brief summary of what took place in those meetings below.

GFC Programs Committee (June 19th, 2025)

During this meeting there was discussion around the creation of a proposed Bachelor of Science in Computer Science, Mathematics and Management degree. However, Florence Glanfield expressed her disapproval given there was no access, community and belonging aspect to the program. A BSc in Data Science (Honors Program) was also put forward to provide a comprehensive education in data science. It would be the only honors data science program in Alberta if enacted. There was an additional proposal for a Post Master's Certificate in Nurse Practitioner Specialty Practice program under the Faculty of Nursing.

Proposed DSAI Graduate Certificate Consultation (June 19th, 2025)

President Aashish Kumar and I were invited to a meeting proposing the creation of a graduate certificate program in data science and AI. This would be a program open to those not currently within this field of study. We agreed to help spread the word about this certificate program and also suggest ways to make the program a success.

Spring Convocation (June 19th, 2025)

I attended this 3 pm convocation ceremony for Business and Law graduates on behalf of the GSA.

GSA/CCR Tour (June 20th, 2025)

We (all GSA DEOs) were invited to tour the Hanson Fitness and Lifestyle Centre by Christine Legault, who is the Director for Campus and Community Recreation.

IPR/GSA/IGSA Monthly Meeting (June 23rd, 2025)

We met with Florence Glanfield and a colleague of hers to discuss the VPIR (Vice President Indigenous Relations) position and the best means of addressing the controversies surrounding the topic of indigenous relations.

Meeting with Tracy (June 26th, 2025)

President Aashish Kumar and I met with Dean of GPS Tracy Raivio to discuss how the university is helping students from Iran, student tuition, collective agreement with NASA (Non-Academic Staff Association) and increased dental care coverage for students among other topics.

GSA Career Fair Discussion (June 26th, 2025)

President Aashish Kumar and I met with Renee Polziehn from FGPS and a colleague of hers to determine a path forward for hosting a career fair for graduate students.

GSA/SU GFC Discussion (June 27th, 2025)

President Aashish Kumar and I met with Pedro Almeida and Katie Tamsett from SU (Students' Union) to discuss composition of the GFC and the creation of the newly formed Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Governance.

GMeet: Pre-meeting: GSPS Pilot Program Volunteer Interviews (July 7th, 2025)

Syed Biyabani provided interview questions for myself and Brianna Bucalo, questions meant to be asked of the candidates vying for mentorship positions within the Graduate Student Peer Support program.

GSPS Interviews (July 7th and July 8th, 2025)

I made sure to ask each of the four candidates interviewed for a GSPS mentor position the two questions that I was assigned. After each interview I offered my thoughts on how each individual candidate performed.

GMeet: Graduate Student Peer Support Program Working Group (July 9th, 2025)

Syed Biyabani and Kevin Friese discussed training and advertising for the Graduate Student Peer Support (GSPS) program come September. Kevin previewed a training schedule for the volunteer mentors that could potentially be adopted.

Thanks once again for allowing me to deliver this report. Please reach out at gsa.vpacademic@ualberta.ca with any questions or concerns you may have.

Sincerely,
Chen Okafor
VP Academic (2025-26)

Item 9c: VP Student Life Report

2025-2026 Vice-President Student Life's Meetings Attended (Hazel)

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between June 19th to July 11th 2025 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board and other internal meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

Reports:

1. VP SL Report
2. GSA Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee Report

Coalition for Action on High Risk Drinking (June 20)
GSA/CCR Tour (June 20)
IPR/GSA/IGSA Bi-monthly Meeting (June 23)
ISVS/GSA Student Support Discussion (June 24)
DEO Training Session
Campus and Community Recreation and GSA Bi-Monthly Meeting (June 27)
Multiculturalism Event (June 27)
2 Student Groups Collaboration Meetings (June 30th)
ED Hiring Committee Meeting (July 7)
WDSJ Working Group Meeting (July 8)
ED Hiring Committee Meeting (July 10)

GSA Council Report

Date: July 11th, 2025

From: Hazel Kemuma, Vice President (Student Life)

Dear Council Colleagues,

As the summer is now in full swing with longer days and warm weather, I hope we are spending time outside and engaging in fun events and activities. The following is a brief report on some of the meetings that I have been involved in since the last council update:

Coalition for Action on High Risk Drinking

The coalition discussed renaming to better reflect its evolving scope. Suggestions were given and are still being deliberated upon. Broader harm reduction and recovery-focused approaches were emphasized, along with the importance of maintaining CAHRD's history in light of possible name change. I presented the Harm Reduction Tent initiative and a decision on collaboration will be arrived at once there is a clearer scope of the coalition's this year's mandate. As a coalition we further discussed the need to expand efforts in overdose recognition in residences. UAPS reported fewer overdoses in June but increased substance use during the playoff season.

ISVS/GSA Student Support Discussion

The Multiculturalism Day and Canada Day celebration, held in partnership with ISVS, UAI,

ASSET and Campus Food Bank was a great success. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who attended and supported the event. Building on that momentum, I met with ISVS to discuss future collaborative initiatives and other support we can offer for students. These conversations are ongoing as we work to expand inclusive programming for the graduate student community.

Campus and Community Recreation and GSA Bi-Monthly Meeting

While there were no updates on the student surveys at the time, we discussed potential collaborative events between CCR and the GSA. Suggested ideas include hosting a social hour at the Wilson Climbing Centre (with coffee and snacks served at the GSA Lounge and accommodations for children), partnering with them on the Run/Walk, and planning a winter Plant Night. We also discussed the importance of having at least one engagement event per month during the winter. These ideas are in the early planning stages and will be further developed in collaboration. More information will be shared with the council as the ideas come to fruition.

Student Groups Collaboration Meetings

In line with my goal to foster cross-campus collaboration and reduce siloed engagement, I've begun outreach meetings with student associations this term. So far the groups that I have reached out to have expressed strong interest, with more meetings scheduled as I work through an extensive contact list. At the heart of these efforts is a commitment to hearing students out, understanding their experiences, concerns, and ideas for a more connected campus. To support this, I will be including departmental councilors in these meetings where possible. One of the first collaborative opportunities on the table is the upcoming Run/Walk event, which is shaping up to be a key initiative for shared involvement and visibility.

WDSJ Working Group Meeting

Planning for the World Day of Social Justice began with positive feedback on the previously proposed call-to-action. A key recommendation from last year being carried forward is the discontinuation of the Living Library more so due to low engagement. The committee is now exploring new formats that still uplift diverse voices without positioning organizers as subject matter experts. Ideas include themed panels of lived experiences, poster stories, and online engagement pieces and other initiatives that are more accessible and community-driven. Discussions also centered on defining social justice in a way that invites real-time community engagement and highlights underrecognized efforts already happening at the U of A.

Thank you for your continued support and should you have any questions, concerns or contributions please feel free to contact me.

GSA Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee Report

The EDIC committee has not convened formally since the last Council update, with our next meeting scheduled for July 23rd. However, work has continued between meetings, particularly on the Harm Reduction Tent. This tent is envisioned as a safe and educational space offering harm reduction supplies, resources, and information during the Week of Welcome and other campus events where alcohol is served. It represents a practical step in our broader commitment to student wellness, safety, and inclusion.

Fundraising for this initiative has been a key focus over the past few weeks. Special thanks to Emma Chambers for her proactiveness in identifying and leading some of the conversation with prospective partners, drafting proposals, and coordinating outreach. The GSA has also committed internal funds to support the project. Additional grant applications and external sponsorship opportunities are being explored, and we are building partnerships with community organizations to enhance the scope and sustainability of the tent.

We will share more details and progress at the next Council meeting following our July 23rd discussion. In the meantime, any Council members interested in contributing to or supporting this initiative are encouraged to reach out.

**Warm regards,
Hazel Kemuma.
VP Student Life (2025-2026)**

Item 9d: VP Student Services Report

**2025-2026 VP Student Services
Report to GSA Council for the July 2025 Meeting**

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

Below is a list of meetings I attended between June 20 and July 10 (not including weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

Date	Meeting
June 23	Meeting with Florence Glanfield and Indigenous Knowledge Holder
June 24	Meeting with Ellement (H&D Plan Providers)
June 24	Meeting with Diana Kim (ISVS)
June 27	GSA/Campus & Community Recreation (CCR) Bi-Monthly Meeting
June 27	Multiculturalism Day Celebration
July 3	CFB Board Chairs and ED Meeting
July 7	GSPS Interview Pre-Meeting
July 7	GSPS Interview with Candidate (1)
July 7	GSPS Interview with Candidate (2)
July 8	Meeting with Kevin Friese
July 10	GSPS Interview with Candidate (3)
July 10	GSPS Interview with Candidate (4)

Dear Members of the GSA Council,

I hope you're all doing well in your academic, professional, and personal pursuits. Below are the details of the meetings I have attended between June 20 and July 10, 2025:

Meeting with Florence Glanfield and an Indigenous Knowledge Holder

This meeting was a continuation of the meeting on June 18, 2025. Dr. Florence had invited an Indigenous Knowledge Holder along with members of the IGSA. Among other aspects, this meeting provided an opportunity for learning about Indigenous perspectives and ways of knowing, being, and living. Equally important, it also provided the members with the opportunity to share their concerns and viewpoints, while also attempting to continue further discussions meaningfully. I have verbally referred to this meeting in my last council remarks, and this meeting was a positive act of moving forward. I am thankful to Florence for organizing the meeting, to the Indigenous Knowledge Holder for spearheading the meeting, and to the IGSA for providing their valuable perspectives. I hope that the Council can respectfully and meaningfully resolve this matter, keeping in consideration the gaps that need to be addressed, the intention of creating the VPIR position in the first place, as well as the Indigenous perspectives.

Meeting with Ellement

Our meetings with Ellement continue to find the best possible Health and Dental Plan for our fellow graduate students. The Executive Board has been trying to negotiate the plan, keeping in mind the previous feedback we have received as well as the current needs of the graduate students. I have also requested Element to prepare promotional material incorporating the plan changes and other relevant details to assist users in understanding the coverage aspects more clearly. Closer to the Fall term, I will also be holding some informational and awareness campaigns to better inform the graduate students about the H&D and other services.

Meeting with Diana Kim

Our VP SL and I met with Diana Kim from the ISVS to discuss programming related to the multiculturalism day. The event was held on Friday, June 27, 2025, as a partnership between the GSA, ISVS, ASSET and volunteer support from the ISA.

GSA/CCR Meeting

In this regular meeting with the Community & Campus Recreation officers, our VP SL and I continued discussions about potential collaborations and initiatives. One of the ideas we are working on currently is to hold a social hours session in the Wilson Climbing Centre, where attendees will be able to enjoy rock climbing in addition to the opportunity to share coffee and snacks with their fellows. There are some other great ideas that our VP SL is working on through the CCR, which she will share.

Multiculturalism Day Celebration

On this day, the DEOs attended and co-organized the event with other partners. The celebration was held to celebrate Multiculturalism Day on campus with several programming events. Along with a BBQ, the celebration included desk set-ups by the ASSET, the Campus Food Bank (CFB), and other Sponsors for the event. The event was kicked off by opening remarks from Florence Glanfield (Vice Provost, Indigenous Programming & Research), Kumarie Achaibar-Morrison (Director, ISVS), Yetayale Tekle (ED, CFB), Aashish Kumar, Abdullah al Anik (ISA Co-President), and me.

GSPS Interviews

The Graduate Student Peer Support Program has moved forward with interviews being scheduled this week and next week. Two interview teams have been formed to interview 21 suitable candidates for the positions of Peer Supporters and a Coordinator. The GSA VP academic and I are part of the two teams that are interviewing candidates. Although the interviews are ongoing, I am confident that the selected candidates will be able to demonstrate exceptional peer support to fellow graduate students and also help shape the pilot program. The Council will be updated once the interviews have been finalized and candidates selected for the roles.

Meeting with Kevin Friese

In our regular meeting, Kevin and I discussed updates on ongoing initiatives and areas of priority. We talked about the progress on the Hydroponics Farm. I am excited to report that the Dean of Students is actively looking into exploring space availability for piloting the farm. We are also meeting with the Professor in the Mechanical Engineering Department next week to continue our discussions on the logistical side of the initiative.

We also talked about the possibility of consolidating the data on the usage of the GSPS Program, which would be valuable for the University and the GSA to prioritize peer support-related networks. Kevin introduced a name for an officer who would be helpful in this regard. Kevin also shared that the report on the usage of the One at a Time Therapy (OATT) pilot program is now prepared and ready to be shared. This report will provide key insights about the project, including the impact on the campus community. The recruitment process for hiring the Manager for the University Health Centre is ongoing, and updates will be shared soon.

On September 24, the Student Mental Health Action Plan will kick off, and the campus community will be invited to the launch ceremony. I will share the details with the Council once we get more information.

Important Notes and Links:

1. The office of the Dean of Students is offering ***Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)*** to our student communities. There are limited spots available for these dates: July 31-Aug 1, Oct 16-17, Nov 6-7, and Dec 11-Jan 1. Interested councillors can directly contact Kevin Friese at friese@ualberta.ca. Please note that if interested, you will have to attend both days together as shared above.

2. Based on feedback received, I have started including important links for graduate students, including parents, to raise awareness about the supports available to them. Please feel free to share these and also refer to them as needed:

Students Who Parent Help Links:

1. [GSA Supports for Parents](#)
2. [Orientation for Students Who Parent](#)
3. [Students Who Parent on Campus \(SPOC\) Group](#)
4. [Campus & Community Recreation \(CCR\): Youth Camps](#)
5. [Green & Gold Sport Camps](#)

Health & Dental Plan Help Links:

1. [StudentCare FAQ](#)
2. [StudentCare Contact Form](#)
3. [StudentCare Plan At A Glance](#)
4. [Opt Out of the H&D Plan](#)
5. [Change of Coverage Period Dates](#)

Quick Links for Grad Funding

1. [GSA Academic Travel Grant, Child Care Grant and Emergency Bursary](#)
2. [FGPS Academic Funding](#)
3. [UofA Emergency Bursaries and Loans](#)
4. [Office of the Registrar Awards, Scholarships, Funding](#)

Best Regards,

Saad Arslan Iqbal

GSA VP Student Services (2025-26)

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

Item 9e: VP External Report

**2024-2025 Vice-President External
Report to GSA Council for the June 23, 2025 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Niloufar Mirfallah
Date: July, 14, 2025

2025-2026 GSA VP External Meetings Attended (Niloufar)

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
June 18	ED Hiring committee
June 19	Awards for Faculty Excellence Adjudication Meeting
June 23	Bi-monthly meetings IPR/GSA/IGSA
June 24	DEO training session
June 25	Edmonton Student alliance meeting
June 26	GSA Career Fair Discussion
June 27	UAI Collaboration – Canadian Multiculturalism Day Event
July 2	Meeting with VP External of SU
July 7	ED Hiring committee
July 8	CASA General Committee Information
July 10	GAC(Graduate Advisory Committee) Info session (CASA)
July 10	FPC(Federal Policy Committee) Info session (CASA)

ED Hiring committee

One of the internal focuses of the GSA is the hiring of a new Executive Director. I am part of the hiring committee. Due to the confidentiality of the process, we are unable to share details at this time, but the process is actively underway.

Awards for Faculty Excellence Adjudication Meeting

We finalized award adjudication

- Henry Marshall Tory Chair
- University of Alberta Distinguished Professor
- McCalla Professorship
- Vargo Teaching Chair
- University Cup

Bi-monthly meetings IPR/GSA/IGSA

We had a meeting with IGSA, with the presence of Florence Glanfield, regarding the VPIR position. The goal was to gain a better understanding of all aspects involved and to identify the best ways for the GSA to support Indigenous students effectively.

Edmonton Student Alliance meeting

We had goal setting for the coming year: Advocacy document by August

- August/September GOTV campaign
- Housing Survey engagement in September
- ELECTION SEASON October
- Municipal Mayoral Election Forum on October 10th
- Transit Survey engagement in November
- Engagement with incoming City Council December/January

We even had a good discussion about each campus priority for in the city of Edmonton:

- Housing
- Transit
- Affordability
- GOTV - Engagement with Post-Secondary Students - Civic Engagement
 - How to engage with the City of Edmonton, governance process
- Employment
- Newcomer supports
- Mental health / Wellness

GSA Career Fair Discussion

We had a discussion with FGPS about the potential for UofA support regarding the career fair. One of the suggestions was to focus more on professional development (PD) sessions. We also discussed new approaches to increase student engagement and participation, particularly by fostering connections during these events. One suggestion was to improve how these sessions are introduced, through collaboration between the GSA and FGPS. Discussions around potential collaborations with industry partners are still ongoing.

UAI Collaboration – Canadian Multiculturalism Day Event

I participated in organizing Canadian Multiculturalism Day on June 27, 2025, in collaboration with ISVS, GSA, ASSET, and the Campus Food Bank. It was a successful day of celebration, advocacy, and community engagement.

Meeting with SU-VP External:

We discussed potential collaboration with the SU at the federal, provincial, and municipal levels of advocacy. Our priorities for the coming year are mostly aligned, with one major difference being the level of provincial advocacy. We explored the possibility of collaborating with CAUS, though further discussion is needed to understand their goals for the upcoming year. In the meantime, we are also meeting with other graduate student associations across Alberta to determine the best advocacy channel. Additionally, we discussed the idea of applying for grants to support the Campus Food Bank and are currently researching available opportunities.

CASA:

We have some general meetings planned to introduce the various committees in CASA ahead of the upcoming PoliStrat week.

Note:

We recently received a communication from the Iranian Students' Association at the University of Alberta (ISAUUA), outlining serious concerns raised by over 50 newly admitted Iranian graduate students experiencing extreme delays in their study permit processing. Many of these students have been waiting over 200 working days, with their applications stalled in background verification despite full compliance with IRCC requirements. Some students have lost their admission or face expiring IELTS scores without access to timely retesting due to limitations in Iran.

In response, the GSA has reached out to IRCC through the appropriate email channel and is actively pursuing further advocacy via CASA. We also have an upcoming meeting with FGPS to discuss potential institutional support, including additional deferral options, supervisor flexibility regarding funding, and potential IELTS requirement waivers.

Item 9g: GSA Senator Report

**2025-2026 GSA Senator
Report to GSA Council for the July 16 2025 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Hussain Alhussainy GSA Senator
Date: July 11, 2025

Introduction

Dear Council,

My name is Hussain Alhussainy (he/him), and I'm honoured to be serving as your GSA Senator. I'm currently a Master's student in Political Science (Thesis stream). I also serve as Vice President Labour for the Political Science Graduate Students' Association and as a Councillor and founding member of the Council for Disability Cultures and Access (formerly the Council on Systemic Ableism).

Purpose and Aspirations as GSA Senator

As GSA Senator, my core responsibility is to represent graduate students and their interests in the University of Alberta Senate. I take this responsibility seriously and intend to bring forward the priorities, concerns, and experiences of graduate students into Senate conversations and initiatives. This includes advocating on matters related to research, funding (particularly as it relates to the programs, services, and initiatives of the GSA that directly support students), disability inclusion and accessibility, and the overall academic and social experience of graduate students.

I am eager to serve in the Senate to help bridge the voices of graduate students, including those facing systemic barriers, with the decisions and structures that shape their experience. While I bring my own lived experience to this role, I recognize that I cannot represent every perspective alone. I'll be working closely with student leaders from a range of backgrounds and equity-deserving groups to ensure that the GSA's presence in the Senate reflects the diversity of our graduate community. This includes ensuring that the voices of Indigenous students are reflected in the University's work on Indigenous engagement, partnerships, and reconciliation.

I believe in embedding equity into governance not just as a principle but as a practice through the policies, services, and initiatives we undertake so that every student is supported. The Senate's commitment to

“inquire, connect, and promote” resonates deeply with my approach to advocacy, and I see this role as an opportunity to make that commitment real in the lives of graduate students.

Relevant Experience

My experience has prepared me to serve in this role with clarity and purpose. Currently, as Vice President Labour for the Political Science Graduate Students' Association, I advocate for fair working conditions and inclusive departmental practices. I also serve as a Councillor and founding member of the Council for Disability Cultures and Access, under the leadership of Vice Provost Carrie Smith and Professor Danielle Peers, working to advance institutional access and disability justice.

During my undergraduate studies, I served as President of the Organization for Arts Students and Interdisciplinary Studies (OASIS), the Faculty of Arts undergraduate student association. In that role, I represented over 7,000 arts students, led faculty-wide consultations on proposed policy changes, secured expanded funding for student services, and launched long-term programming on mentorship, accessibility, and support for marginalized students. I also organized inclusive events and completed an accessibility audit to inform infrastructure improvements.

Within university governance, I've served on the General Faculties Council, Arts Faculty Council, and the Council on Student Affairs. In these roles, I contributed to academic policy review, strategic planning processes, and advocacy around student experience with a consistent focus on equity and inclusion.

Looking Ahead

In the months ahead, I look forward to working closely with the GSA Council and fellow Senators to ensure that graduate students are meaningfully represented in the Senate. I welcome your input, concerns, and questions as I take on this responsibility, and I am committed to regular and transparent communication with the Council about my work in the Senate.

Please feel free to reach out at any time via email at gsa.senator@ualberta.ca

Thank you

Hussain Alaeddin Alhussainy

Item 9j: GSA Nominating Committee Chair Report

**2024-2025 Nominating Committee Chair
Report to GSA Council for June 2025**

To: GSA Council

From: Arseniy Belosokhov

Date: July 11, 2024

Dear members of the GSA Council,

The Nominating Committee (NoC) has continued its work despite currently operating with one member short due to a recent resignation for academic reasons. We look forward to welcoming a new appointee from the Council to restore our full capacity.

Since the last Council meeting, the NoC has been actively engaged in filling several key vacancies reflected in agenda items concerning the Deputy Speaker, EDIC, and ERC positions. Alongside these duties, we've also been focusing on internal improvements. Notably, we've begun testing the Single Transferable Vote (STV) system across a range of scenarios. We hope to recommend it to the GFC for broader implementation as a standard voting method, as well as to suggest a series of recommendations on the bylaws improvements for consideration

In addition, the NoC is currently addressing the significant vacancy on the ACB. We have been exploring several solutions that have been shared with you for input and transparency.

We are also actively recruiting for the following open positions and encourage members to consider putting their names forward or helping spread the word:

- 25 GSA Members for the FGSR Council
- 1 GSA Member for the Governance Committee
- 3 Councillors or Alternates for the GSA Board (no nominations received since the last Council. Your participation is especially welcome)
- 1 GSA Member for the Deputy Returning Officer (DRO)
- 2 Councillors or Alternates and 3 GSA Members for the ACB

Additionally, we encourage 1 Councillor to join the Nominating Committee

We appreciate your continued support and encourage all members to consider getting involved.

Kind regards,

Arseniy Belosokhov, Nominating Committee Chair

Item 9k: GSA Elections & Referenda Committee Chair Report

**GSA Elections and Referenda Committee
Report to the GSA Council for the 16th July 2025 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Elsie Osei
Date: 15th July 2025

Dear GSA Council Colleagues,

As the Council is aware, the position of Vice-President Indigenous Relations (VPIR) remains vacant. At the previous Council meeting, a motion was passed directing the Elections and Referenda Committee (ERC) to develop and execute a plan to fill this critical position. The ERC initiated the process with the intention of reaching a resolution and passing a motion. The initial step involved discussions during our emergency and regular meetings, followed by a motion for Council consideration, requesting that the Indigenous Graduate Students' Association (IGSA) nominate a candidate, as outlined in the policy.

However, the ERC encountered significant obstacles preventing resolution:

- a. Member Resignations: The ERC experienced resignations from members during this process.
- b. Operational Pressure: Remaining ERC members reported feeling substantial pressure and difficulty navigating the complexities and sensitivities surrounding this vacancy. One member requested more time to evaluate the issue and cast their vote (The ERC was on a time crunch and was unable to provide more time to this individual. Hence, they decided not to cast their votes.
- c. Loss of Quorum: The combination of resignations and operational strain rendered the ERC unable to reach a consensus or formally conclude its mandated task of developing a plan for the Council.

Given the ERC's inability to come to a consensus and the continued vacancy, we must now proceed directly to the subsequent steps mandated by GSA Policy D.POL.10.1.f:

D.POL.10.1.f.ii: "The GSA Council will be asked to nominate a student who meets the eligibility criteria, in close consultation with the Indigenous Graduate Students' Association (IGSA). The nomination process should give due consideration to the current IGSA Councillor and IGSA President as possible nominees, among other eligible candidates."

D.POL.10.1.f.iii: "If no student is found after all of the above, to ensure the GSA is still fulfilling their commitment and responsibility to Truth & Reconciliation, the salary for the position will go towards funding for FNMI students."

Recognizing the critical importance of the VPIR role to Indigenous graduate students and the broader GSA membership and acknowledging the strong sentiment expressed by many graduate students demanding this position be filled to uphold commitments to Truth and Reconciliation, the ERC Chair has stepped forward to assume personal responsibility for facilitating a path forward. While the full committee cannot act, the Chair, as its appointed leader and reporting officer to Council, is providing this plan to:

1. Respect Council's Mandate: Fulfill the intent of the original motion by proposing actionable steps.
2. Address Student Concerns: Respond directly to the graduate student body's expressed need for representation and action.
3. Prevent Further Delay: Ensure procedural paralysis does not indefinitely stall filling this vital position.
4. Uphold Policy: Transition the process to the next mandated stage (D.POL.10.1.f.ii).

Proposed Path Forward (Presented by ERC Chair)

The vacancy persists, and the ERC committee is currently non-operational for this task. Therefore, the Council must immediately activate the process outlined in D.POL.10.1.f.ii, as the Formal pathway is no longer viable.

The ERC Chair proposes the following steps, per D.POL.10.1.f.ii:

1. **Formal Consultation with IGSA (The ERC chair initiated this):** Based on the motion passed by the council, the ERC chair asked the IGSA to provide a name(s) of persons they feel are in good standing for this position. This consultation is the absolute foundation of the next stage. Policy D.POL.10.1. f. ii states: "**The GSA Council will be asked to nominate a student...**" The consultation with IGSA has identified a nominee. Council must now fulfill its role by formally approving or denying the nomination of **Tamara Dubé** for the VPIR position (see profile below).

Tamara Dubé (she/her) is a Red River Métis graduate student and proud member of the Métis Nation. She is currently pursuing a Master of Science in Occupational Therapy at the University of Alberta (Augustana campus). She holds a Bachelor of Education with a minor in Indigenous Studies from Mount Royal University. She also has a Post-Baccalaureate Certificate in Inclusive Education from Athabasca University.

Tamara brings nearly a decade of diverse teaching and leadership experience across Treaty 6, 7, and 8 territories, as well as internationally in Aotearoa New Zealand. Her professional background includes working as an elementary and inclusive education teacher, with expertise supporting Indigenous students, children with disabilities, and rural and remote communities. She has also participated in Indigenous mentorship programs and field schools focused on Indigenous culture and pedagogy.

Tamara's work is grounded in Indigenous ways of knowing, cultural safety, and decolonizing education and healthcare systems. She has a strong record of interdisciplinary collaboration and rural advocacy and is committed to advancing Indigenous rights, accessibility, and representation. Her leadership approach emphasizes meaningful engagement with Indigenous student groups, amplifying the voices of Indigenous graduate students, and creating culturally inclusive spaces within the Graduate Students' Association. She has been serving as our VPIR since IGSA elected her on June 4, 2025.

2. Before the ratification vote, it is **strongly recommended** that the GSA Council hear a brief statement from the nominee. Council must ratify this nomination according to standard GSA

procedures for appointed executive positions (typically requiring a majority vote of Council).

Following IGSA's formal nomination of Tamara Dubé for the VPIR position, the Council must now determine the confirmation mechanism after confirming the nominee.

- a. The council formally ratifies Tamara Dubé by majority vote at this meeting. Meaning she would not be required to go through a general election.

In Legal terms, BE IT RESOLVED that the GSA Council, under Policy D.POL.10.1.f.ii and based on the nomination received from the Indigenous Graduate Students' Association (IGSA), formally appoints Tamara Dubé to the position of Vice-President Indigenous Relations (VPIR) effective immediately, subject to verification of eligibility; and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Executive is directed to facilitate the onboarding process immediately.

- b. The council approves the nomination but declines to ratify directly and instead directs the CRO to conduct a full by-election where Tamara Dubé would run as a candidate, requiring a vote by the entire GSA membership. This would enhance perceived legitimacy among students.

In legal terms, BE IT RESOLVED that the GSA Council directs the Elections and Referenda Committee (ERC) and the CRO to conduct another by-election for the vacant position of Vice-President Indigenous Relations (VPIR) per standard election bylaws; and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED That Tamara Dubé shall be eligible to stand as a candidate in said by-election.

If the council selects option B, a motion must explicitly override the current bylaw and direct another by-election. The ERC and the CRO must be urgently reconstituted/resourced to conduct the election. Tamara Dubé would need to formally run as a candidate by passing the standard nomination rules and potential challengers.

Should Council reject both paths (i.e., decline to appoint via Option 1 and decline to call another by-election via Option 2), Policy D.POL.10.1.f.iii is automatically triggered, requiring the VPIR salary to be reallocated to FNMI student funding.

The failure of the ERC to vote on a plan necessitates moving to the next stage defined by our governance policies. The council now holds the responsibility to approve or reject the nomination of a candidate for the VPIR position directly. This process is critical for restoring representation and fulfilling our obligations. Immediate action to consult with IGSA was paramount to the ERC chair. We must proceed diligently and respectfully to fill this essential role or, failing that, ensure the salary directly supports FNMI students as a meaningful interim commitment.

Sincerely,

Elsie Osei, Chair of the GSA ERC

Item 9L: GSA Management & LRC Report

**GSA Management
Report to GSA Council for July 16 2025 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Cindy Roose
Date: July 16 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.

Staff have been busy helping department associations run their elections, providing training for incoming CEOs, approving student group registrations, and processing grant requests. The Board's Strategic Work Plan (SWP) is being presented at the Council meeting and quarterly updates have been scheduled. Engagement activities are being planned for the fall semester and planning for fall orientation is ongoing. The Fall Orientation event will be on September 3rd in the Dinwoodie Lounge. Staff are creating an orientation video that will serve as the primary information piece for department orientations this year.

The annual audit work for the GSA 2024 - 2025 finances will begin in late July - early August. Our Finance Manager, Dorota Dziekan-Kryjak, and Accountant, Seidy Louangxay, will work with a local firm to provide the necessary materials.

The office has been supporting the work of several standing committees including the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (EDIC), Elections and Referenda Committee (ERC), Labour Relations Committee (LRC), 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, June 27 2025

Management has been engaged with the following since the last meeting of June 18, 2025:

Strategic

- The Board's SWP has been finalized and will be presented at the July Council meeting.
- The summer student, Alexia Ionescu, began work on Tuesday, June 24th. She will be with us for the next 6 weeks.
- Members of the Board continue to meet with Studywell to negotiate the Health and Dental Plan.
- Negotiations have been completed for the renewal of the NASA Collective Agreement for GSA staff.
- Work on the annual audit should begin in mid July.

Operations

- Currently processing more grants (~50) for the next cut off of Aug 8.
- Grant closure scheduled for July 7 - Aug 4. Communication has been sent to Brandy for the newsletters.
- The grants budget is up to date with figures except for the EB's.
- Student Groups are busy, lots of re-registering groups. Updating the GSA liability form to comply with current UofA policy changes.
- Working on the Good Grants form to collect bank data for Student Group Council Remuneration: 42 eligible groups x \$250 = \$10,500 spend.
- Sent a prompt to GSA External to connect with the Awards Committee to start their review of the awards policy.
- Grace is scheduling orientation sessions as requests from departments come in.
- Archiving of GSA records is underway to ensure we fit within the university's limits for Google Storage

Social Media

No social media update for this week

Management Report to the GSA Board, July 8 2025

Management has been engaged with the following since the last report from June 27, 2025:

Strategic

- The Board's SWP has been finalized and will be presented at the July Council meeting.
- The summer student is busy in the office. She is helping to clean out old files, organize others, and will assist with a space planning project. She has also been doing some research on operational policies.
- Members of the Board continue to meet with Studywell to negotiate the Health and Dental Plan. Behind the scenes, work is underway with the university to ensure a smooth transition onto the plan and work on the GSA's dedicated health and dental plan website is underway.
- Labour negotiations resumed this week. The parties are looking at monetary proposals.
- Work on the annual audit should begin in mid July - early August.
- The ED Hiring Committee has begun to meet and review potential candidates.

Operations

- Grants are closed from July 7 - Aug 4. There are currently 28 grants to process and the second approval is July 28. Vanessa will aim to have them done by the end of day July 15 so there is time to second approve.
- Council remuneration is underway -- just waiting for any appeals from groups we have tallied as 'ineligible'. We have until the end of August to finalize payment for council remuneration.
- Vanessa is compiling data for the President on GSSF usage.
- Grace is scheduling orientation sessions as requests from departments come in.
- Archiving of GSA records is underway to ensure we fit within the university's limits for Google Storage.
- We have a few Standing Committee and external vacancies to fill, but a good amount of interest in the roles.
- The ERC are working on an Action Plan for initial steps on how to fill the VPIR position.
- The incoming CRO and Senator are entering training for their roles this week.
- There have been a few departures from the Labour Relations Committee, due to students graduating, so replenishment will begin soon.
- Brandy is working on Orientation planning - organizing invites and finalizing a list of booths, programming grad student resources (15-20 min presentations), following up on venue confirmation, and creating the GSA orientation video with freelancer.
- Brandy has sent out calendar reminders for the SWP quarterly updates.
- Website - inclusion of VP IR in DEO/Board pages and coordinating with Web Developers on updates.
- Monitoring front desk email and directing inquiries.

Social Media

Facebook

Reach: -37% (June 10-July 8)

Followers: no change (current: 2052)

Instagram

Reach: +5.1% (June 10-July 8)

Followers: +5 followers (current: 1582)

Twitter/ X

Followers: -4 followers (1274)

**GSA Labour Relations Committee
Report to GSA Council for the July 16, 2025 Meeting**

To: Council Members
From: LRC
Date: July 16, 2025

Dear Council Members,

The LRC Committee met on July 14, 2025. Below are the highlights of the meeting.

The Vice-Chairperson seat is vacant now since the previous Vice-Chairperson has graduated. A brief description of the role was provided and LRC will hold an e-vote to fill this seat once candidates have put their names forward.

An update was provided by the Bargaining team. The last round of bargaining sessions were held on July 7th and 8th, as scheduled. The team informed LRC that bargaining is at an impasse. This means that neither side can agree on certain points and further sessions were deemed redundant. In light of this, the next step would be informal mediation. For clarity, it is the students on the bargaining team that decide the direction and the next steps to be taken. The PSAC representative is there to present the union's position and offer advice, but the student representatives make all decisions.

In light of the AVPL suspension, LRC members conducted an e-vote on July 4, 2025 to appoint Muneeb Masood Raja to continue on as a bargaining representative for the union's bargaining team. This appointment is temporary, however, LRC may vote to extend the duration of the former AVPL's tenure on the team.

The Labour Relations Committee will send a special bulletin to AEGS students with updates very soon.