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Item 1: Agenda

Monday, March 17, 2025

**Held in-person in 2-100 Council Chambers**

6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

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

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**GSA SPEAKER:**

Zain Patel in the Chair

**GSA DEPUTY SPEAKER:**

Amirah Nazir

**CLOSED SESSION:**

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

Time	Item #	Page #	Title	Presenter(s)
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6:00	-	1	Land Acknowledgement	Z. Patel, GSA Speaker
1 min	1	2-5	Approval of the Agenda for March 24, 2025 GSA Council	Z. Patel, GSA Speaker
1 min	2	6-20	Approval of the GSA Council Minutes of February 24, 2024 GSA Council	Z. Patel, GSA Speaker
2 min	3		Changes in GSA Council Membership	Z. Patel, GSA Speaker
5 min	4		Announcements	
	5		<b><u>PRESENTATION ITEMS</u></b> - None at this time	
15 min	6	21-23  24-29	<b><u>ELECTIONS</u></b> A. GSA Nominating Committee: a. One vacancy b. Two nominations  B. GSA Councillors-At-Large: a. Seven vacancies b. Five nominations	A. Belosokhov, NoC Chair
5 min  1 hr	7	30-31  (separate) 7.0- 7.1 7.2- 7.6 7.7- 7.22  7.23- 7.33	<b><u>ACTION ITEMS:</u></b> A. General Election Results a. Outline of Issue  B. GSA Budget & Finance Committee: Budget Approval a. Outline of Issue 3-Year Plan and 2025-2026 Budget b. Cover Letter to GSA Council 2025-2026 GSA Operating Budget c. 2025-2026 GSA Operating Budget (Including Capital Budget) (HD Estimated) d. GSA 2025-2026 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Narrative	Z. Patel, GSA Speaker  H. Arshad, GSA President

1 hr		7.34-7.37 7.38-7.40 7.41 7.42-7.43  32-33 34-35 36-37 38 39-40 41-43 44-46	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>e. GSA 2025-2028 Restricted and Other Funding Budget</li> <li>f. GSA 2025-2028 Restricted and Other Funding Budget Narrative</li> <li>g. GSA 2025-2028 Labour Union Restricted Fund Budget</li> <li>h. GSA 2025-2026 Labour Union Restricted Fund Budget Narrative</li> </ul> <p>C. Submitted Motions to Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Outline of Issue - Councillor-led Motion Procedure</li> <li>b. Outline of Issue - Bylaw Update Procedure</li> <li>c. Outline of Issue - Bylaw Update Procedure</li> <li>d. Outline of Issue - Standing Committee Attendance, Accessibility &amp; Advertising</li> <li>e. Outline of Issue - Standing Committees &amp; Confidentiality</li> <li>f. Outline of Issue - Impeachment &amp; Vote of No Confidence Procedure</li> <li>g. Outline of Issue - AVP Labour Voting Rights</li> </ul>	N. Lamarche, EFS Councillor & Incoming AVP Labour
7:55			<b><u>10 MINUTE BREAK</u></b>	
15 min	8	47-53 54-56 57-58  59-60	<p><b><u>INFORMATION PIECES</u></b></p> <p>Reports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. GSA President: Haseeb Arshad <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. President's Report</li> <li>b. GSA Board Report</li> <li>c. GSA Budget &amp; Finance Committee Report</li> <li>d. GSA Governance Committee Report</li> <li>e. GSA Equality, Diversity &amp; Inclusion Committee Report</li> </ul> </li> <li>B. Vice-President Academic: Rija Kamran</li> <li>C. Vice-President Student Life: None at this</li> </ul>	No scheduled meeting  No report submitted

		61-66 67-68 69-72 73 74 75 76-77 78-83	<p>time</p> <p>D. Vice-President Student Services: Saad Iqbal</p> <p>E. Vice-President External: Parman Mojir Shaibani</p> <p>F. Associate Vice-President Labour: Muneeb Raja</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">a. GSA Labour Relations Committee</p> <p>G. GSA Senator: Ola Mabrouk</p> <p>H. GSA Speaker: Zain Patel</p> <p>I. Chief and Deputy Returning Officers: Sophie Shi &amp; Temi David</p> <p>J. GSA Nominating Committee Chair: Arseniy Belosokhov</p> <p>K. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Chair: Elsie Osei</p> <p>L. GSA Management</p>	<p>No scheduled meeting</p> <p>No report submitted</p>
15 min	9		<p>Question Period</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Written Questions (May be submitted to the GSA Deputy Speaker before 4:00 PM on Thursday, March 20, 2024)</li> <li>2. Oral Questions</li> </ol>	
	10		Adjournment	

Item 2: GSA Council February 24, 2024 Minutes

**Held in-person in 2-100 Council Chambers**

6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

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

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**GSA SPEAKER:**

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 Speaker: Zain Patel
- GSA Deputy Speaker: Amirah Nazir
- Chief Returning Officer: Sophie Shi
- Senator: Ola Mabrouk

**Departmental Councillors:**

- Ning Dai, Biochemistry
- Samantha Tan, Biological Sciences
- Gurparkash Singh, Biomedical

<p><b>GSA Executives:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● GSA President: Haseeb Arshad</li> <li>● VP Academic: Rija Kamran</li> <li>● VP Student Services: Saad Arslan Iqbal</li> <li>● VP External: Parman Mojir Shaibani</li> <li>● AVP Labour: Muneeb Raja</li> </ul> <p><b>Councillors-At-Large:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Christine Hymanyk</li> <li>2. Margaret DeCoste</li> <li>3. Andres Dorado Solarte</li> <li>4. Abdul Hadi Syed</li> </ol> <p><b>Standing Committee Chairs &amp; Vice-Chairs:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Elsie Osei, ERC Chair</li> </ul> <p><b>Guests:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Temi David, DRO Candidate</li> </ul>	<p>Engineering</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Andy Zhang, Digital Humanities</li> <li>● Nathaniel Morley, Earth &amp; Atmospheric Sciences</li> <li>● Jennie Burton, Elementary Education</li> <li>● Nathan Lamarche, English &amp; Film Studies</li> <li>● Colin Hamnett, History, Classics, &amp; Religion</li> <li>● Zoe Wagner, Human Ecology</li> <li>● Eileen Ai-Lin Tang, Laboratory Medicine &amp; Pathology</li> <li>● Dalia Cristerna Roman, Linguistics</li> <li>● Qi Feng Lin, Medical Microbiology &amp; Immunology</li> <li>● Emma Heidebrecht, Neuroscience</li> <li>● Rebecca Reif, Obstetrics &amp; Gynecology</li> <li>● Toqa Abdelwahab, Ophthalmology</li> <li>● Fulin Wang, Pharmacology</li> <li>● Daniel Carleton, Physics</li> <li>● Grace Essuman, Physiology</li> <li>● Savannah Ribeiro, Political Sciences</li> <li>● Cheryl Pan, Psychology</li> <li>● Kathryn Short, Public Health</li> <li>● Matt Ball, Renewable Resources</li> <li>● Samantha Knapp, Sociology</li> <li>● Ivan Ma, Surgery</li> </ul> <p><b>Alternate Departmental Councillors:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Andy Cheng, Cell Biology</li> <li>● Amirmahdi Mohamadi, Chemical &amp; Material Engineering</li> <li>● Yimiao Zhao, Oncology</li> <li>● Eduardo Andrade, Philosophy</li> </ul>
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Time	Item #	Title	Presenter (s)
6:00	-	Land Acknowledgement	Z. Patel,

			GSA Speaker
1 min	1	Approval of the Agenda for February 24, 2025 GSA Council P. Mojir Shaibani moved. S. Iqbal seconded.  Motion PASSED unanimously.	Z. Patel, GSA Speaker
1 min	2	Approval of the GSA Council Minutes of January 20, 2024 GSA Council S. Iqbal moved. H. Arshad seconded.  Motion PASSED unanimously.	Z. Patel, GSA Speaker
2 min	3	Changes in GSA Council Membership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incoming: Christinne Falguera, Medical Genetics Alternate Councillor</li> </ul>	Z. Patel, GSA Speaker
10 min	4	Announcements	
15 min	5	<b><u>PRESENTATION ITEMS</u></b> A. GSA Council & Elections 101 Presentation Presented by Z. Patel, GSA Speaker, & S. Shi, GSA Chief Returning Officer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Z. Patel detailed the key positions that elections determine, including the President, Vice-Presidents (VPs), and Councillors-At-Large.</li> <li>A newly established role, VP Indigenous Relations (VPIR), is exclusively for Indigenous graduate students.</li> <li>Voting eligibility is based on updated lists received from FGPS.</li> <li>Referenda allow graduate students to vote on key issues like student fees, the U-Pass, and health &amp; dental plans.</li> <li>The complaints process for election violations was outlined, including informal resolution, formal complaints, and a demerit system for rule breaches.</li> <li>Bylaw of the Day: the tie-breaker policy for elections was changed from drawing a name from a hat to a one-day voting extension.</li> </ul>	A. Nazir, GSA Deputy Speaker
	6	<b><u>ACTION ITEMS:</u></b> None at this time	



10 min	7	<p><b><u>ELECTIONS</u></b></p> <p>A. GSA Deputy Returning Officer</p> <p>a. One GSA Member Position:</p> <p>i. One nomination</p> <p>ii. Successful candidate: Temi David</p>	Z. Patel, GSA Speaker
30 min	8	<p><b><u>INFORMATION PIECES</u></b></p> <p>Reports:</p> <p>A. GSA President: Haseeb Arshad</p> <p>a. President's Report</p> <p>i. The GSA is working with the university to support displaced Palestinian students by expanding their access to library resources and offering automatic fee waivers for graduate applications, as opposed to the initial reimbursements applicants would have to apply for.</p> <p>ii. The President also advocated for paid Overleaf subscriptions for research students, as this could enhance collaboration between scholars across different institutions.</p> <p>iii. MNIF guidelines were discussed with the Provost's office: recent guidelines released in July talk about university consultation with the GSA. H. Arshad encouraged the Provost's office to attend Council twice - once with the preliminary proposal and again with the final proposal, as there is a far better turnout to Council sessions than Tuition Town Hall events.</p> <p>iv. H. Arshad raised that there is no graduate student career fair. He encouraged the university to invite industrial partners, sign MOUs for promotional opportunities, and create a through-line to employment for graduate students.</p> <p>v. H. Arshad met with a university governance specialist regarding improving Council effectiveness: he is trying to find ways of paying Councillors while still remaining within the PSLA to maintain motivation for reading the materials and participating fully in the sessions.</p>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>vi. Campus Recovery Pledge update: as far as H. Arshad is aware, the university is doing very little in terms of work helping students recovering from addiction. Two universities, Mount Royal and UofC, have signed a pledge with Recovery on Campus, which is a non-profit organization that creates safe spaces for students to open up about addiction issues. The university is currently stating that their budgetary allowances are too tight to contribute to this initiative, but suggested they could introduce a new fee to create these spaces, which H. Arshad argued is the point of the MNIF and should be used toward these such services. H. Arshad will follow up with this and update the Council at the next meeting.</li> <li>vii. The GSA, along with other AB GSAs, have written a letter to the Minister of Advanced Education re the provincial cuts universities have seen over the last three years and how these cuts are affecting student affordability. Numbers in the letter are concerning: only 60% of AB graduates are staying in AB. Other provinces' retention numbers are higher, meaning they contribute to their local economy. H. Arshad had interviews with CBC and Gateway regarding this issue. The plan is to administer a campaign and ask students to create 2-minute videos expressing their concerns and experiences and post them to the GSA socials to help lobby the government. H. Arshad encouraged Councillors to share information about this once it's available.</li> <li>viii. H. Arshad will also draft a letter to the review panel that the Minister of Advanced Education has announced to review how they want to support post-secondary education, and will update the Council.</li> <li>ix. University Budget Briefing: it was an open session for BoG, so it is public information. They announced a 3% budget cut across all units, along with a hiring freeze. H. Arshad expressed</li> </ul>	
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		<p>concerns that these financial constraints could negatively impact graduate student supervision, as faculty members may have fewer resources to support students, as well as the GSA's GSSF.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. GSA Board Report</li> <li>c. GSA Budget &amp; Finance Committee Report</li> <li>d. GSA Governance Committee Report: No meeting scheduled</li> </ul> <p>B. Vice-President Academic: Rija Kamran</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. R. Kamran provided an update on the university's transition to the Canvas Learning Management System (LMS), which will be fully implemented by Fall 2025. Graduate students, particularly those working as TAs and principle instructors, are encouraged to seek support from her until April, and the new VP Academic after that, if they experience challenges during this transition.</li> <li>b. R. Kamran also addressed ongoing AASUA collective bargaining negotiations from M. Raja, AVP Labour: they have been unable to reach an agreement on key issues, which raises concerns about the potential for a faculty strike. If a strike occurs, it is unlikely students other than thesis-based graduate students may face delays in graduation or interruptions in their research. The university has committed to ensuring that graduate students will continue to receive funding during a strike, but the GSA will monitor the situation closely to hold the university accountable.</li> <li>c. M. Raja asked what offices are working to reduce these effects on graduate students? R. Kamran answered that mitigation routes were discussed, particularly relating to deadlines that professors need to meet as corresponding authors on manuscripts. The university governance made a commitment that all graduate student rights will be protected, but in the event of a strike, professors will lose access to their CCIDs, P Cards and funding, which will affect graduate students. R. Kamran stated that this will be brought to the Union for discussion. The university VP Academic and Dean of Student offices are working to ensure the student experience is not affected.</li> <li>d. R. Kamran suggested writing down all of the concerns</li> </ul>	
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		<p>that will have effects on graduate students and take them to the Dean of Students and Provost to strategize ways around them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>e. C. Hamnett, History Councillor, asked regarding a timeline. R. Kamran stated that updates are posted on the AASUA webpage regarding how the bargaining is proceeding, but there is no time frame currently. In December, forms were sent out to academic staff to submit if research needed to be considered as something that will likely be affected, so it has been prepared for. Both bargaining parties are still coming to the table.</li> </ul> <p>C. Vice-President Student Life: None at this time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. GSA Equality, Diversity &amp; Inclusion Committee Report</li> </ul> <p>D. Vice-President Student Services: Saad Iqbal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. S. Iqbal discussed the initiatives related to student housing and food security with the Student Housing Stability Working Group. This group explores possible student assistance programs that provide shelter, groceries, and essential items for students in need. He encouraged students to reach out for more information.</li> <li>b. Concerns were raised about campus safety with K. Husing, particularly regarding the poor condition of the bus shelter near HUB Mall, which has been described as unsafe and unsanitary. The GSA has brought this issue to the university’s attention at the Safety and Security Committee, but jurisdictional challenges with the city slowed the process of making improvements. S. Iqbal reassured that this will be dealt with shortly.</li> <li>c. The Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Working Group has launched a new support system on their website for students participating in work-integrated learning programs. This initiative ensures that students placed in external work environments have a clear process for reporting sexual violence and accessing resources.</li> <li>d. He discussed the transition to the new health and dental insurance provider, Ellement, which will take effect in Fall 2025. Students expressed frustration over the lack of details regarding coverage and rates. While the final policy details are still being negotiated, S. Iqbal assured students that there will be no increase in fees, and they</li> </ul>	
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		<p>hope to reduce premiums by \$15–\$20 per year. SI encouraged students to reach out with any current concerns with the health and dental plan, as we want to consolidate issues to bring to the new provider to solve issues going forward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>e. The GSA has also applied for a grant to transform the Parent Lounge into a broader Wellness and Family Support Hub, which would provide additional wellness and childcare resources for graduate students.</li> <li>f. The U-Pass referendum was overwhelmingly approved, with 92.5% of students voting in favor of continuing the program.</li> <li>g. Days of Action Committee Living Library events: there is a link in his report for participation. The events discuss social justice in personal anecdotes.</li> <li>h. S. Iqbal met with Renson, UASU VPSL, and K. Huising, Facilities &amp; Operations to discuss collaboration in their Hand-Me-Down store. The largest issue was space, which has now been resolved. They are now investigating how to set up the store. S. Iqbal will share more as further details are decided.</li> <li>i. The UAI Movie Night collaboration has been a continued success.</li> <li>j. There is a visiting lectureship on human rights creating a list and they currently have 16 names. These volunteers are a diverse group of social rights activists. S. Iqbal encouraged Councillors to reach out with anyone they know have done substantial work in terms of activism and suggest their names be added to this visiting lecture series.</li> <li>k. S. Iqbal met with K. Friese, Dean of Students Office, regarding an update on the meal swipe plan that will be tied to OneCards for both graduates and undergraduates that allows for the transfer of extra credit to be forwarded to a student in need. S. Iqbal will share details soon, but the program is expected to launch in March or April.</li> <li>l. H. Arshad, S. Iqbal and P. Mojir Shaibani attended the farewell gathering for E. O’Neill, CFB Executive Director. An interim acting director has been chosen from within the CFB and a new director will be decided on soon.</li> </ul>	
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		<p>m. S. Ribeiro, Political Science Councillor, raised that her department is getting upset at not knowing the upcoming health and dental plan details yet. S. Iqbal clarified that the GSA ED, AD and himself are working with Ellement currently to hammer out details, which will be public soon. When it's ready, we will have our own website with Ellement to visit for all the plan details in the Spring or Summer term. H. Arshad added that in the last meeting, details were beginning to be finalized.</p> <p>E. Vice-President External: Parman Mojir Shaibani</p> <p>a. As submitted</p> <p>b. At the Graduate Advisory Committee, P. Mojir Shaibani discussed the value of social sciences and humanities research (SSHRC) funding. There have been rumours that funding will be cut - in order to counter that, we are planning advocacy campaigns and surveys with GSAs across Canada to oppose these cuts and emphasize the importance of this research. He would like students to participate and share the news.</p> <p>c. The ISE meeting, chaired by Doug Weir, Acting Provost &amp; VP International, discussed problems affecting graduate student experience, with a focus on international students. They identified three key concerns and will work to improve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Community and belonging: many international students struggle to integrate into campus life.</li> <li>ii. Academic experience: there are barriers that make it difficult for international students to succeed academically.</li> <li>iii. Career support: international students often face additional challenges when seeking employment after graduation. Including financial support, safety and wellness, community, navigability problems.</li> </ul> <p>d. E. Tang, Lab Med &amp; Path Councillor, asked for elaboration regarding the cuts to the arts departments: R. Kamran stated that it began in Fall 2024 and the effects of the cuts will continue as the implementation progresses. P. Mojir Shaibani stated that advocacy and campaigning will continue to be done to change this. R. Kamran elaborated</p>	
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		<p>that in the last budget cycle, when the tri-council grants were announced, there was a plan proposed for budget cuts and it was left to SSHRC to decide how they were going to accommodate these cuts over the next two years within their overall budget. The website details reducing travel spending among others and their plan on how they will reduce spending in certain areas to make up for all the associated costs. There is a plan until 2026 that is in place, but there may be more budget cuts planned, which necessitates the campaigning. The SSHRC President put out a statement, which connects to the campaign to establish the importance of this research funding and avoid further cuts.</p> <p>e. S. Ribeiro asked for clarification around the SSHRC budget review, as they have increased their award values despite these cuts. R. Kamran clarified that this increase came out in the 2023 budget cycle and the budget is to be reduced by \$14.1 million over the next five years. They have provided a breakdown on how they will sustain this via reducing spending. They haven't provided a breakdown on how graduate student funding will be affected, but the increase in award amounts will stay the same. They may reduce the number of awards, but there aren't any details available for that currently. S. Ribeiro asked if there was a timeline of when that information may be released. R. Kamran said she would get that information.</p> <p>F. Associate Vice-President Labour: Muneeb Raja</p> <p>a. As submitted</p> <p>b. GSA Labour Relations Committee</p> <p>i. M. Raja provided updates on supervisor safety compliance: currently, over 90% of supervisors have completed the mandatory safety training. The university has implemented an escalation process to ensure compliance, with cases being referred up to the university president if necessary.</p> <p>ii. Safety Summit update: there has been work to expand its focus from physical safety to psychological safety. In the past, the university's safety initiatives have primarily addressed</p>	
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		<p>physical risks, but there is now a growing recognition of the need to address mental health concerns and power imbalances between graduate students and their supervisors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>iii. To support students facing these issues, the Graduate Student Peer Mentor Program will launch in Fall 2025. This program will train student ambassadors to assist peers who are experiencing supervisory conflicts or academic challenges. The recruitment process will begin in March and April, with training starting in spring and summer, and then this plan would be piloted in September. The Dean of Students office is working on the training program currently.</li> <li>iv. In terms of LRC work, we are in the process of appointing the new Outreach Coordinator and the Chief Steward, so hopefully we'll be able to have those appointments in place for March. M. Raja is trying to get more support from PSAC around training and mobilization, with the idea of holding more training sessions and outreach events. However, we are also trying to incorporate more in-house sessions within our own union, such as the GSA Labour Breakfast held in January. We hope to continue these social events to increase outreach and involve former members.</li> <li>v. S. Ribeiro asked after the GSA collective bargaining: M. Raja reported that the GSA has shared a non-monetary proposal with the university and will sit down for a meeting on March 31st and April 1st. However, progress has been slow, as the university appears to prioritize negotiations with larger faculty and staff unions over the GSA. The GSA's bargaining team has found it difficult to secure additional meeting dates, which has caused delays in negotiations. S. Ribeiro asked if this had been brought up with the bargaining team, which M. Raja confirmed.</li> </ul> <p>G. GSA Senator: Ola Mabrouk: Not submitted</p>	
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		<p>H. GSA Speaker: Zain Patel: Not submitted</p> <p>I. Chief and Deputy Returning Officers: Sophie Shi</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Results were not finalized in time for report submission for Council</li> <li>b. The GSA concluded the 2025 General Election this month</li> <li>c. We achieved almost 25% eligible voter turnout (historically around 10%)</li> <li>d. Key factors attributed to the higher turnout: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. More accessible online ballot</li> <li>ii. Reminder emails</li> <li>iii. U-Pass referendum, which attracted many voters who abstained from the rest of the election.</li> </ul> </li> <li>e. We had no VPIR candidates, so a by-election will be organized</li> <li>f. CAL vacancies be filled by Council vote, rather than through the by-election</li> <li>g. All results are available on the GSA website along with CRO decisions. There were no ACB decisions.</li> <li>h. HA recommended reaching out to the Vice-Provost Indigenous Relations to encourage students to nominate themselves via a small video</li> <li>i. N. Lamarche recommended banning social media campaigning from elections for the purposes of fairness and equity.</li> <li>j. HA raised an eligibility issue with voters: C. Roose, GSA AD, clarified that we get a list of registered graduate students from FGPS. If there are irregularities, please send them to Cindy for us to investigate with FGPS.</li> </ul> <p>J. GSA Nominating Committee Chair: Arseniy Belosokhov</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. As submitted</li> </ul> <p>K. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Chair: Elsie Osei</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. As submitted</li> </ul> <p>L. GSA Management, Executive Director: Lewie Moodley</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. As submitted</li> <li>b. For transparency purposes, L. Moodley encouraged N. Lamarche to speak directly with BFC for stipend clarification, as the stipend change directly affects his position and management will be reaching out to the newly elected DEOs for their personal banking</li> </ul>	
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		<p>information this week. Preparing for documentation this week, L. Moodley recommended reaching out to a BFC member to discuss potential upcoming changes and context as there would be changes coming that would affect him.</p>	
15 min	9	<p>Question Period</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Written Questions (May be submitted to the GSA Deputy Speaker before 4:00 PM on Thursday, February 20, 2025):             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. N. Morley, Earth &amp; Atmospheric Sciences Councillor: As everyone likely knows, there have been heightened tensions between the governments of Canada and the USA over the past couple months, with both countries threatening to impose tariffs on one another and thus start a trade war. Although the trade war has been delayed from its original starting date, both countries have refused to rule out tariffs if they cannot cooperate in the long term. Such tariffs would lead to dramatic inflation in both countries, which would disproportionately impact low-income workers such as graduate students, and several of my constituents have raised concerns about how these tariffs, if they were to go through, would affect their housing affordability and food security. What actions are the GSA Board considering to mitigate the financial effects of a potential trade war between Canada and the USA, both to graduate students individually and the GSA as an organization?</li> <li>b. H. Arshad provided some context: the Board of Governors discussed this issue, but most of the meeting was confidential. He stated that it will likely affect research stipends, as professors will have to spend more money on supplies and equipment. Professors may not have the funding to support more students. Those are the potential implications for graduate students. This should not affect the GSA particularly, unless the utilities go up, but they are very low as part of our working partnership with the university.</li> <li>c. R. Kamran added that the University Research and Innovation Advisory Committee has been having ongoing</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	

		<p>discussions on the research grants that come out of the U.S. and potential consequences. The U.S. itself has seen many budget cuts. Many of the National Institute of Health Health Science grants come from the U.S.</p> <p>2. Oral Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. N. Lamarche, the incoming AVP Labor, criticized a proposal by the President to reduce the AVP Labor salary by 20% while increasing other executive salaries by 2%.</li> <li>b. Concerns raised:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Reduction may discourage candidates from running in the future considering the level of work alongside program stress.</li> <li>ii. The timing (after the election) appeared questionable.</li> <li>iii. Confidentiality concerns: The President questioned how Nathan learned about the Budget and Finance Committee (BFC) deliberations, as the information was not yet made public.</li> </ul> </li> <li>c. H. Arshad explained that he puts forward recommendations to the BFC to use GSA funds to the best of their ability. The BFC has approved the change, but it still needs to be approved by the GSA Board and Council. He clarified that CPI will be applied to all positions (2.2%) and only after that, the stipend is recommended to be reduced from there. H. Arshad will explain in further clarity when the matter comes to Council for discussion and a vote, as it may not be approved by the GSA Board.</li> <li>d. H. Arshad, R. Kamran and S. Iqbal noted that it is concerning that a Councillor knows about an issue brought to the BFC that is still being discussed and hasn't been brought to Board for approval.</li> <li>e. N. Morley raised a point of parliamentary inquiry regarding whether this discussion should continue in Closed Session. R. Kamran furthered the discussion shouldn't continue, as the Board has no context for this</li> </ul>	
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		<p>recommendation and governance procedure must be followed.</p> <p>f. A. Dorado, BFC member and Councillor-At-Large, commented that the decision isn't final and efficient conversation wouldn't be possible with all Council involved.</p> <p>g. M. Raja encouraged students, N. Lamarche particularly, to reach out to him to discuss this recommendation</p>	
	10	Adjournment 7:42 PM	

## Item 6a: GSA Nominating Committee Nominations

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

Information regarding the one (1) vacancy for GSA members was advertised in the GSA Newsletters of February 21st and 28th with a nomination deadline of March 7th at 12:00 PM. Two (2) nominations were received and approved by the GSA NoC.

The GSA NoC is charged with selecting graduate student representatives to serve on councils, committees, and other bodies requiring such representation.

**There will be an electronic vote held at the March 24 2025 GSA Council meeting.**

*If you and your alternate are unable to attend the Monday March 24 2025 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](mailto:gsaca@ualberta.ca)) BEFORE 3:00 PM on Monday March 24 in order to cast your vote in advance of the GSA Council meeting.*

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

- 1. Harika Polu**
- 2. Sosthenes Ekeh**

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

**Jurisdiction:****GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section E.POL.4**

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

**GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section E.POL.5.1**

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

*graduate student members elected by GSA Council, as voting members.”*

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

**1. Harika Polu**

<p><b>Statement of Interest</b></p>
<p>I am eager to join the GSA Nominating Committee because I am passionate about student leadership, governance, and ensuring that capable representatives are selected to serve the graduate student community. With my background in leadership and governance, including my experience with the GITAM Student Election Commission (GSEC), I understand the importance of a fair and structured selection process in appointing the right individuals to key positions. My strong analytical skills, attention to detail, and ability to assess candidates objectively will allow me to contribute meaningfully to the committee’s work. This role is an excellent opportunity for me to engage with student governance at the University of Alberta, collaborate with other student leaders, and help build a strong and effective representation for graduate students.</p>
<p><b>Bio</b></p>
<p>I have previously volunteered with the GITAM Student Election Commission (GSEC), where I played a key role in overseeing student elections. My responsibilities included verifying candidate eligibility, ensuring a fair voting process, and maintaining election integrity. This experience allowed me to develop strong organizational, decision-making, and governance-related skills. Additionally, I have been involved in leadership and student engagement activities that required collaboration, critical thinking, and fairness in selection processes. These experiences have strengthened my ability to evaluate candidates objectively and contribute to decision-making processes—skills that would be valuable in the GSA Nominating Committee.</p> <p>I am a dedicated and detail-oriented graduate student pursuing a Master of Science in Internetworking, with a strong passion for leadership, governance, and student representation. My academic background has equipped me with analytical thinking and problem-solving skills, while my professional experience in DevOps has enhanced my ability to work in structured, process-driven environments.</p> <p>Additionally, my volunteer experience with the GITAM Student Election Commission (GSEC) has given me firsthand knowledge of election processes, candidate evaluation, and fair decision-making. These experiences have strengthened my ability to assess applicants objectively and contribute to a transparent and efficient selection process. With my leadership experience, attention to detail, and commitment to student representation, I believe I can make a meaningful contribution to the GSA Nominating Committee.</p>

## 2. Sosthenes Ekeh

### Statement of Interest

I am drawn to the GSA NoC as a fulfilment of my undying passion to serve and because of the common front the GSA generally presents in student-related matters. As a second-year PhD student, I have benefited immensely from the services made possible through GSA negotiations and bargaining, and I feel that past my experiences and initiatives can be suitable to further GSA purposes. I am happy to lend my service through the committees or councils or other bodies which I am elected and/or appointed to represent the interests of the graduate students. Having completed my coursework in my programme also gives me a flexible schedule that allows my full participation in the GSA NoC activities. I look forward to having the best experience if I am considered.

### Bio

While in Nigeria, I volunteered as a mentor for ESSELB (Enugu State Scholarship and Education Loans Board), where I provided career advice and reviewed application documents for students seeking to study abroad. I have also volunteered as a suicide awareness and prevention advocate while teaching at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, organising suicide campaigns and bringing guest speakers to talk to the students of the university. I have also delivered volunteer talks to both secondary school and university students on topics such as career opportunities, mental health challenges, education for the less privileged etc. These volunteer experiences underline my passion and motivation for serving in volunteer positions.

Before moving to Canada, I was teaching at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. As a lecturer in the university, I have served in various committees both at the departmental and faculty levels. I was once the secretary of the Local Organising Committee (LOC) for the departmental annual conference; I have also served in the Faculty of Arts Exam Committee and Department of English and Literary Studies Exam Committee; I have been twice the students' Staff Adviser, and so on. When I was also teaching at Godfrey Okoye University, I served as a member of the Use of English Committee for Course Planning and as a secretary for the Use of English Unit. As a final-year student, I served as the Editor-in-Chief of departmental students' journal and as an Associate Editor in the edition that preceded mine. These administrative positions, which are complemented by my seven-year experience of teaching in higher education institutions, have prepared me to relate with people from diverse backgrounds and equipped me with skills in decision-making, both of which I deem relevant to the service of GSA NoC.

## Item 6b: GSA Councillor-At-Large By-Election Nominees

GSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE (GSA NoC)  
**GSA Councillor-at-Large By-Election (7 POSITIONS):  
FIVE (5) NOMINEES**

In the 2025 GSA General Election, three (3) out of ten (10) Councillor-at-Large positions were filled. Consequently, there are currently seven (7) GSA Councillor-at-Large vacancies for graduate students. As per GSA Bylaw and Policy, GSA Council fills any remaining positions from nominations forwarded by the GSA NoC (Section I: Elections, GSA Policy, Elections, Section I.POL.16.3). The duties of GSA Councillors-at-Large are to attend all meetings of GSA Council, and “to provide additional voices on GSA Council from those offered by DEOs, Departmental Councillors, and the IGSA Councillor” (GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section C: GSA Council, GSA Policy, GSA Council, Section C.POL.3.3.b.iii).

These positions were advertised in the GSA newsletters of February 21 and 28 with a nomination deadline of March 7 2025. Five (5) nominations were received by the deadline.

**There will be an electronic ballot vote held at the March 24 2025 GSA Council meeting.**

*If you and your alternate are unable to attend the March 24 2025 meeting of GSA Council and would like to cast an electronic vote for this position, you must contact the GSA Administrative Specialist (gsaca@ualberta.ca) BEFORE 3:00 PM on Monday March 24 2025 in order to cast your vote in advance of the GSA Council meeting.*

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

- 1. Ibrahim Khodabocus (Paediatrics)**
- 2. Haroun Elyasir (Civil Engineering)**
- 3. Julianna Durham (Communication & Technology)**
- 4. Rishabh Dagur (Mechanical Engineering)**
- 5. Jeff Akhagbosu (Internetworking)**

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

*“In the event that any CAL positions are not filled by the end of the GSA General Election, or a CAL position is vacated prior to December 1 (or the next working day) GSA Council will be responsible for electing any remaining CALs. When electing any remaining CALs, the GSA Council will aim to elect graduate students from as broad a range of disciplines as possible. The GSA NoC will decide on*



*procedures and then provide one or more names to GSA Council for consideration, except that the GSA NoC may not waive advertising. Note that the legislated GSA NoC process specifies that all vacancies will be advertised at least twice in advance of the nomination deadline noted in the advertisement. If the matter is urgent, GSA Council can hold this election electronically.”*

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

**1. Ibrahim Khodabocus**

<p><b>Statement of Interest</b></p> <p>I would like to serve as a member of the GSA Council, to ensure that the interests of all graduate students are accurately represented by the GSA; of particular concern are the interests of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour) students at the University of Alberta. I hope to work with the body to ensure that the concerns of BIPOC persons are equitably represented and are thoroughly acknowledged within several Governance bodies within and beyond the boundaries of the GSA, and thus I believe that my work as a GSA Councilor will largely complement the other work that I currently partake in (GSA-based or otherwise) – please see below for more details.</p>
<p><b>Bio</b></p> <p>I currently serve as the two-term President of the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour) and Allies Students’ Association, and as the two-term Co-Vice President (VP) of Mentorship of the PedsGSA (Pediatrics Graduate Student Association) at the UofA. In the research landscape, I serve on the Women and Children’s Health Research Institute Trainee Advisory Committee (WCHRI TAC) as a voting member of the Mentorship Subcommittee and Department of Pediatrics Representative in Children’s Health. I serve as a Graduate Studies Advisory Committee (GSAC) Member in the Department of Pediatrics, a General Faculties Council (GFC) Councilor-at-Large, a Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Councilor-at-Large, as well as a GSA Nominating Committee Member, a GSA Governance Committee Member, a GSA Board Member, and as the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Vice Chair. Beyond my leadership/advocacy commitments, I also volunteer with the UofA Campus Food Bank (CFB), where I have served over 50 service hours for our most vulnerable. I have personally supervised 2 trainees while in the laboratory: an undergraduate and a high school student researcher; both have won summer studentships. They have presented their work at symposia 6 times, while earning co-authorships on forthcoming publications. My roles included: teaching and supervising trainees within the laboratory and disseminating career and personal mentorship/advice. I have assisted both trainees in writing and submitting abstracts and scholarship applications to maximize their chances of success. Prior to my current PhD program in Medical Sciences-Pediatrics, I was part of the Biology Graduate Students' Association (BGSA) throughout my MSc degree in Biological Sciences (also completed at the UofA), serving as a VP and the President of the BGSA from September 2021 - April 2022 and April 2022 - December 2022, respectively. The</p>

BGSA is the student-run collective interested in representing the academic, political, and social interests of graduate students in the Department of Biological Sciences. I also served as a Graduate Student Representative on the Departmental Council from April 2021 - December 2022; here, I advocated to increase Teaching Assistantship quotas and pay for graduate students in Biological Sciences.

During my research career, I have been consistently involved with student-impacted collectives. I am currently the President of the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour) and Allies Students' Association and the Vice President (VP) of Mentorship of the PedsGSA (Pediatrics Graduate Student Association) at the University of Alberta (UofA). The goal of the BIPOC and Allies Students' Association is to promote the recruitment, admission, and retention of BIPOC students at the UofA. The PedsGSA exists for the purpose of supporting the personal, scholarly, and professional development of pediatrics graduate students at the UofA. I am responsible for public outreach and event broadcasting on behalf of the BIPOC-led student organization and maintaining collaboration and communication between the BIPOC initiatives. I am responsible for facilitating mentor-mentee relationships between junior graduate students and more senior pediatric researchers at the UofA. I also serve as a Graduate Studies Advisory Committee (GSAC) Member in the Department of Pediatrics, a Graduate Students' Association Councilor at Large (GSA CAL), a General Faculties Council (GFC) Councilor at Large, as well as a Graduate Students' Association Nominating (GSA NoC) Committee Member, and a Graduate Students' Association Elections and Referenda (GSA ERC) Committee Member. I also serve on the Women and Children's Health Research Institute Trainee Advisory Committee (WCHRI TAC), where my responsibilities largely complement the work that I do for the PedsGSA, as I serve as part of the Mentorship Subcommittee as a voting member. Importantly, I am very passionate about advocating for racial equity and justice through my roles throughout the academy. I am also humbled by the fact that my extracurricular work has recently been recognized by one of only three 2024 Graduate Student Rising Star Awards for my "exceptional promise" in the first year of my PhD studies.

As a MSc student at the UofA, I was a part of the Biology Graduate Students' Association (BGSA) throughout my program, serving as a VP and the President of the BGSA from September 2021 - April 2022 and April 2022 – December 2022, respectively. The BGSA is the student-run collective, interested in representing the academic, political, and social interests of graduate students in the Department of Biological Sciences. As a VP, I assisted in the arrangement of events, specifically: the Ethics and Professional Development seminar series. The goal of this event was to inform graduate students of the Ethics and Professional Development requirement set by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research to ensure the timely completion of these courses prior to convocation/defense. As President, I directed and led meetings pertaining to the issues and interests of graduate students in the Department of Biological Sciences. I was the main point of contact between the BGSA and the Departmental Chair, facilitating collaboration between the BGSA and the department at large. Beyond my leadership responsibilities, I also served as a Graduate Student Representative in the department of Biological Sciences from April 2021 - December 2022. Here, I was a Biological Sciences Departmental Council voting member. I spoke on issues pertaining to the

Biological Sciences graduate student body and provided meeting summaries to other Graduate Student Leaders (BGSA executives and R.E Peter Student organizers) on Departmental Council matters. Further, I volunteered as a Judge for the R.E. Peter Biology Conference (R.E. Peter) 2022. R.E. Peter is a student-run conference designed to showcase the diverse research conducted by Biological Sciences students at the University of Alberta and institutions across the province. I judged live presentations at the graduate and undergraduate levels. I also worked as a graduate Journal Reviewer for the Eureka Journal from January 2021 - January 2023. Eureka is a student-founded and student-run journal, offering student-scientists the unique opportunity to share their discoveries with the scientific community through a double-blind peer review process.

**2. Haroun Elyasir**

**Statement of Interest**

I am eager to serve as a Councillor-at-Large for the Graduate Students’ Association (GSA) at the University of Alberta because I like to help students. In my previous term with GSA, I was privileged to witness the progress of the graduate minimum guarantee fund initiative. I was able to comment and participate and share my perspective. Also, I learned many valuable things on GSA dynamics and what services GSA advocates for. Lastly, I improved my presentation and confidence by being able to speak in front of many people. All the previous reason have motivated me to apply.

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**Bio**

I served before as Councillor-at-Large from 2023-2024. I also volunteer as a cardiac unit advisor at the University hospital.

Hi, I’m Haroun, and I’m excited about the opportunity to serve as a GSA Councillor-at-Large. My journey started in farming, where I developed a strong work ethic and a deep appreciation for sustainability. I later transitioned into oil and gas, working as a field operator before earning my engineering degree. Since 2012, I’ve been involved in pipeline projects, process optimization, and energy policy, gaining hands-on experience in problem-solving and collaboration.

Beyond my professional work, I’ve been actively engaged in student leadership, serving as the VP of Communication for the GSA at the University of Regina in 2016. That role taught me the importance of advocacy, clear communication, and building a strong student community—values I would bring to this position.

I’m passionate about supporting fellow graduate students, improving student engagement, and ensuring our voices are heard. With my mix of industry experience, leadership, and policy background, I believe I can contribute meaningfully to the GSA. I’d love the opportunity to help make a difference!

**3. Julianna Durham**

<p><b>Statement of Interest</b></p> <p>I'm passionate about student governance and the agency it provides students to impact their community and improve the experiences of others.</p>
<p><b>Bio</b></p> <p>During my undergrad, I served in various elected executive roles for the U of A Cheer Team, including President. This fostered a strong understanding for and appreciation of university processes, policies, and the role that student volunteers play in shaping their community. My success in this role was confirmed by my offer to return to the team as a coach the subsequent year.</p> <p>I've served in various government communications and policy roles, including as a policy advisor for the department of Advanced Education, which has provided me a strong understanding of the postsecondary sector and governance frameworks as a whole, as well as the skills of analysis and diplomacy required for a role of this sort.</p> <p>Writing for the Gateway regarding municipal politics has also re-ignited my interest in local policymaking and initiatives.</p>

**4. Rishabh Dagur**

<p><b>Statement of Interest</b></p> <p>I am passionate about advocating for graduate students and want to ensure their voices are heard in key decision making processes. Serving as a GSA Councillor-At-Large would allow me to contribute meaningfully to the graduate student community, like working towards policies that enhance academic, financial, and social well-being. My experience as a graduate student representative on the Executive Coordinating Committee (ECC) has given me insight into student needs and university governance, and I am eager to extend this experience to a broader level.</p>
<p><b>Bio</b></p> <p>I am serving as a Graduate Student Representative on the Executive Coordinating Committee (ECC) at the Faculty of Engineering, to advocate for student concerns and facilitating engagement with faculty leadership. Additionally, I have contributed as a Teaching Assistant (TA), mentoring undergraduate students, and as a Lab Manager (LSA), to ensure smooth academic and research operations. My involvement in academic and student governance has strengthened my leadership, teamwork, and communication skills.</p> <p>I am a PhD student in Mechanical Engineering at the University of Alberta, specializing in materials research. My academic and professional experiences have shaped my ability to problem-solve, communicate effectively, and advocate for student needs. Through my roles and my part-time position as a Shift Leader at University of Alberta Students' Union (UASU), I have engaged with</p>

diverse student groups, and have gained valuable insights into student concerns, university administration, and policy-making. This experience has strengthened my commitment to fostering an inclusive, supportive, and thriving graduate student community.

**5. Jeff Akhagbosu**

<b>Statement of Interest</b>
To advocate for student policies I believe will be beneficial and to learn leadership from the serving DEOs
<b>Bio</b>
I am an Ambassador for The Innercity Missions: A mission organization dedicated to catering for less privileged children and families of marginalized communities and limited resources around the world.
I am a passionate and dedicated graduate student currently pursuing a Master of Science in Internetworking (MINT) at the University of Alberta. With a background in telecommunications engineering spanning approximately four years, I bring a strong foundation in problem-solving, leadership, and strategic thinking.
Beyond my technical expertise, I am a wellness and fitness enthusiast, committed to fostering positive habits and productivity. I am also a public speaker, graphic designer, and advocate for social causes, frequently contributing to initiatives that support underprivileged children. My interests extend to sports, fashion, and culinary exploration, reflecting my dynamic and well-rounded personality.
As a devout Christian and a proud Edo State native from Nigeria, I value integrity, inclusivity, and community service. I am eager to represent and support my fellow graduate students, ensuring their voices are heard and their needs are met within the GSA.
Thank you.

Item 7a: 2025 GSA General Election Results - Outline of Issue

**Outline of Issue**

**2025 GSA General Election Results: To Receive For Information For Purposes of Transferring Banking Signing Authority**

**Suggested Motion for GSA Council:**

That GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the results of the 2025 GSA General Election wherein the following graduate students were duly elected as President, Vice-President Academic, Vice-President External, Associate Vice-President Labour, Vice-President Student Life and Vice-President Student Services:

<b>President</b>	<b>Aashish Kumar</b>
<b>Vice-President Academic</b>	<b>Chen Okafor</b>
<b>Vice-President External</b>	<b>Niloufar Mirfallah</b>
<b>Associate Vice-President Labour</b>	<b>Nathan Lamarche</b>
<b>Vice-President Student Services</b>	<b>Saad Arslan Iqbal</b>
<b>Vice- President Student Life</b>	<b>Hazel Kemuma</b>

**Background:**

The 2025 GSA General Election official results were announced to all graduate students by the Chief Returning Officer on Friday, 21 February 2025.

GSA Council is now asked to receive these results for information as the GSA’s bank requires that the names of the newly Directly-Elected Officers appear in the Minutes in order to transfer signing authority on 1 May 2025.

**Jurisdiction:**

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section D: GSA Officers, GSA Policy, GSA Officer Portfolios, Section D.POL.10.1.e.iii:  
*“The CRO reports to GSA Council, in writing, the names of all elected GSA DEOs, following the release of the official results for a GSA General Election or by-election, for the purposes of transferring bank signing authority.”*

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section K: Finances, GSA Policy, Budget Principles and Procedures, Section K.POL.3.7.a:

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

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section K: Finances, GSA Policy, Budget Principles and Procedures, Section K.POL.3.7.b:

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

GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section K: Finances, GSA Policy, Budget Principles and Procedures, Section K.POL.3.7.c:

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

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

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

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

**Outline of Issue**

**Suggested Motion for GSA Council:**

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

**Background:**

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

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

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

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

**Jurisdiction:**

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Outline of Issue**

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

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

#### **Background:**

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

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

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

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

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

#### **Jurisdiction:**

F.POL.4 GSA Governance Committee

F.POL.4.1 Composition

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

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

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

members.

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

**F.POL.4.2 Mandate**

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

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

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

**F.POL.4.3 Meetings**

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

### **Outline of Issue**

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

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

#### **Background:**

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### **Jurisdiction:**

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

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

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

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

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

### **Outline of Issue**

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

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

#### **Background:**

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

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

**AND WHEREAS** the discussions of committees concern all GSA members,

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

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

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

#### **Jurisdiction:**

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

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

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

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

### **Outline of Issue**

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

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

#### **Background:**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



### **Outline of Issue**

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

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

#### **Background:**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Jurisdiction:**

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

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

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

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

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

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delegate), who will seek legal advice if necessary.

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

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

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

### **Outline of Issue**

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

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

#### **Background:**

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### **Jurisdiction:**

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

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

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

## D.POL.11 Associate Vice-President Labour

### D.POL.11.1 Duties

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

### D.POL.11.2 Committees

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

### D.POL.11.3 Qualifications

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

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

Item 8a: GSA President Reports

**2024-2025 President  
Report to GSA Council for the 24 March 2025, Meeting**

To: Council Members
From: Muhammad Haseeb Arshad
Date: 2025/3/20

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

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between Feb 26 to Mar 24, 2025 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting</b>
Feb 26	University Association Meeting
Feb 26	Meeting with T. Raivio
Feb 27	BFC Budget Finalizing Meeting
Feb 27	Minister Sawhney Budget Meeting
Feb 28	Meeting with President Flanagan
Mar 3	GSA EDI Committee
Mar 5	EDI Reading Group
Mar 5	Meeting with M. Padfield
Mar 5	MOU Meeting with S. Wolgemuth
Mar 6-7	HESA AI-cademy Conference
Mar 6	Recovery Pledge Follow-Up Meeting
Mar 6	Hackathon Event Discussion
Mar 10	Online GFC Budget Update
Mar 11	CAUU Toddler Centre Funding
Mar 11	DoS Meeting
Mar 12	TD Insurance Annual Review
Mar 12	GFC APC

Mar 13	UofA Board Finance & Property Committee
Mar 14	UofA Board Learning, Research & Student Experience Committee
Mar 14	The Gateway Interview
Mar 17	Meeting with Chief of Staff, J. Smith
Mar 17	StudentCare Update Meeting
Mar 18	GSA Facilities Meeting
Mar 20	Meeting with Minister Sawhney/UofA Board of Governors
Mar 21	Governance Committee
Mar 24	Meeting with President Flanagan

Dear Council Members,

The past month has been incredibly impactful and rewarding as we continue making significant strides in advancing the priorities outlined in our strategic plan. From securing long-term financial agreements for the GSA, to pushing for greater affordability and transparency in university budgeting, to strengthening advocacy efforts at both the provincial and institutional levels, we have achieved meaningful progress that will leave a lasting impact on graduate students. As we approach the final stretch of my team’s fiscal year, I am pleased to share that we are on track to present the final update on our strategic plan at the next council meeting, ensuring that our key initiatives are well-documented and positioned for long-term success.

With the semester ending, we are also preparing for a period of transition as we gear up for the summer and welcome the new executive team. The work we have done over the past year has laid a strong foundation for the next GSA leadership, and I am confident that they will build upon these achievements to continue advocating for graduate students. I encourage all of you to remain engaged as we finish out this term and help ensure a smooth transition for the incoming team.

**GSA Peer Connect Conference**

As you all are aware that I have been pushing for one of our key initiatives since the start of my presidency, the Peer-Connect Conference, and I am pleased to report that we are making significant progress. We have budgeted \$27,000 to launch this initiative next year and after multiple discussions with the Dean of Students office and the GPS office, I am confident that this will be a wonderful event to celebrate graduate students’ research and can eventually become a revenue generating source in future years.



I recently met with Tracy to discuss potential collaboration, and I am excited to share that there is strong interest from her office in working with the GSA to have a successful conference. Given that GPS is already working on initiatives to celebrate graduate research and has its own funding to support such efforts, this collaboration presents a great opportunity for both the GSA and the university. What makes this initiative particularly exciting is its potential to become a revenue-generating project for GSA. With the right planning and execution, this conference could help us take steps toward financial sustainability and reduce our reliance on university funding. I will be documenting the details in my transition report to ensure that the next team has a clear path forward. However, it will be crucial for them to properly advertise and sustain this event so that it can grow into a long-term success.

### **CUAA Coalition of all Unions on Campus**

I am pleased to report to the council that we have finalized Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Students' Union (SU), NASA, and AASUA to strengthen solidarity among all union members on campus. This coalition, now officially named CUAA, represents a significant step toward fostering collaboration between different campus unions.

The official launch of CUAA is scheduled for April, at which time we will release a joint statement outlining our shared priorities and commitments. For your reference, I have attached the coalition's MoU to this report so you can review the details. I believe this partnership will help inform and support the work of all unions on campus by providing a unified voice on key issues affecting students, staff, and faculty.

Additionally, I have ensured that AVPL is included as a signatory in this document. Given their delegated authority under the bylaws to represent academically employed graduate students, their endorsement is essential for both institutional history and internal governance practices. Their inclusion strengthens the legitimacy of this coalition and ensures that graduate student workers are recognized within this broader union alliance.

This is a significant milestone for the GSA, as it positions us as an active stakeholder in broader labor discussions on campus. I look forward to seeing the impact this coalition will have in the coming months.

### **Provincial Advocacy Update**

Since the start of my presidency, advocating against Bill 18 has been a priority, and I want to update the council on the significant progress we have made. As you all know, my first statement as president addressed the concerns of graduate students regarding this bill. We followed up with an open letter to the Minister of Advanced Education and met with her in November to push for mandatory student

consultation on any legislation that directly impacts us. During that meeting, we also raised concerns about the lack of transparency surrounding Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees (MNIFs) and other issues that Parman and I discussed during our advocacy efforts in November.

I am pleased to report that our efforts have resulted in key exemptions being added to Bill 18. The minister has confirmed that any graduate student receiving tri-council funding will not be affected by the bill. Additionally, lease agreements for student associations have also been exempted. These exemptions will officially take effect on April 1, marking a significant win for graduate students and student organizations.

Beyond Bill 18, I also attended the Minister of Advanced Education's budget announcement, where she confirmed that new guidelines for MNIFs will be introduced before Fall 2025. These guidelines are expected to provide much-needed clarity and remove the ambiguity surrounding MNIFs, ensuring that students better understand what they are paying for.

I want to take a moment to acknowledge the support of UCGSA and AUGSA in these advocacy efforts for their hard work in making these exemptions a reality. Moving forward, I strongly encourage the next GSA team to continue advocating for a differential MNIF structure for graduate students. As we have consistently pointed out, graduate students do not use many of the services covered by MNIFs at the same level as undergraduates, and some services are exclusively available to undergraduates. It is only fair that we push for a fee structure that reflects our actual usage.

### **Harm Reduction and Recovery on Campus Pledge**

Over the past few months, Lisa and I have been actively advocating with the Dean of Students office for the university to sign the Recovery on Campus pledge. I am pleased to report that our efforts have gained strong support, particularly from the Assistant Dean of Wellness (Kevin Friese), who has expressed a genuine commitment to this initiative. I am hopeful that before our term ends, we will be able to establish a working document outlining all available resources for students navigating the challenges of recovery on campus.

Additionally, in our last EDI committee meeting, members expressed interest in developing a structured action plan to further integrate harm reduction and recovery support into the GSA's broader EDI efforts. There was also a discussion about drafting recommendations for the next GSA board, which could be incorporated into their strategic plan. This is a promising step forward in ensuring that harm reduction remains a priority in our advocacy work.

I am currently working on a draft action plan for the EDI committee and will provide an update to the council once it is finalized. Once completed, the plan will be presented to the council as an information piece, ensuring that this important work continues beyond our term.

## **External Funding and MoU Agreements**

Given the enrollment decrease, securing long-term financial stability for the GSA is extremely crucial, and I am pleased to report that I have signed three-year, non-binding Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with the GPS and the Dean of Students (DoS). These agreements not only safeguard institutional history but also ensure the continuity of financial support from both offices.

Previously, the GSA received \$5,000 annually from both GPS and DoS. After persistent negotiations, I have successfully secured an increase in funding, with DoS committing \$8,000 and GPS increasing their contribution to \$6,000 starting next year. This marks a significant step in strengthening the financial foundation of the GSA and ensuring that we continue receiving vital support for graduate students. However, I also want to share the challenges I faced in securing an MoU for the Graduate Student Support Fund (GSSF). Despite my best efforts, the university's ongoing financial struggles—particularly the 3% budget cut being implemented across all units for the next three years—prevented them from signing an agreement. While this was disappointing, I did manage to ensure that our current GSSF funding remained intact, avoiding a reduction that could have significantly impacted graduate students. Looking ahead, I believe there is an opportunity for the association to revisit this issue during collective agreement bargaining. While GSSF funding benefits all students, the last bargaining team successfully advocated for an increase in GSSF support and leveraged strong negotiation skills to secure more funding. I encourage the next team to continue these conversations and explore every possible avenue to strengthen the financial stability of GSA.

## **Meeting with Bill and Melissa**

In my recent meeting with Bill and Melissa, I focused on the long-term sustainability of the GSA and raised several key concerns that directly impact our association's operations and advocacy efforts. One of the most pressing issues I brought forward was our ongoing space constraints. I emphasized the importance of providing private offices for the DEOs, as their current cubicles do not offer the necessary privacy for confidential meetings. Given the nature of their roles and the sensitive matters they handle, this remains a critical issue that needs to be addressed to ensure they can perform their duties effectively.

With Melissa, I discussed the tuition fee consultation plan that her office will be preparing starting from June, which will be up for approval by the GSA. As we are moving forward, I want to ensure that the administration respects and follows the new consultation guidelines that require them to present the

proposal to the GSA council twice. This is a crucial step in making the tuition consultation process more transparent and ensuring that graduate students have a stronger voice in these discussions. Additionally, I would like to put on record that President Flanagan has been an incredible partner, particularly in advocating for our course-based scholarship and ensuring that the GSSF remains protected from budgetary cuts. His support has been instrumental in maintaining financial stability for graduate students, and I appreciate his willingness to engage with us on these critical issues.

### **Board of Governors Standing Committees**

Over the last week, I attended the BFPC and BLSRC meetings, where critical budgetary and policy discussions took place. To ensure continuity in GSA advocacy, I invited the incoming president to join me for the open sessions of these meetings.

At the BFPC meeting, the university's budget for the next academic year, including the tuition fee proposal, was up for approval. I took this opportunity to raise concerns about affordability, particularly considering the university's decision to increase salaries by over 11% while simultaneously enforcing a 3% budget reduction across all units and implementing a hiring freeze. I questioned how these financial decisions would impact student experience services and graduate student supervision, areas that are already facing significant constraints.

Another major issue I addressed was the 20% increase in parking permit costs. This sharp increase far exceeds inflation, and I pressed the administration on how they plan to reconcile such a rise with their commitment to student affordability. Additionally, I raised concerns regarding financial aid, specifically requesting that the university provide an explicit budget line under financial support for our community engagement award for course-based students, as they previously committed to the GSA.

Student enrollment was another area of concern. A 37% reduction in international student applications will have a significant impact on the university's budget next year. Furthermore, the university has issued admission letters to over 60% of applicants, which raises serious questions about the competitiveness of the admission process. The implications of these trends will be felt in multiple areas, including student funding and institutional reputation, and I emphasized the need for a more strategic and transparent approach to admissions.

On the tuition fee proposal, while I acknowledged that the administration incorporated our feedback by adopting a differential fee model—with no increase for international thesis-based students, a 5% increase for MBA students, a 10% increase for all other course-based international students, and a 2% increase for domestic students—I reiterated concerns raised by domestic thesis-based students regarding their 2% increase. Moreover, I expressed strong opposition to the double-digit tuition hike for international students, especially when tuition across Canada has increased by just over 2%—a figure

below inflation. The sharp increase for international students sends a concerning signal that their tuition fees are being used to subsidize revenue losses caused by the cap on domestic tuition increases. These discussions reinforced the importance of sustained advocacy, and while we have seen some progress, we must continue pushing for a fairer and more transparent budget process that prioritizes affordability for all students.

As I progress with these initiatives, my commitment remains the same: to ensure that our graduate community's voices are heard, to represent our interests in key decisions, and to adopt practical, people-focused strategies to meet our challenges. If you have any questions and concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at [gsapresi@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsapresi@ualberta.ca). Thank you for taking the time to read through the lengthy council agenda, it means a great deal to us and to the work we are doing to support our graduate community.

Sincerely,

Haseeb Arshad, President of the GSA

**GSA Board**  
**Report to GSA Council for the 24 March 2025, Meeting**

To: Council Members
From: Chair GSA Board
Date: 2025/3/20

Dear Council Members,

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

**19 March 2025 GSA Board Meeting**

Main Agenda Items:

Strategic Work Plan Updates for Council, DEO's Reports, Management Report.

Motions and Agreements:

None.

**12 March 2025 GSA Board Meeting**

Main Agenda Items:

DEO Priorities Survey, DEO's Reports, Management Report.

Motions and Agreements:

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

attached material in the “2025-2026 Budget for Approval” column bordered in red on each page), and the Restricted and Other Funding Budget (2025-2026) (found in the attached material in the “2025-2026 Budget for Approval” column bordered in red). **RK MOVED; PS Seconded. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Motion:** That the GSA Board RECOMMEND TO GSA COUNCIL TO RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION, having also been reviewed and advised upon by the GSA Budget and Finance Committee, the Operating and Capital Three-Year Budget/Business Plan (2025-2028), the Labour Union Dues Three-Year Budget/Business Plan (2025-2028), and the Restricted and Other Funding Three-Year Budget/Business Plan (2025-2028) (in the attached material). **RK MOVED; PS Seconded. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **5 March 2025 GSA Board Meeting**

#### Main Agenda Items:

Provincial Budget Updates, DEO’s Reports, Management Report.

#### Motions and Agreements:

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

**Motion:** That the GSA Board RECOMMEND TO GSA COUNCIL TO RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION, having also been reviewed and advised upon by the GSA Budget and Finance Committee, the Operating and Capital Three-Year Budget/Business Plan (2025-2028), the Labour Union Dues Three-Year Budget/Business Plan (2025-2028), and the Restricted and Other Funding Three-Year Budget/Business Plan (2025-2028) (in the attached material). **MOTION TABLED**

### **26 February 2025 GSA Board Meeting**

#### Main Agenda Items:

Campus Wellness Survey Data Presentation, DEO’s Reports, Management Report.

Motions and Agreements:

**Motion:** Motion to RECEIVE and APPROVE the amount of \$500 funding for the Graduate Conference of the department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies. **RK MOVED; PS Seconded. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Motion:** Motion to RECEIVE and APPROVE the amount of \$1500 funding for the 6th Annual Structures Graduate Students Conference (SGSC). **RK MOVED; PS Seconded. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Motion:** Motion to APPROVE the estimated expense for one (1) representative/s to attend HESA AI-CADEMY Canada Summit for Post-Secondary Education in Calgary March 5-8, 2025, in Calgary Alberta). **RK MOVED; PS Seconded. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**19 February 2025 GSA Special Board Meeting**

Main Agenda Items:

None.

Motions and Agreements:

**Motion:** Motion that the GSAB APPROVE and will provide to the GSA council for information purposes only removing Benjamin Kucher from as the NIAC delegate for UofA graduate students at the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (CASA) and investigating a new process to appoint a new chair. **RK MOVED; PS Seconded. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Note:** Haseeb declared a conflict of interest and delegated his authority to the Acting President, who chaired the special meeting. He also abstained from voting.

I am happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

Haseeb Arshad, President and Chair of the GSA Board



**GSA Budget and Finance Committee  
Report to GSA Council for the March 24, 2025, Meeting**

To: Council Members
From: Chair GSA BFC
Date: 2025/3/20

Dear Council Members,

I hope this report finds you well. I am pleased to provide an update on the final Budget and Finance Committee (BFC) meeting.

On February 27, 2025, the BFC convened for its third and final review of the 2025-2026 budget and the 2025-2028 multi-year budget. This meeting provided a comprehensive assessment of projected revenues, expenditures, restricted funds, and strategic financial priorities. The primary focus was to ensure that the proposed budgets align with the GSA's long-term goals, allocate resources effectively to key advocacy initiatives, and enhance operational efficiency.

Committee members engaged in thoughtful deliberations, scrutinizing budget lines and offering constructive feedback to refine allocations for maximum impact. Following these discussions, several adjustments were made, and a motion was raised to approve the final draft with recommendation. The BFC members unanimously carried the motion, underscoring the committee's diligence and commitment to transparent financial planning.

The thorough three-stage review process reflects the BFC's dedication to responsible stewardship of resources, particularly considering the financial challenges facing graduate student associations across Alberta due to enrollment declines. I would like to recognize the hard work of the committee members and the financial team in crafting a balanced budget that upholds the financial sustainability of the GSA.

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

Sincerely,

Haseeb Arshad, President and Chair of the GSA BFC

**GSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee  
Report to GSA Council for the March 24, 2025, Meeting**

To: Council Members
From: Acting Chair GSA EDIC
Date: 2025/3/20

Dear Council Members,

The EDI Committee met on March 3, 2025, to discuss several important initiatives aimed at advancing equity, accessibility, and inclusion within the GSA and the broader university community. One of the key discussions centered on renaming the EDI Committee to the Access, Belonging, and Community Committee (ACBC) to align with the university's evolving framework. This renaming reflects a broader mandate, ensuring that the committee's work aligns with institutional priorities and effectively represents the needs of students.

Another significant discussion focused on the development of a GSA-specific EDI Action Plan. The committee agreed on the importance of creating a structured and actionable framework to guide the GSA's equity and inclusion efforts. I will be drafting this plan and will present it to the committee for further debate and refinement before seeking formal approval.

The committee also reaffirmed its commitment to sustaining the Harm Reduction Tent initiative during every Week of Welcome and Fall Orientation. Members discussed the need for stable financial support to ensure this initiative continues to provide essential resources to students. There was also discussion on securing additional university funding for mental health services, particularly considering the provincial government's recent announcement of an additional \$4 million for mental health support. The committee explored how any potential funding allocations could be used to strengthen the Peer Support Program, ensuring that graduate students have access to meaningful mental health resources.

Another major topic of discussion was the need to separate accessibility from accommodations to better support disabled students. Currently, the university categorizes disabled students as part-time by default, restricting their access to grants unless they request a status change each year. I proposed that

accessibility should be addressed separately under the university's ACB (Access, Community, and Belonging) framework, ensuring that students do not face unnecessary barriers to financial aid. I also suggested incorporating this recommendation into the EDI Action Plan and formally presenting it to the GSA Board for advocacy.

Concerns were also raised about the lack of clarity in the accommodation process, particularly regarding the requirement for students to disclose their disabilities to access accommodations. The committee recognized the importance of improving transparency in this process to reduce unnecessary burdens on students. Additionally, there was discussion about medical certificate requirements for sick leave, particularly for international students who face long wait times for healthcare services. Members emphasized that these restrictions should be reconsidered to ensure fair and accessible policies for all students.

Further discussion focused on advocating for trauma-informed teaching practices. Currently, faculty members have the option to opt out of accessibility improvements, which raises concerns about inconsistent support for students. The committee discussed ways to encourage mandatory training for faculty members, ensuring they are equipped with the skills to provide an inclusive and supportive learning environment. E. Chambers proposed including ASSIST (Suicide Prevention) and Mental Health First Aid training in faculty and TA development programs, emphasizing that educators should be trained as first points of contact in crisis situations.

The meeting concluded with a commitment to formalizing these discussions into a concrete advocacy plan. The next steps include drafting the EDI Action Plan, securing financial support for key initiatives, and continuing to push for institutional changes that enhance accessibility, mental health services, and trauma-informed teaching practices. The committee remains dedicated to ensuring that all students, particularly those from marginalized communities, receive the support they need to succeed in their academic and personal lives.

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

Sincerely,  
Haseeb Arshad, President and Acting Chair of the GSA EDIC

Item 8d: Vice-President Student Services Report

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

<b>To:</b> GSA Council
<b>From:</b> Saad A. Iqbal
<b>Date:</b> Mar. 19, 2025

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

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

<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting</b>
February 26	AllFactory Visit re Hydroponics Farm
February 26	DAAC Meeting
February 27	BFC Budget Finalizing Meeting
February 27	HCA 2025 Regional Gathering
March 3	Student Group Mental Health Network Meeting
March 3	WDSJ Review Meeting
March 4	Meeting with Tim Ira (ACB)
March 6	CFB Policy Committee Meeting
March 7	Campus Wellness Network
March 10	Students Who Parent Working Group
March 10	SEAP Support Team Meeting
March 10	CFB Board

March 11	DoS/GSA Meeting
March 13	VLHR Committee Meeting
March 13	Meeting with a Student (Confidential)
March 14	UAI/ASSET/GSA Movie Night
March 17	Studentcare Update Meeting
March 18	Campus Wellness Network: DoS Service Walk
March 18	U-Pass Meeting

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope you're all doing well, in your academic, professional, and personal pursuits. Below are the details of the meetings I have attended between February 19 and March 19, 2025:

**AllFactory Visit re Hydroponics Farm (Feb 26)**

In continuation of the discussions for the hydroponics farm, Kevine Firese, Madi (CFB) and myself visited the research lab of a Professor from the Mechanical Engineering Department, UofA along with the researchers working in the lab. In this tour, we were briefed about the research being conducted in the lab using hydroponics and aquaponic techniques. We also discussed some details related to expected costs for setting up a hydroponics farm, maintenance costs, and space-related issues. Overall, this was a very productive discussion, and we have some directions for the future. Budget and space allocation still remain an important consideration, and our work is ongoing in this regard.

**DAAC Meeting (Feb 26)**

In the Dean's and AVP Advisory Committee, members discussed regular items of the agenda including updates from the Dean of Students and the AVP Office, as well as updates on the mental health support for student advocacy. The University website is being updated considering some important feedback gathered from the University community regarding services offered to support students. Some of the suggestions include the need for a one-stop-shop service catalogue, more clear information about services, user friendliness and intuitiveness, and a more approachable tone.

**HCA 2025 Regional Gathering (Feb 27)**

I also attended the Healthy Campus Alberta's (HCA) Regional Gathering online where students, faculty, and staff from different institutions across Alberta discussed topics around post-secondary mental health and well-being. I had a chance to learn from external members while also explaining different initiatives, services, and programs offered by the GSA as well as other entities of the University to support students' mental health and well-being.

#### Student Group Mental Health Network Meeting (Mar 3)

In this regular meeting, members discussed various updates from groups on campus regarding different activities being planned to support mental health and well-being among our campus community. We also had an educational moment centered around event planning. The educational piece also included discussion on the importance of flexibility, background work, distributing tasks, booking venues, communication, and overall management. From the GSA, I shared the details of our elections being concluded and incoming DEOs.

#### WDSJ Review Meeting (Mar 3)

I attended this meeting for the VP SL. After the success of the Living Library sessions organized by the Days of Action, this follow-up meeting was called to review the program and the lessons learned. While the event was appreciated by the attendees, there were some improvements suggested for next year's program. Members also discussed the potential of exploring alternative ways to observe the World Day of Social Justice and some ideas were brought forward.

#### Meeting with T. Ira (Mar 4)

In this meeting (attended for VP SL), Tim and I discussed important updates from the Office of Access, Community and Belonging (ACB) that is currently working on putting together tools and resources related to disability. The aim is to promote these resources among instructors and staff who can help provide accommodations to students. Tim also shared that representatives from the ACB are willing to visit one of our councils to share information about what the office envisions for the future. We also briefly talked about the recent election results, and I shared that Hazel (incoming VP SL) will be joining me in our upcoming meeting to ensure a smoother transition.

#### CFB Policy Committee Meeting (Mar 6)

In this regular meeting the members of the CFB Policy Committee discussed some key draft policies that are being developed to strengthen the internal working of the CFB. As a member of the committee, I have also been contributing to these discussions.

#### Campus Wellness Network (Mar 7)

In this regular meeting, members discussed key updates on campus trends, area updates from different groups and offices related to wellness on campus. Some of our discussion also focused on communication and awareness about different activities, services, and events which focus on wellness and how to ensure that students are more informed about them.

#### Students Who Parent Working Group (Mar 10)

In this regular meeting, members were briefed about the student caregiver survey. The survey was sent to 43,793 students out of which 3123 consented to fill the survey. I also requested specific information related to graduate students. Since the results are being analyzed at the moment, these details will be shared at a later time. It is expected that once data related to graduate students is gathered, the GSA will be in a better position to set some strategic goals and objectives to support our graduate student parents and caregivers. Members also shared updates about different activities and initiatives. I informed the members about the elections and the continuation of efforts for our parents' lounge.

#### SEAP Support Team Meeting (Mar 10)

In this meeting (attended for VP SL) members were briefed about key updates related to the Student Experience Action Plan (SEAP). The survey to gather insights and feedback will run from March 19-April 22. Priority focus areas include enhanced approaches for advising ecosystem for this year. From May, 2025 our incoming VP SL will be the GSA representative for this initiative.

#### CFB Board (Mar 10)

The CFB Board met on March 10 where members discussed key updates and regular items of relevance. One of the highlights from this meeting is that the selection committee has put forward a name for the role of the Executive Director. The recruitment process is ongoing, and updates will be shared once finalized.

#### DoS Meeting (Mar 11)

In this regular meeting, the Executive Board Members and representatives from the DoS discussed key areas of mutual interest. The discussion centered around resources and policies for student parents or caregivers (the same survey explained above) and the child-minding proposal which is currently out on a hold due to budget constraints. We also talked about opportunities for creating better connections and access between campuses, celebrating graduate research, and the GSA's Food Strategy.

#### VLHR Committee Meeting (Mar 13)

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I attended this meeting for the VP SL. The Committee on the Visiting Lectureship on Human Rights met to discuss shortlisting guest speakers for this year. Out of a wider list, we shortlisted six names which will further be ranked by all members by the end of this month. Once the name has been finalized, more details will be shared about the lecture and its organization.

#### UAI/ASSET/GSA Movie Night (Mar 14)

On March 14, the GSA collaborated with the UAI and ASSET teams in organizing another movie night. Attendees saw the Brother Bear movie along with snacks, popcorn, and drinks. I was accompanied by two GSA volunteers for this event. Events such as this one seem to gather a lot of attention among graduate as well as undergraduate students. Based on popularity, we might continue to collaborate on such events in the future as well.

#### Studentcare Update Meeting (Mar 17)

The StudentCare representative gave a comprehensive report to the Associate Director, President and me about the usage of our health and dental plan for the year 2024-25. There are some important highlights from the report worth discussing. Even though we are now moving to a new provider, these statistics are very helpful for us to determine the health and dental plan arrangements with Ellement. The report will be shared with the council as well.

#### Campus Wellness Network: DoS Service Walk (Mar 18)

On March 18, the office of the Dean of Students organized, [Thrive: Student Mental Health Forum](#). This was a drop-in event where various service partners tabled and helped students gain information about the services and programs offered to enhance their educational experiences. In addition, the forum also offered presentations and panel discussions related to mental health and resources.

#### U-Pass Meeting (Mar 18)

In this regular meeting, members discussed details about the referenda related to the continuation of the U-Pass agreements. Both the UASU and the UAGSA have had their referenda passed, which means that the UofA will be renewing the U-Pass program for both undergraduate and graduate students. The GSA's lawyer has already reviewed the agreement, and we will be signing the new contract once it has been forwarded to us officially.

Best Regards,

***Saad Arslan Iqbal***

GSA VP Student Services (2024-25)

*Please reach out to me at [gsavpsse@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsavpsse@ualberta.ca) if you have any questions, concerns, suggestions or feedback related to my portfolio or the initiatives.*

Item 8e: Vice-President External Report

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

To: GSA Council
From: Parman Mojir Shaibani
Date: March 24th, 2024

**2024-2025 GSA VP External Meetings Attended (Parman)**

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between October 9th to 8 November 12th (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

Date	Meeting
Feb 24	Fearless Innovator Orientation
Feb 25	CASA GAC Meeting
Feb 26	Alumni Careers Committee Meeting
Mar 11	Steering Committee: Engage with Purpose
Mar 12	Steering Committee: Engage with Purpose

Over the past meetings, I engaged in key discussions and decision-making processes across multiple committees. As part of the Fearless Innovator Award, I participated in the adjudication process, ensuring a fair and thorough evaluation. At the CASA GAC Meeting, we made progress on the first draft of the Sherk Survey and reviewed general GAC policies to guide future advocacy efforts.

The Alumni Careers Committee Meeting covered a range of topics, including voting on the Distinguished Alumni Award Recipients, integrating Indigenous perspectives into alumni awards, and reviewing updates to the University of Alberta’s Naming Policy and Donation Acceptance guidelines. We also examined Alumni Participation Analysis, identifying trends across colleges and discussing strategies to enhance engagement and efficiency. Additionally, we contributed feedback to help refine alumni and donor engagement policies.

In the Steering Committee – Engage with Purpose, discussions focused on advancing an integrated action plan to align university commitments with external engagement strategies. The Connectors and Superconnectors initiative was introduced to strengthen collaborations between the university and

community partners, emphasizing the role of research in economic development. A proposed TEDx-style event was explored, with five thematic areas under consideration to highlight impactful research and community engagement. The Impact Series was also discussed as a way to foster continuous, meaningful connections beyond traditional events.

Overall, these meetings were crucial in shaping policy updates, strengthening alumni and donor relations, enhancing student advocacy, and expanding the university's engagement framework. Looking forward to the next steps in implementing these initiatives.

Item 8f: Associate Vice-President Labour Report

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

To: GSA Council
From: Muneeb Masood Raja
Date: 19 Mar 2025

**2024-2025 GSA Associate VP Labour Meetings Attended**

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 25 Feb to 24 Mar 2025 (not inclusive of weekly GSA Board meetings). The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

Date	Meeting
25 Feb	Meeting with a Student
27 Feb	BFC Budget Finalizing Meeting
1 Mar	Welcome to your Union Training
3 Mar	GSA Ambassador Program Working Group Meeting
11 Mar	CAUU Meeting
11 Mar	People Strategy Steering Committee Meeting
11 Mar	GSA & DoS Meeting
12 Mar	GSA Recognition Awards Night
18 Mar	Meeting with the Bargaining Team
20 Mar	Monthly Check-in with CS and OC

21 Mar	Meeting with a PSAC Representative
24 Mar	LRC Meeting
24 Mar	GSA Ambassador Program Working Group Meeting

Dear Council Colleagues,

It's hard to believe my second term is almost over. Over the past month, I've had the opportunity to attend several important meetings. Here are some key details of those meetings:

**(Mar 3) Graduate Student Ambassador Program Committee Meeting**

The meeting focused on reviewing the pilot initiative under the Culture of Care Action Plan aimed at addressing the unique challenges faced by graduate students, especially the power dynamics between students and Principal Investigators (PIs). The program seeks to establish a network of trained graduate student ambassadors who will serve as safety champions, supporting students' physical, psychological, and cultural safety. These ambassadors will provide peer support, guide students to university resources, and help identify any barriers in university policies.

In terms of training, the ambassadors will receive education on relevant policies which are currently being prepared by the DoS office. The recruitment process, initially scheduled to begin in March, has been moved to April to allow the team to explore similar programs on campus and ensure there is no duplication of efforts. Training for ambassadors will take place over the summer, and the program is set to officially launch in September 2025, running for one year as a pilot.

**(Mar 11) Coalition of University of Alberta Association (CUAA) Meeting**

The Graduate Students' Association, Students' Union, Non-Academic Staff Association, and Post-Doctoral Fellows Association have come together to form a coalition. The coalition's purpose is to amplify the collective voice of our members, provide mutual support, and advocate for sustainable solutions. Key objectives include strengthening solidarity, offering assistance in times of need, sharing knowledge and best practices, and collaborating on advocacy efforts to improve teaching, working, and learning conditions, as well as influencing relevant legislation.

This coalition will be governed by a leadership committee made up of representatives from each association, with regular quarterly meetings to discuss ongoing initiatives and concerns. Working groups will be established as necessary to focus on specific issues like labour rights, tuition costs, and support

for students, staff, faculty, and postdocs. Each association retains autonomy over the projects and initiatives it supports, with the right to oppose actions that don't align with its membership's interests. The coalition will also focus on joint campaigns, sharing training and educational resources, and developing emergency support frameworks. Periodic evaluations will assess the coalition's progress and adjust strategies as needed. This collaboration will strengthen our collective efforts to build a resilient, equitable, and forward-thinking environment for all members.

The coalition along with Association of Academic Staff of the University of Alberta (AASUA) have jointly signed a letter expressing our strong concern over the University's decision to end its financial support for the six university-affiliated daycares. These daycares provide essential, high-quality childcare for the children of university faculty, staff, and students. With this letter, we aim to highlight the critical role these daycares play in fostering an inclusive and accessible university community and to urge the university to reconsider this decision, as the financial support is vital for maintaining the high standard of care and educational development that benefits families across the university.

### **(Mar 11) People Strategy Committee Meeting**

The People Strategy Committee meeting focused on the development of institutional values for the University of Alberta, a key deliverable under the People Strategy for the first year. The meeting aimed to outline the process for creating a set of values that align with the university's mission and vision while also ensuring these values are broadly accepted and resonate across the community. The Steering Committee, co-chaired by the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and the Vice-President (University Services, Operations and Finance), provided oversight for the process.

The meeting included a review of the Terms of Reference and discussed the importance of organizational values, with participants exploring why these values matter and how they can serve as a touchstone for the university community. Key input was gathered from the Board-GFC Senate Summit, where themes such as collaboration, impact, resilience, excellence, ambition, curiosity, freedom of expression, transparency, trust, and mutual respect resonated most strongly among groups. The proposed approach outlined a two-phase consultation process, with an initial focus on thematic consultations through surveys and workshops, followed by the release of a "What We Heard" report and a draft set of values for validation. The formal approval of the institutional values will be sought by Fall 2025.

### **(Mar 18) Meeting with the Bargaining Team**

Our negotiating team met last week to finalize our monetary proposal, which will be tabled during the upcoming meeting with the university on April 22-23. The proposal has been carefully finalized following thorough research and in-depth discussions. We are committed to keeping you informed and will provide updates as negotiations progress.

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

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



## Item 8g: GSA Senator Report

**To:** GSA Council

**From:** Ola Mabrouk, GSA Senator

**Date:** March 19, 2025

**Subject:** Summary of GSA Senator Activities

**Report on Activities as GSA Senator:** As part of my ongoing commitment to representing and contributing to the University of Alberta community and representing the GSA, I would like to highlight my recent activities and engagements:

**1. Board/GFC/Senate Summit Participation:**

I attended the Board/GFC/Senate Summit on January 31<sup>st</sup>, where discussions focused on the university's organizational values and the newly launched People Strategy. Table discussions were held to review university statements, gather input, and identify gaps to shape the university's statement of values. My participation ensured that diverse perspectives, including those of graduate students, were considered in these discussions.

**2. Senate Plenary Participation:**

I attended the Senate Plenary sessions held in December and March for 4 days, actively engaging in discussions on key issues and institutional developments. The plenaries covered a range of topics, including a strategic review of Senate themes and a presentation from U School Award Recipient, highlighting the impact of the program. Additionally, Deputy Provost Kathryn Todd and Vice-Provost Carrie Smith provided insights into university initiatives related to access, community, and belonging. The sessions also included an update on the Social Innovation Working Group, and an overview of the On Campus Program in the Faculty of Education. Furthermore, I participated in a session focused on preparing U School elevator pitches, enhancing advocacy efforts for this important initiative.

**3. Support for the CFB Community Pantry:**

As part of the Senate's commitment to addressing food insecurity, I contributed to the CFB Community Pantry initiative. Through collective efforts, senators donated \$2,600, enabling the purchase of nearly 1,100 lbs of food to support individuals in need. This initiative highlights the university community's dedication to social responsibility and student well-being.

**4. Committee Involvement:**

I was an active member of several committees (confidential). My contributions helped shape the outcomes and final decisions of the committees and ensured that graduate students' perspectives were included in the decision-making processes.

I look forward to continuing my work as GSA Senator and contributing to initiatives that benefit our students.

**Thank you for your attention and support.**

**Ola Mabrouk**

GSA Senator

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## Item 8i: GSA Chief Returning Officer Report

Dear GSA Council,

Over the past month, I have met with ERC to begin debriefing the general election and make recommendations for the next cycle. We will have more updates over the next months as discussions wrap up and potential changes are presented to Council.

We have also been planning for the By-Election of the Vice President Indigenous Relations. The nominations are currently open until Wednesday, April 2nd, the forum will take place on Friday, April 4th, and voting from April 8th to 10th. Please spread the word to your constituents and encourage them to run in the election and/or vote. Note that this position is only open to Indigenous students.

If you have any questions, please contact [gsa.elections@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsa.elections@ualberta.ca).

Sophie Shi  
GSA Chief Returning Officer

Item 8j: NoC Chair Report

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

To: GSA Council

From: Arseniy Belosokhov

Date: March 19, 2024

Dear members of the GSA Council,

Since the last Council meeting, one of the Nominating Committee members has resigned. The vacancy has been advertised and the applications of the two candidates to refill the position have been reviewed and put forward for the Council vote. The GSA General Elections ended up with 7 vacancies for Councillors-At-Large positions. These vacancies have been advertised and 5 applications are put forward to the Council vote. The remaining vacancies will continue to be advertised by the GSA Speaker and reviewed by NoC.

Sincerely,  
Arseniy Belosokhov, Nominating Committee Chair

Item 8k: ERC Chair Report

**GSA Elections and Referenda Committee  
Report to the GSA Council for the March 24, 2025 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Elsie Osei, Chair of the GSA ERC  
Date: 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025

Dear GSA Council Members,

The Elections and Referenda Committee (ERC) convened **March 4th and 11th, 2025**, to address critical updates and proposals for the upcoming and future election cycle. Below is a summary of key discussions and decisions.

### **ERC Meeting Summary**

#### **Proposed Nomination Process Revisions (CRO Proposals):**

- The ERC approved the pilot launch of a new online nomination form designed to streamline the application process for candidates seeking the GSA Directly Elected Officer positions or Councillors-at-Large positions. The ERC reviewed the new form; suggested improvements including streamlining fields and enhancing accessibility.
- During this initial phase, the Google Form-based submission will be introduced as an optional alternative to traditional nomination methods. This pilot aims to evaluate the efficiency, accessibility, and user experience of the digital platform, ensuring it aligns with the needs of candidates and the GSA's commitment to transparency. By offering this optional pathway, the ERC seeks to gather feedback and assess the viability of transitioning to a fully digital nomination process in future elections.
- To advance informed and confident participation in GSA elections, the ERC and CRO are discussing the introduction of a mandatory knowledge-based assessment as part of the nomination process. This brief quiz, developed collaboratively by the committee, would ensure candidates demonstrate a clear understanding of the roles, responsibilities, and expectations associated with the positions they seek.

This initiative addresses feedback from past elections, where gaps in role awareness occasionally led to mismatched expectations. By integrating this step, the ERC aims to:

- a. Empower candidates with foundational knowledge about their desired roles.
- b. Strengthen governance by prioritizing candidates who align their goals with the position's demands.
- c. Enhance transparency by clarifying commitments upfront.

**Term Limits:**

- Differentiated term limits for Vice Presidents (VPs) and the President are under consideration. Specific thresholds for these roles (e.g., stricter limits for the President or VPs) will be deliberated in future meetings.

This is to tailor term limits to reflect the distinct responsibilities and leadership demands of executive roles.

- The ERC will conduct a detailed analysis of role-specific term impacts and solicit feedback from stakeholders.  
Final recommendations will be presented for Council approval following further discussions.

**Candidate Information:**

- Debated inclusion of **candidate photos and bios** in election materials. Further consultation and discussions needed.

**By-Election Timeline:**

- Finalized dates: **March 19 to April 11, 2025.**

**Supervisor Approval:**

- Discussions are ongoing on the removal of the supervisor approval requirement for nominees. Decision pending further feedback.

Sincerely,  
Elsie R. Osei,  
Chair of GSA ERC

## Item 8L: GSA Management Report

GSA Management  
Report to GSA Council for March 24 2025 Meeting

To: GSA Council  
From: Cindy Roose  
Date: March 24 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.

Overall engagement in the 2025 elections improved from previous years. Engagement was measured through increased number of candidates, attendance at various election events, and voter turnout. The U-Pass renewal was on the ballot, which helped to improve voter turnout. The online voting system worked well, but we have identified a few improvements in messaging for upcoming years. Nominations are also open for the VP Indigenous Relations by-election. More information can be found in the GSA Newsletter. I would like to thank Grace Adair and Sophie Shi for all of their hard work to ensure a smooth general election and by-election, and on behalf of staff, we are looking forward to the transition and onboarding process for incoming DEO's.

The GSA Awards night was held on March 12, 2025. This night celebrates student academic achievement, volunteerism, and engagement. The evening was a success and I would like to thank Brandy Ellamil for organizing this special event. Planning is underway for a Volunteer Appreciation event, the last Social Hour of the semester, Spring Social, and fall orientation activities.

There is continuing work on the preparation of 2024 winter quarterly financial statements. The quarterly financial statements provide the Council with transparency and accountability of operational spending as this will reflect the current financial health of the association. These efforts ensure fiscal responsibility and demonstrate our commitment to maintaining trust with the graduate student community. I would like to thank Dorota Dziekan-Kryjak (Finance Manager) and Seidy Louangxay (Accountant) for their efforts in constructing our new 2025-2026 budget and supporting our ongoing financial operations.

The office has been supporting several critical committees, including the Tuition-Based Advisory Committee (TBAC), Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees Joint Oversight Committee (MNIF), Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (EDIC), Budget and Finance Committee (BFC), and Governance Committee (GC). These committees are fundamental to shaping policies, advocating for student interests, and ensuring ethical and effective governance. The staff have been instrumental in coordinating meetings, providing research support, and ensuring these committees have enough members and resources to work effectively.

Sincerely,

Cindy Roose, Associate Director

### **Management Report to the GSA Board, February 26 2025**

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on **February 12, 2025**

#### **Executive Director update:**

- Grants close Mar 1 - Mar 31 as we prepare for the new fiscal year (updates in Good Grants to applications and process, budget, etc.)
- The Awards adjudication has closed and the committee met on January 28 2025 to finalize the winners. The winners have now been notified about the awards.
- We have finalised our 2025-2026 budget and the 3-year budget plan, which was delivered as a first draft at the January 9th BFC. The BFC will meet again on February 27 2024 to review the updates made at the January and February meetings.
- The VPIR By-Election will be organized at the ERC meeting next week. We have elected a new DRO, who will be trained in the coming weeks in time for the by-election.
- GFC is replenishing their graduate student representatives in March; advertising will go out for that via our newsletter and website.
- New DEO board job shadowing will be organized in the coming week with the aim of starting on March 17th
- Social Media updates:

Facebook Reach: +60.5% (Feb 11-25) Followers: no change (current: 2063)

Instagram Reach: +60.3% (Feb 11-25) Followers: +8 followers (current: 1513)

Twitter/ X Followers: -3 followers (1303)



### **Management Report to the GSA Board, March 5 2025**

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on **February 26 2025**

#### **Executive Director update:**

- Grants close Mar 1 - Mar 31 as we prepare for the new fiscal year (updates in Good Grants to applications and process, budget, etc.)
- We have finalised our 2025-2026 budget and the 3-year budget plan, which will be presented to Council on March 17 2025.
- The ERC met yesterday to arrange the by-election of the VPIR dates and debriefing on how the General Election went. The nomination forms are being updated in preparation.
- This Friday, we will be advertising for GFC graduate student spots, alongside our NoC and CAL vacancies.
- The bookings for job shadowing schedules for the new DEOs will begin later this week, as we sort through the priorities of meetings.
- We will draft the GSSF letter this week for VPSS and we will have finalized the numbers by Friday.
- Social Media updates:

**Facebook** Reach: -55.1% (Feb 25-March 4) Followers: -3 followers (current: 2060)

**Instagram** Reach: -73.8% (Feb 25-March 4) Followers: -7 followers (current: 1506)

**Twitter/X** Followers: no change (1303)

### **Management Report to the GSA Board March 12 2025**

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on **March 5 2025**

#### **Executive Director update:**

- Grants close Mar 1 - Mar 31 as we prepare for the new fiscal year (updates in Good Grants to applications and process, budget, etc.). We have a few new grants to approve this week.
- We have finalised our 2025-2026 budget and the 3-year budget plan, which will be presented to Council on March 24 2025 after being voted on by the Board.
- VPIR paperwork updates are complete and the timeline will be approved by the ERC later today, so advertising can begin for the nomination window to open on Wednesday the 19th of March.
- The bookings for job shadowing schedules for the new DEOs will be finalized later this week, as we sort through the priorities of meetings.
- We have drafted the GSSF letter this week for the VPSS and we will send that in to receive our 2025-2026 funding.
- Social Media updates:

**Facebook:** Reach: +81.8% (March 4-11); Followers: -1 followers (current: 2059)

**Instagram:** Reach: -2.6% (March 4-11); Followers: +4 followers (current: 1510)

**Twitter/ X:** Followers: -2 followers (1301)

### **Management Report to the GSA Board, March 19, 2025**

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on March 12, 2025:

#### **Strategic**

- Developing a timeline for work on next year's GSA Board Strategic Work Plan. A short survey will go out to students this month to gather feedback on priorities.
- DEO job shadowing is being coordinated, a transition schedule and planning 101 scheduling by portfolio, etc., is being developed, and an onboarding/training schedule for incoming DEOs is being finalized.
- Bargaining team met to review monetary proposals in preparation for the next round of bargaining at the end of March.

#### **Operations**

- VPIR advertising is going well. IGSA and FPH are getting the word out for us via posters and an email campaign. Florence Glanfield is going to do a short video by next week to help encourage Indigenous students to apply.
- The VPIR nomination form has been approved and is ready to be opened online on Wednesday, which will be a good test before next year's elections to see if it's preferable to paper.
- The ERC are deliberating the VPIR Forum questions.
- We have a Facilities meeting tomorrow to see what can be done about the issues in Triffo Hall.
- Grants are currently closed and will reopen on April 1, 2025 at 8:30 AM.

#### **Social Media**

##### **Facebook**

Reach: -76.6% (March 11-17)

Followers: no change (current: 2059)

##### **Instagram**

Reach: -27% (March 11-17)

Followers: +1 follower (current: 1511)

##### **Twitter/ X**

Followers: no change (1301)