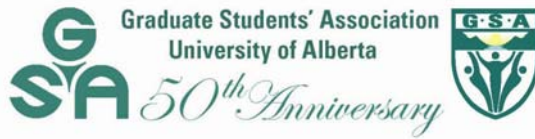


GSA Council
October 24, 2011
Agenda

1. Approval of the Agenda
2. Approval of the Minutes
 - (a) September 26, 2011 **(to be attached)**
3. Presentations and Announcements
 - (a) Presentations by Guests
 - i. PAW Design Development (Doug Ramsey – Architect, Ben Louie – University Architect) (30 minutes)
 - (b) Remarks from the Speaker
4. Reports
 - (a) Elected Officials
 - i. President **(attached)**
 - ii. VP Academic **(attached)**
 - iii. VP Labour **(attached)**
 - iv. VP Student Life **(attached)**
 - v. VP Student Services **(attached)**
 - (b) Officers
 - i. Speaker
 - ii. Senator
 - iii. Chief Returning Officer
 - (c) Standing Committees
 - i. GSA Board **(attached)**
 - ii. Governance Committee **(attached)**
 - iii. Budget and Finance Committee 2011 – **NoC to advertise for members shortly**
 - iv. Student Affairs Advisory Committee – **NoC seeking members**
 - v. Awards Selection Committee – **adjudicating Graduate Citizenship Award**
 - vi. Negotiation Committee – **no work at present**
 - vii. Labour Relations Committee – **members just elected: will meet soon**
 - viii. Elections and Referenda Committee – **members just elected: will meet soon**
 - ix. Nominating Committee **(attached)**



(d) GSA Management (**attached**)

5. Question Period

(a) Written Questions

We kindly ask that written questions be submitted by the Wednesday before a Council meeting to allow sufficient time for a comprehensive answer.

(b) Oral Questions

We kindly ask that oral questions be limited to matters that have arisen just recently. All other questions should ideally be submitted in advance as written questions to allow for a comprehensive answer.

6. Elections

(a) Election of Representative for the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry Dean Search and Selection Committee (**candidate biographies to be distributed**)

7. New Business

(a) **R20111024.1**: Request to waive advertising for the Provost/VP Academic Review Committee (Outline of Issue to be distributed)

8. Adjournment

General Orders

R20111024.1 BIRT Council, upon the recommendation of the GSA Nominating Committee, waive the advertising requirement for the selection of a student representative to serve on the Provost/VP Academic Review Committee.

GSA Council Minutes – 26 September 2011

The Speaker called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm. The Speaker also noted his preference for taking attendance: a roll call, combined with a sign-in sheet for late-comers and sign out sheet for people who leave early. The Speaker then took a roll call.

1. Approval of the Agenda (unanimous)

2. Approval of the Minutes (unanimous)

3. Presentations and Announcements

(a) Presentations by Guests

i. Tuition (**Phillip Stack, Associate Vice President Risk Management Services – PS/AVP**) and Academic Plan (**Dr. Carl Amrhein, Provost – CA/PRO**)

- Also present: **Mazi Shirvani (Dean of Graduate Studies– MS/DGS), Frank Robinson (Dean of Students – FR/DoS), Von Whiting (Senior Administrative Officer – VW/SAM), and Colleen Skidmore (Vice Provost – CS/VPRO)**
- Detailed presentations were given. (Any Council member not present may ask for the transcript.)
- Questions were then entertained:
- **VK/CAL:** As part of grad studies, there should be more opportunities to delve into industries: what effort could the university make to incorporate industry into its programs?
- **CA/PRO:** We know that 70% of PhDs do not go into Academia – it has been a long time since the University saw students that way. Engineering students have tremendous opportunities to cooperate with industry throughout their programs.
- I'm not sure about the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry. The clinical realm may not be all that relevant for someone wanting to go into private industry.
- The challenge with the AB health system is that AHS was very adamant about not contributing to research, even though their CEO disagrees with this.
- I'll take your comments as urging us to push for research in that realm
- There are also already many opportunities in other faculties; Rehabilitation Medicine, for example, is completely integrated into professional practice.
- There are also some opportunities within *Alberta Innovates*
- **MS/DGS:** While the university knows that 70% of doctoral students don't go into academia, this knowledge hasn't percolated to supervisory levels. It's difficult to find opportunities if supervisors won't let you out of the labs. But here's an opportunity for the Competencies and Attributes Committee. If that committee says an outside experience is an integral part of graduate education, then we can use it to explain that more forcefully.
- **CA/PRO:** It takes a great leap of faith to let students co-chair this committee.
- **NY/VPA:** We are currently working on some brainstorming - what are the attributes expected of UofA grads? What do we want UofA grads to be known for? What are the soft skills? Just had our first meeting and now we have nine faculty members thinking about that.
- **RC/PRES** – Development of transferable skills, soft skills, ability to function in industry and put forward ideas in small meetings rather than lecture to a large class.

- **CA/PRO:** Just got some US and EU materials from Universities working on soft skills. Faculty of Extension is well poised to work on those skills. Government may recognize some of those co-curricular activities and credentials.
- In my old job, I worked on getting student placements with industries; companies were looking for skills such as collecting evidence, writing and presenting an argument, statistical competence, computer competence. But that might have since changed.
- **LN/CAL:** What are you aiming for in terms of ratio between graduate and undergraduate students?
- **CA/PRO:** We are aiming for a student to instructor ratio of 1:16. We started at 1:25, then were briefly down to under 20, now back at 1:21.
- The budgetary confusion of the last two budgets showed up so quickly in statistics like that.
- Recently, the ratios have been stable. The percentage of tenured professors has gone up and sessionals has gone down, contrary to what you might think.
- We are not pleased to no longer be making progress towards 1:16.

- **FW/SP:** I would now entertain a motion to extend the time for the presentation, since time is up.
- **RC/PRES:** How many questions are on the speaker's list?
- **FW/SP:** Three.
- **RC/PRES - TK/VPL: MOTION** to extend presentation until the three questions are exhausted. (*unanimous*)

- **TK/VPL:** How can graduate students take advantage of the green and gold awards?
- **CS/VPRO:** They were launched on Monday, and both undergraduate and graduate students are eligible. We recommend applying at least 8 weeks prior, since applications will be adjudicated once a month. Part of the process is to teach you how to put together a grant application, so it matters how well your application is put together.
- **Ashraf Abd-Elmeguid (Graduate Student):** What did the university do to decrease tuition to Quebec levels?
- **CA/PRO:** Quebec university funding is not transparent. We have no idea how they stay alive. We think their financial model looks like Greece's. We know what we know about their funding and their costs, and it doesn't make sense.
- With salary settlements at 2%, which is 80% of our costs, and government grants staying at 0%, and tuition going up at 1.45%, there's fiscal constraint ahead.
- **MS/DGS** Take a look at the numbers in relation to McGill. Their number of grad students is a little larger than ours. The funding they provide to grad students is \$80 million, where we provided \$100 million. The extra \$1000 in grad student tuition multiplied by 5000 grad students is only \$5 million. So we give back more than that to students.
- **RC/PRES:** Do you have any suggestions how we can contribute to changing that situation?
- **CA/PRO:** Vote once, vote often. Vote for your self-interest. If we want to remain the most intensive public university in North America, we will have to convince the government to do better if we want 75% of funding from government. Seattle, for example, is going to 0%. Presidents lose their jobs over showdowns with the government. We are in a very privileged position. Our government continues to fund at post WWII levels. Alberta only has maintained that commitment.

- In addition, the percentage of tuition remitted to students in terms of scholarships (does not include TA and RA funding) is on the high side.
- We have a culture where a lot of people want to put the government back in the black instantly.
- **FW/SP:** Time is up. Is there another motion for extension? Seeing no motion, we'll move on to the next presenter.

ii. Audit (Auditor Tom Gee) (30 minutes) **(three audit documents were before Council: Audited Financial Statements, Report to the Council with Respect to Matters Arising From the Audit, and Review of Matters Raised During 2010 Audit – copies may be found online with the 26 September 2011 Agenda Package)**

- **Karen Gibson** presented the audit, noting that Tom sends his regrets on account of family issues.
- I understand you don't need a line by line explanation, which was given to the Board and BFC.
- In summary, there have been substantial improvements in financial management, but some improvements still need to be made.
- You are in a strong financial position.
- Payables are a little higher, but that was an issue of invoicing later. Nothing to be worried about.
- Operations: you were in a situation of substantial loss. Dental and health: change in fees. Admin fees are higher.
- Differences in legal fees, salaries, and consulting fees accounted for substantial differences. These occurred on account of changes in policies.
- **FW/SP:** Are there any questions? None.

iii. Alberta Graduate Council (President Paul Walz) (30 minutes) **(letter from RC/PRES was before Council and may be found online with the 26 September 2011 Agenda Package)**

- **FW/SP** – The AGC President, Paul Walz, sends his regrets for not being present.
- **RC/PRES:** Some recent incidents left the Board concerned with regards to communications sent out by AGC. Specifically, a letter was sent to CAUS on AGC letterhead without the UofA GSA's signature. RC/PRES then read P Walz's letter and reported that he would be raising these matters with AGC.

(b) Remarks from the Speaker – none

4. Reports

(a) Elected Officials

i. President **(written report was before Council)**

- **RC/PRES:** As submitted, with some additions.
- PAW – at draft design and development stage.
- We're sitting down next week with VP Don Hickey/Provost to hammer things out rather than sending things back and forth.
- Happy to entertain questions.

ii. VP Academic (**written report was before Council**)

- **NY/VPA:** as submitted.
- I'll add three points:
- About CLE Attributes and Competencies: if you have questions send them my way. There is a huge consultation process and component; we are considering all input. Once we have our terms of reference and some discussion with faculty, I'll update you. Will bring some presenters to Council too.
- GFC grad caucus was formed and met before the GFC meeting. Good meeting and will report at next Council about it.
- FGSR Council caucus was a little different – we had orientation for new members. We had policy changes and some debate about the new fee structure.

iii. VP Labour (**written report was before Council**)

- **TK/VPL:** a few updates: the new Green and Gold grant is excellent for grad students. It's mainly for travel, but can also be used for professional development activities locally. It can be an individual or group grant – look at website and encourage others to apply. UofA wants to spend all the money so the program will continue. (www.greenandgoldgrant.ualberta.ca)
- FGSR: the new market modifier implementation has issues. I'm following up with FGSR in the next few weeks. At the next Council meeting you will see updates from me.
- The government has recently determined that refugees do not pay the international differential fee. If you know students with refugee status, let them know about that.

iv. VP Student Life (**written report was before Council**)

- **HS/VPSL:** Regarding the PhD comics movie – I am waiting to hear back about a screening. Regarding Take Back the Term sessions, there will be more info soon.
- The Government of Alberta offers a citizenship award, which the GSA adjudicates. Due on Oct 15, which is the deadline on the government application form. Spread the word.

v. VP Student Services (**written report was before Council**)

- **SL/VPSS:** PAW is looking at LEED certification. Right now it has 59 pts, which is Silver. LEED Gold is 60 points.
- UAI has plans to provide \$3700 for living expenses to help students going abroad, but the graduate to undergraduate ratio is not decided.

(b) Officers

i. Speaker

- **FW/SP:** more people should come out for after-Council social gatherings.

ii. Senator (**written report was before Council**)

- **TK/SEN:** U School is starting next week. Sixteen different classes are coming to the University – grades 4-9. This is a week-long experience to explore university. The program is still looking for volunteers. Email is in my report – please spread the word.
- All students in the program are from underprivileged schools. They might not choose to come to university without this program.
- Also attended a plenary – UofA President has established an interdisciplinary water council.

iii. Chief Returning Officer

- **FW/SP:** The CRO is not present.

(c) Standing Committees

i. GSA Board (**written report was before Council**)

- **RC/PRES** – report is as submitted.

ii. Governance Committee

iii. Budget and Finance Committee

- **RC/PRES:** please refer to the audit presentation. Also, the new BFC terms of reference are coming in for a second reading today.

iv. Student Affairs Advisory Committee – seeking members.

v. Awards Selection Committee – will meet soon.

vi. Negotiation Committee – no work at present.

vii. Labour Relations Committee – members to be elected today.

viii. Elections and Referenda Committee – members to be elected today.

ix. Nominating Committee (**written report was before Council**)

- **VK/CAL:** Item 6a requires action by Council.
- We have been very active this month.
- We are receiving expressions of interest from graduate students interested in running for elected office, and have started training.
- **TM/ ECE:** how do we contact you if anyone wants to run?
- **VK/CAL:** Email Joanna Chan, since she coordinates the committee, or me.

(d) GSA Management (**written report was before Council**)

- **ES/ED:** We are providing you with a partial list of legal agreements so you can see how we function as a corporation.
- The Board and BFC have seen a line by line audit presentation from our auditor – very detailed and informative.

5. Question Period

(a) Written Questions – none.

(b) Oral Questions

- **HS/VPSL:** Please volunteer for SAAC.
- **LN/CAL:** What's SAAC?
- **HS/VPSL:** Student Affairs Advisory Committee. Co-chaired by myself and Sagar. We are looking for feedback, and an opportunity to bounce off ideas.
- **IR/CAL:** Tuition increased for everyone, but not everyone gets the RA increase.
- **TK/VPL:** The increase we negotiated is mandatory. You are entitled to it.
- **RC/PRES:** The university wants to adhere to the collective agreement, otherwise they expose themselves to lawsuits.
- **IR/CAL:** It's necessary to have two years of work experience when applying for permanent residency.
- **TK/VPL:** What can the university do to change classification of international students who are working? The work on campus used to qualify for permanent residency. Last year the government changed that. Waiting to hear back from University staff on particulars.

- At the end of the day, govt of Canada makes their own regulations, and if they decide it's not sufficient, there's very little we can do about that.
- I will follow up – as far as I know, it's a problem with working hours. The government classifies work as something in exchange for pay. But we will try our best.
- **SA/CME** President's report: "1.45% maximum increase. We will do our best to accommodate". UG vs. grad?
- **RC/PRES:** 1.45 % applies to all tuition, graduate or undergraduate. That's \$53. The university is still a deficit. Tuition will be going the normal governance route – APC, BFPC, Board of Governors. It usually passes but students vote against. Remarkable that there are still some good programs coming out like Green and Gold.
- **TK/VPL:** We have a legal agreement, and it is enforceable. I'm also on a task force to look at how depts pay their grad students.
- **CS/COMP:** Can you confirm if the University of Calgary has already done a screening of the PhD Comics movie?
- **HS/VPSL:** Screenings have been available since August, but I don't know.

6. Elections

(a) GSA Standing Committees (**Nominating Committee recommendations were before Council**)

- **VK/CAL – LN/CAL: MOTION** to approve nominations for the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (*all in favour - 2 abstentions, from HS/COMP and SA/CEE*)
- **VK/CAL – LN/CAL: MOTION** to approve nominations for the GSA Labour Relations committee: (*all in favour - 2 abstentions, from HS/COMP*)
- **VK/CAL – LN/CAL: MOTION** to approve nominations for the GSA Governance Committee: (*all in favour – 3 abstentions, from HS/COMP, LS/ANT, and , ZY/CHEM*)

7. Second Reading of R20110926.1: BFC Terms of Reference

RC/PRES – SL/VPSS: MOTION TO pass R20110926.1: BIRT Council, upon the recommendation of the GSA Board, approve the BFC Terms of Reference Proposal as attached in second reading.
(*unanimous*)

8. New Business

- **RC/PRES – SL/VPSS: MOTION** to go into closed session (*all in favour, TM/COMP abstains*)
- **JE/CAL – TM/COMP: MOTION** to leave closed session (*unanimous*)

9. Adjournment

- Meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.

**GSA VICE-PRESIDENT STUDENT LIFE
REPORT TO COUNCIL FOR OCTOBER 24, 2011**

To: Council Colleagues
From: Hillary Sparkes, Vice-President Student Life
Date: October 13, 2011

Dear Council Members,

I apologize that this will be a short report from me but I have been away dealing with some family issues. However, this past month has been very productive and I think there are lots of great things happening in my portfolio.

I have been attending many meetings but the ones I'd like to highlight involve events that are coming up quickly.

Take Back the Term is Saturday Oct 29. I have mentioned this before but it is an event that graduate students can attend who might need extra information or support in various aspects of their degree. We have organized three sessions that are directed specifically at graduate student needs. If you would like to attend please mark it in your calendar. We are also looking for volunteers for the day to help engage students and make sure the day runs smoothly.

The **Undergraduate Research Initiative** has launched and I encourage all Graduate Students to apply for these small grants if you are looking for an Undergraduate to help you with your research.

I was part of two granting committee sessions: one for **Student Group Services** and the second for the **Student Engagement Grants**. These are two grants available to Undergraduate and Graduate students. Please let your departments know about these funding opportunities.

After a successful and well-attended Fall Orientation, I am now working with GSA office staff to begin planning **Winter Orientation** in early January for new graduate students and those who were not able to attend in the fall.

I am sorry that I cannot say that I have moved forward with the PhD movie currently, family matters prevented me from getting this set up as I had hoped. I do apologize. But please be patient with me and let your departments know that it will happen.

Please find below a list of the meetings I attended between September 16, 2011 and October 13, 2011:

Sept. 16	Residence Halls Association Meeting
Sept. 19	Welcome Centre Advisory Group Meeting
Sept. 19	Health Centre Advisory Committee Meeting
Sept. 19	New Student Experience Working Group
Sept. 19	General Faculties Council
Sept. 19	Festival of Teaching Steering Committee
Sept. 20	New Student Experience Working Group
Sept. 21	Residence Halls Association
Sept. 21	GSA Board
Sept. 22	Residence Budget Advisory Committee
Sept. 23	GSA/SU Exec Breakfast
Sept. 26	Registrar's Office Unit Review
Sept. 26	GSA Council
Sept. 27	Alumni Council
Sept. 27	URI Launch
Sept. 28	Meeting with Students
Sept. 28	GSA Board
Sept. 29	Residence Services
Sept. 30	Festival of Ideas Advisory Board
Sept. 30	Student Group Granting
Sept. 30	Residence Halls Association
Oct. 3	SEG Granting Committee
Oct. 10	Residence Halls Association
Oct. 12	GSA Board

Sincerely,

Hillary Sparkes
VP Student Life
Graduate Student's Association

**GSA PRESIDENT
REPORT TO COUNCIL FOR OCTOBER 24, 2011**

To: Council Colleagues
From: Roy Coulthard, President
Date: October 13, 2011

Dear Council Colleagues,

The main focus of the past month for me has been the **Physical Activity and Wellness (PAW) Centre**. The draft design development (DD) report is complete and will be presented at Council this month. This report adds additional detail that was previously lacking, and gives us a greater degree of comfort in what the final building will look like. Following the DD, few design changes are expected. The GSA participated in a LEED charette to explore the environmental and sustainability features of the building. The GSA and SU have pushed for highly visible/interactive sustainability features so that the building will not only be efficient but also facilitate learning and behavioural change in terms of sustainability and student life. If any Councillor has any thoughts regarding sustainable practices and features for projects such as PAW, I encourage them to contact me. Further, the SU and ourselves have made a great deal of progress towards resolving the outstanding contractual issues on PAW. I am confident that we will have a contract that will meet graduate students needs over the long term to bring for Council's approval in the next two months.

September proved to be an important month for GSA external affairs. During September I represented the GSA at the annual **Board of Governors Orientation** where I spoke about the importance of student governors. I attended the **Henry Marshall Tory Lecture**, the **Alumni Recognition Awards**, the **Centennial Centre for Interdisciplinary Sciences Opening and Honorary Degree Ceremony**, annual **Killam Award Winner's Luncheon**, and the **Celebrate! Teaching, Learning and Research** event.

In other developments, the **GSA Strategic Plan** is nearly completed and will be publically available by the October Council meeting. I met privately with Provost Carl Amrhein to present the Strategic Plan to him. I also presented aspects of the Strategic Plan related to student engagement to the Council of Student Affairs.

Some of the highlights of meetings last month: I met with **Vice-Provost Jonathan Schaeffer** about the University's next five year I.T. plan. Dr. Schaeffer sees students as the drivers of the future I.T. at the University, and will be looking for graduate students to serve on his committees. The Nomination Committee will send out notices as requested by Dr. Schaeffer's office.

The Board met with **Residence Services** for our annual meeting and to ensure that an ongoing dialogue of graduate student concerns is maintained for such issues as graduate residence and future residence development, future work at Michener Park, and future child care facilities.

I met with the **Gateway** regarding the referendum they are seeking which would see graduate students paying into the newspaper. I welcome feedback from any councillors on any proposal the Gateway puts forward.

It was recently announced that following a one-year leave of absence starting July 2012, Dr. Carl Amrhein is seeking a third term as Provost. During Dr. Amrhein's leave, **Dr. Martin Ferguson-Pell**, Dean of the Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine, will be serving as Acting Provost. The Board will, in the future, meet with Dr. Ferguson-Pell in order to build upon our strong relationship with the Office of the Provost and to ensure that graduate student interests remain a priority of that office.

A **Tea at Triffo** was held to recognize the 100th anniversary of the awarding of the first graduate degrees; where we also recognized the 100th anniversary of Athabasca Hall. A short history of both of these events, including biographies for the first five graduate degree recipients, can be found on the GSA webpage.

A complete list of the meetings I have attended is appended to this report as usual. I continue to be pleased with the quality of work and office environment that is produced and maintained by our professional staff.

Finally, I am happy to announce that we have come to a mutually beneficial agreement renewal with **TD Insurance Meloche Monnex** which will see continued sponsorship of GSA events and activities and the continuation of group rate insurance for graduate students.

Roy Coulthard

GSA President

Meetings between September 15, 2011 to October 13, 2011

Sept. 16	Meeting with Dr. Luth
Sept. 17	Alberta Graduate Council
Sept. 19	General Faculties Council
Sept. 19	Board of Governors
Sept. 20	PAW
Sept. 20	Board of Governors
Sept. 21	GSA Board
Sept. 21	SACIE
Sept. 21	PAW

Sept. 22 Meeting with Dr. Amrhein
Sept. 22 COSA
Sept. 23 GSA/SU Exec Breakfast
Sept. 25 GSA Budget Advisory Committee
Sept. 25 Board of Governors
Sept. 25 Board of Governors
Sept. 25 Board of Governors
Sept. 26 GSA Council
Sept. 28 GSA Board
Sept. 28 GFC Academic Planning Committee
Sept. 29 Residence Services
Sept. 29 Meeting with Dr. Schaeffer
Oct. 3 Meeting with Gateway Editor
Oct. 4 PAW
Oct. 5 GSA Nominating Committee
Oct. 5 GSA Board
Oct. 5 PAW
Oct. 5 Meeting with the Dean of FGSR
Oct. 5 Alberta Graduate Council
Oct. 6 PAW
Professional Development
Oct. 11 Opportunities
Oct. 12 GSA Board
Oct. 12 Meeting with Dr. Babiuk

GSA Vice President Academic Report to Council

To: Council Colleagues
From: Nima Yousefi Moghaddam
Date: October 13, 2011

There was a significant ramp up in the VP Academic portfolio over the past few weeks as we roll into fall semester. I've reported orally on a few of the major meetings in our September Council meeting and will quickly mention those in this report.

Aligned with our strategy to rebuild our relationship with University administration, as VPA I am meeting with academic administration on a regular basis, which I hope will become and remain part of our culture in coming years. Accordingly, I had a great meeting with **Dr. Colleen Skidmore, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President (Academic)**, where we discussed various items including the attributes and competencies from graduate student perspective, the Provost task force on the quality of graduate supervision, changes in the Provost's team and the upcoming unit review. Dr. Skidmore reassured me that the Provost's commitments on these issues remain in place. Additionally, I'm meeting **Dr. Bill Connor, Vice-Provost (Academic)**, as a part of our monthly meeting, to follow up on a few items including the GSA strategic plan.

The Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) Advisory Committee

The Centre for Teaching and Learning mandate is to transform learning experiences through leadership and informed support. It covers various issues around teaching and learning such as getting involved in learning communities, discovering innovative methods to further engage stakeholders, application of technology in teaching and learning including the latest advancements in eLearning. The CTL advisory committee meets annually, where the annual report is presented and discussed. Dr. Heather Kanuka will finish her 5 year term as the academic director of the Centre. Engaging mid-career faculty members in teaching sessions and travelling teaching enhancement series were among the initiatives undertaken by the Centre this year.

The committee is concerned that there is too much focus on research at universities, with the purpose of improving their place in ranking systems, and that this trend might negatively affect the amount of effort universities put on their teaching portfolio. Another pressing issue is that each faculty has a different set of criteria for evaluating their teaching, so when it comes to assessment of current goals of academia, it is done at the faculty level through Faculty Evaluation Committees (FEC).

“Transforming Learning Experiences” is the new vision statement that came out of this meeting as well as a new mission statement: “Provide research-informed knowledge TO support AND enhance teaching and learning”.

I believe one of the positive outcomes of the work of this committee is to come up with teaching methods that are proven to be effective. I would encourage all Councillors to attend some of the ‘Teaching Enhancement Series Talks’, including Dr. Olive Yonge, on Teaching and Learning Scholarship Day scheduled for March 23, 2012.

GFC and GFC EXEC

The GFC EXEC reviewed and approved the 2012 – 2013 academic schedule. The Office of the Registrar presented the annual report on enrolment with interesting data on the number of graduate students in various categories, *i.e.*, international, domestic, and aboriginal students. Data showed that the number of international graduate students is increasing (from 23% in 2008 to 29% in 2010) totalling 2140 students. During the same period, the number of students with Canadian citizenship dropped (from 63% to 58%). This, in fact, aligns with the University’s goal for such transition.

The **Academic Integrity Task Force** report was also presented by Chris Hackett (Discipline Officer, Office of Student Judicial Affairs) which covers data from a national survey about the academic integrity and two years of the work of the committee. You might have seen the Gateway’s report on the Academic Integrity issue and its “pro and cons”. This report will eventually find its way to our council – hopefully in November - for comments and discussion, and I would like to encourage councillors to take a look at the document and its recommendations.

Committee on Learning Environment (CLE)

Access to Universal Student Ratings of Instruction was presented and it was moved to be discussed at the next GFC EXEC meeting.

CLE Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies

As you may recall from my oral report to Council in September, a joint meeting of the CLE/TLAT struck this subcommittee to look at students’ attributes and competencies, and I have been appointed as one of the three co-chairs of the subcommittee. The Subcommittee met in September and decided on the terms of reference and the membership, where we have two graduate student reps. The terms of reference and the membership were reviewed in CLE once before, and this time were approved. The Subcommittee is going to meet this month and the

top item on our agenda is to look at the two working groups for graduate students and undergraduate students and the different needs of these two groups.

Please find below a list of the meetings I attended between September 16, 2011 and October 13, 2011:

Date	Meeting
Sept. 19	GFC Caucus
Sept. 19	GFC Caucus
Sept. 21	GFC CLE Attribute and Competencies
Sept. 21	FGSR Caucus
Sept. 21	GSA Board
Sept. 21	FGSR Council
Sept. 22	GSA/SU Exec Breakfast
Sept. 26	Registrar's Office Unit Review
Sept. 26	GSA Council
Sept. 27	Undergraduate Research Initiative Launch
Sept. 28	GSA Board
Sept. 29	CTL Advisory Committee
Sept. 29	Residence Services
Oct. 3	GFC Executive
Oct. 5	GSA Board
Oct. 5	GFC CLE
Oct. 6	Meeting with Dr. Skidmore
Oct. 7	TLEF Presentation
Oct. 12	GSA Board
Oct. 13	Meeting with Dr. Connor

Permanent Residency Applications

Question: Some Permanent Residency applications require a confirmation of the number of hours worked in an accepted job. How is a student to acquire a letter of confirmation for their permanent residency application?

History: This question has arisen in the context that some supervisors and departments have been providing students with letters that confirm their academic employment and others have not provided these letters. This practice has led to an inconsistency in the type and quality of letters that were being provided to students.

Answer:

At the University of Alberta the only office that can issue a confirmation of employment for academic employment is Human Resources. The detail of the letter will be limited to the amount of hours the student is employed for and dates from which the employment ran.

Students will need to fill out the form at the following link:

<http://www.hrs.ualberta.ca/PayInfo/EmploymentVerification.aspx>. Students can submit this form to Payroll and Operations for processing. Contact Information on the Payroll and Operations Office is included below.

Human Resource Services

2-60 University Terrace
8303 112 Street
Edmonton AB T6G 2T4

Students can go to the following website and look through the contact list to determine the particular payroll contact for their department: <http://www.hrs.ualberta.ca/Contacts.aspx#PayrollOperations>

Supplementary Information:

All graduate students have access to the GSAP (Graduate Student Assistance Program) through Human Solutions. GSAP provides graduate students with a free half hour of Immigration or Tax Consultation. You can obtain more information on GSAP services by going to the human solutions website (www.humansolutions.ca) or by contacting one of their representatives (780-428-7587). Further information can also be obtained from the GSAP brochure at http://www.gsa.ualberta.ca/downloads/FINAL_brochure.pdf.

Continued GSA Action:

The GSA is continuing to look into opportunities to provide international graduate students with more information about permanent residency. In collaboration with UAI and GSAP, the GSA is exploring the potential for a permanent residency information session. Further information will be supplied when it is available.

GSA VICE-PRESIDENT LABOUR
REPORT TO COUNCIL FOR OCTOBER 24, 2011

To: Council Colleagues

From: Tamara Korassa, VP Labour

Date: October 13, 2011

Hello Councillors,

It has been a busy month since we last met. I have dealt with a number of issues in this time and some of them are ongoing.

Market Modifiers

As many of you know the Government of Alberta approved the implementation of the graduate student market modifier to tuition in 2010. This market modifier meant that graduate tuition over the course of the program would increase for all thesis-based graduate students beginning their studies in September 2011 and later. The market modifier was implemented this year in the form of a program fee that can be paid in 4 instalments corresponding with the academic terms. As September 2011 was the first instalment period in which the market modifiers were in effect, it was inevitable that there would be a few issues. I am working with the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research and the Registrar's Office to fix some of these issues. In addition, I will be documenting student complaints, comments, and issues over the year to be used in the review of the market modifier implementation that will be conducted after a year of the program being in place.

Office of Safe Disclosure and Human Rights

The Office of Safe Disclosure and Human Rights is a completely confidential referral service for the university community for anyone who has an issue on campus. OSDHR will direct students, faculty, and staff to the office on campus that can deal with their issue if they seek to take their issue further. This month I met with the OSDHR office and they updated the GSA on some of the initiatives through the OSDHR office. Of particular note is this year's bullying awareness campaign. In November, for bullying awareness week, the OSDHR will launch their campaign that will continue through the year with monthly lectures. The office of OSDHR is another place on campus that can assist students in a confidential manner when student do not know where to go.

Harassment and Discrimination

I am looking over the Harassment and Discrimination policies that have been developed by committees over the past couple of years and submitting the GSA's input. These policies will be going through the governance approval process, including GFC, this year.

Permanent Residency

I have looked into the issue of graduate students getting employment verification letters from the University to submit with their applications for permanent residency. I will be submitting a more detailed document to Council about this issue.

AISSC – Administrative Information Systems Steering Committee

Recently the GSA was asked to sit on this committee which looks at upgrades and new systems for the technological side of campus life. Many of these upgrades directly affect students and the committee is looking for student input. For example, some changes that the committee will be reviewing this year include:

- **Bear Tracks Communication Update** which will allow faculties and departments to post communications to a student's Bear Tracks account. This would roll out first to allow academic standing communication and then perhaps other communication in the future. Some benefits for students are that official communications from the University on these matters would be archived and easily accessible. It also ensures that those students who are away for the summer (International, Field Work) receive the communications in a more timely manner.

- **Electronic Grade Entry** which would allow for a more streamlined process of grade entry, giving students in courses their grades more quickly at the end of the term. There would likely be little change that students would notice other than efficiency.

There may be additional projects over the year that will affect students and I will continue to attend these meetings to be able to report and provide graduate student feedback.

At the last Council meeting a number of questions were asked of my portfolio. I hope to have written answers to these questions and some FAQ sheets ready by the Council meeting. They will be forwarded to you when they are complete.

Please find below a list of the meetings I attended between September 16, 2011 and October 13, 2011:

Date	Meeting
Sept. 19	Board of Governors
Sept. 21	GSA Board
Sept. 21	FGSR Council
Sept. 22	GFC Campus Law Review Committee
Sept. 22	Meeting with Dr. Amhrein
Sept. 23	GSA/Su Exec Breakfast
Sept. 26	GSA Budget Advisory Committee
Sept. 26	Registrar's Office Unit Review
Sept. 26	GSA Council
Sept. 27	Meeting with Student re: Labour
Sept. 27	Board of Governors Safety, Health and Environment Committee
Sept. 28	GSA Board
Sept. 29	Residence Services
Oct. 3	Meeting with the Students' Union
Oct. 3	GSA Governance Committee
Oct. 5	GSA Board
Oct. 5	Meeting with Student
Oct. 5	Meeting with Dr. Shirvani
Oct. 6	AISSC (Information Systems)
Oct. 6	Office of Safe Disclosure and HR
Oct. 12	GSA Board
Oct. 12	Chancellor Search Committee
Oct. 13	GSA Labour Relations Committee

Regards,

Tamara Korassa

VP Labour and Executive VP

**GSA VICE PRESIDENT STUDENT SERVICES
REPORT TO COUNCIL FOR OCTOBER 24, 2011**

To: Council Colleagues
From: SAGAR N. LUNAWAT, GSA VP STUDENT SERVICES
Date: OCTOBER 11, 2011

Dear Colleagues,

**In autumn when the trees are brown
The little leaves come tumbling down
They do not make the slightest sound
But lie so quietly on the ground
Until the wind comes puffing by
And blows them off towards the sky.**

Truer words are rarely spoken. As the autumn approaches the total atmosphere becomes beautiful; finally autumn is here again! I hope you all are doing good and enjoying Fall 2011. The campus is full of new faces and busy with classes and research. At the GSA we have also seen many changes with new committees coming in.

GSA executives met with **Phyllis Clark, V.P. Finance** to discuss various issues facing Graduate students. At this meeting we discussed our strategic plan.

Along with **President Roy Coulthard** I attended the **PAW Centre** detailed design overview meeting. This meeting was a discussion about the first draft of Detailed Design (DD) submitted by architect to the University. The discussion in the meeting gave an insight about the complete design and overview about all the sections and their possible designs. The mechanical and structural design aspects were also discussed in detail. The environmental initiatives taken into consideration by the design committee attracted all the members.

The **PAW LEED** charette meeting was arranged after the detailed design meeting where the architects gave a clear idea about the LEED certification process and the environmental and sustainable initiatives taken in order to get the LEED points. The architect and University administration are targeting to achieve the LEED Silver certification.

On September 16, I attended the **Celebrate! Teaching, Learning and Research** with other GSA elected officials and staff. It was really a recognition of the teaching and research produced at the University of Alberta.

Fall 2011 U-Pass distribution went smoothly. Various new initiatives were taken for successful distribution. For the first time Campus Saint-Jean had a distribution point so that the students could get their U-Pass sticker without having to travel to North Campus.

GSA executives met with Dorte Sheikh (formerly of the Registrar's Office) to learn more about the different services offered provided by the Office of Registrar and FGSR.

I would like to add my voice to those of my colleagues in encouraging graduate students to apply for **the Green and Gold Student Leadership and Professional Development Grants**. This grant has no limit on funding amount. For more details and application process you can visit at <http://www.greenandgoldgrant.ualberta.ca/>.

GSA elected officials met with **Residence Services** for a working lunch. We discussed and shared information about the various residences on campus and current issues faced by graduate students at residences.

Finally the GSA has heard a number of concerns about **space related issues**. As such, we met with the CME to see the space allocated to CME graduate students in NREF – 4th floor and to discuss various issues they are facing in that space.

If you have any questions or suggestions please write them to me gsavpsse@ualberta.ca.

Please find below a list of the meetings I attended between September 16, 2011 and October 13, 2011:

Sept. 19	General Faculties Council
Sept. 20	PAW
Sept. 21	GSA Board
Sept. 21	SACIE
Sept. 21	PAW
Sept. 22	U Pass Advisory Committee
Sept. 22	GFC Facilities Development Committee
Sept. 23	GSA/SU Exec Breakfast
Sept. 26	Registrar's Office Unit Review
Sept. 26	GSA Council
Sept. 27	Meeting with Student
Sept. 28	GSA Board
Sept. 29	Residence Services
Oct. 5	GSA Board
Oct. 5	Green and Gold Leadership Adjudication Committee Meeting
Oct. 12	GSA Board

Sincerely,

Sagar

GSA Board
Report to Council for the October 24, 2011 Meeting

To: Council Colleagues
From: Ellen Schoeck, Executive Director and Coordinator of the GSA Board
Date: October 13, 2011

Dear Council Members,

The Board reports regularly to Council by listing its agenda items, motions/agreements and main items of discussion. Motions on Agenda approval and approval of the Minutes are not included unless there were amendments made. Closed session items are not minuted.

The President, Vice-Presidents, Director of Operations, Financial Manager and I will be happy to answer any questions or provide more information at the Council meeting.

September 21 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Board members discussed the AGC meeting, PAW, legal agreements, labour issues and academic integrity, the Residence Halls Association, Take Back the Term, the PhD movie, and office staffing.

No motions or agreements.

September 28 GSA Board Meeting

Main agenda items:

Board members discussed the Strategic Plan, PAW, immigration and permanent residency issues, URI, office hires, and enrolment data.

No motions or agreements.

October 5 GSA Board Meeting

Main agenda items:

Board discussed need for AEGS contingency plan and tracking, Strategic Plan Approval and GFC presentation opportunity, Gateway, CME space, need for clarification of market modifiers, URI, Residence Services and the Graduate Residence, CTL, and academic integrity.

Motions:

Motion re Signing Authority proposed by SL, seconded by TK: **APPROVED**

It was **MOVED** by SL and **SECONDED** by TK that Dorte Sheikh be appointed as Primary Contact with Ceridian Payroll. Note that Bernadette Elliott will be appointed as secondary contact.

It was **MOVED** by SL and **SECONDED** by TK that Dorte Sheikh be appointed as Administrator with Bank of Montreal Mastercard and leave Bernadette Elliott as a secondary contact.

It was **MOVED** by SL and **SECONDED** by TK that Shirley Ball be appointed as Signing Authority on all banking with Bank of Montreal.

October 12 GSA Board Meeting

Meeting was special topic and moved into an informal question session for candidates for office.

Main agenda items:

Market Modifiers, Strategic Plan Approval, discussion with candidates for office.

Motions:

It was **MOVED** by HS, and **SECONDED** by NY that the Board accept the draft GSA Strategic Plan [with minor editorial changes yet to be made] as the final document. The motion was **APPROVED**.

GSA Governance Committee Report to Council October 2011

On October 3, 2011 the GSA Governance Committee (GC) had its first meeting under its new terms of reference and composition.

In attendance

VOTING MEMBERS:

President and Chair: Roy Coulthard (RC) (from 5:10pm)

Vice-President Labour: Tamara Korassa (TK)

Council member: Emily Klomps, LIS (EK)

Council member: Nikolai Sinkov, Chem (NS)

Council member: Lacey Fleming, Anthro (LF)

NON-VOTING MEMBERS

Speaker Fred Wu [inadvertently not notified of the meeting]

Executive Director: Ellen Schoeck (ES)

Terms of Reference

Several points concerning the GC's terms of reference and membership were discussed at length including:

- the parameters of the term "editorial" and the ability of the committee to make editorial changes to Bylaw and policies;
- what constitutes "**good governance**", with Council operating at a macro level (known as the Carver model) and delegating responsibilities to the Board and GSA committees, with regular reports back to Council on how delegated functions were being carried out; and
- the benefits of having Councillors on GC including de-politicizing governance issues.

Working Groups

The concept of working groups was raised whereby two people from GC would work on various issues and then report back in a full committee meeting. Two major issues to be tackled in this way are the review of Bylaw and Policy, and reform of the judicial process including the drafting of a discipline policy.

Council Composition

The members of the committee received a chart representing the legal composition of GSA Council. This chart had been in draft form and refined over several months. The chart showed what the *Post-Secondary Learning Act (PSLA)* had to say as well as GSA Bylaw, which stated as part of the Council's composition "**one Councilor from each department at a University that offers a graduate program.**" Noting that FGSR had the same statement as part of its composition, it was noted that there were *now Faculties and units outside departments that had graduate programs*. Further, it was noted that FGSR had adopted an interpretation of that composition statement as follows: **The term department "applies both to a department and to a non-departmentalized faculty or to an extra-departmental graduate program."**

TK noted that the GSA is already following this interpretation and suggested that the GC recommend to Council that the Bylaw be reworded as follows:

“...one Councilor from each graduate program offered by a department, Faculty or extra-departmental unit.” **It was SO AGREED.**

Discussion then turned to two other matters for the GC’s later consideration: (1) Noting that the PSLA stated that Councilors were elected, the term “elected’ would require discussion since some Councilors were appointed; (2) Noting that some Faculties had unique departmental structures, there might be different considerations for them, e.g. Medicine and Business.

Judicial System Discussion

All agreed the judicial system is unclear and in need of a major rethink. The major component of the system was identified as the process for removal of an elected official from office, and whether or not there should be a role for the full Council.

Members discussed the positives and negatives of a GSA judicial board holding a full and fair hearing and then either (a) making the decision on removal with no appeal or (b) making a recommendation to Council with varying amounts of information (e.g. report with statement of facts and no re-hearing), or with all documentation before Council or (c) allowing an appeal on procedural grounds only. Members **AGREED** that ES should produce two different drafts: one allowing an appeal to Council from the judicial committee on *procedural grounds*, and one providing for the judicial committee to make a *recommendation to Council* on removal from office. Each scenario should highlight pros and cons, e.g. protection of privacy, size of Council in acting as an appeal body.

Discussion then turned to committee reform and Bylaw and Policy review. ES noted that although a great deal of progress had been made on both fronts in the past year, further review is still needed.

Z:\Meeting Reports\Reports for Council\Council 2010-2011\2011-2012\October 2011\GSA Governance Committee_Draft.docx

**GSA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
REPORT TO COUNCIL FOR OCTOBER 24, 2011**

To: Council Colleagues
From: Executive Director, Ellen Schoeck
Date: October 13, 2011

Dear Council,

I am drafting this report in early October and will soon be winging my way to Europe for a three-week vacation, thanks to a neighbourhood friend who is a cruise agent, where I tag on to her tour group. I will be Skyping in regularly and will be available for any crucial meetings.

But how strong we are, now, as a group of elected officials and as an office team.

In Heather Hogg (Director of Operations) and in Dorte Sheikh (Financial and Operations Manager) you have two individuals with over 60 years experience in senior administration. They are a dynamite duo, and will lead the office team in October. Your office team is extraordinary: multiple degrees, practical experience, and dedication to the GSA.

At the September meeting, I gave you a snapshot of the high-level legal agreements that define us as a corporation. For the October meeting, Heather, Dorte and I would like our joint report to consist of the detailed reports we jointly provide to the GSA Board. These reports are attached. Councils such as ours are not usually involved in such detail, but we think it is good for all of you to know what your management is doing in an on-the-ground way.

Please find the following reports I submitted to the GSA Board between September 15, 2011 and October 13, 2011:

**Executive Director Ellen Schoeck (ES), Director of Operations Heather Hogg (HH): Report to
GSAB September 14, 2011**

Financial

The final audit will proceed to Council in September.

As noted, we continue to refine our **internal controls**: we have a guideline for one-up signatures for credit card expenditures and for stale-dated cheques. Catrin Berghoff has been trained to produce emergency bursary and other cheques. We will train other staff to produce cheques, eg for invoices and AEGS funds. Our auditor has encouraged us in this effort, whereby we separate out bookkeeping tasks from financial management duties; this will provide interesting new duties for office staff and will reduce the workload of the Financial Manager. All

cheques require a sign-off by the Financial Manager and either the ED or DO and then two signatures, one of which must be an elected official (we aim for signatures by two elected officials).

Operational, Advocacy and Office

Speaker: We had two excellent meetings with Speaker Fred Wu about support the GSA professional staff can provide in managing Council. Jo Chan and Catrin Berhoff have been central to this support.

Files/Archive: Mikaela Ediger and Sarah Barnes have made huge progress on sorting through stacks of files. They have identified new file categories for GSA, especially those that need institutional memory (eg Collective Agreement negotiations). They have drafted excellent summaries of thorny and/or pressing issues, eg the Social Spaces Fund.

The GSA archive located in the Power Plant (the ‘cave’) has a substance dripping from the ceiling. The files stored there are covered with thick dust. I have asked that this area be checked for asbestos and also that F&O conduct a general safety check before staff enter again. This is also not good space for files storage and we will be making a case to use the former PDF office in Triffo Hall. Of note is that fact that if we send our old files to the U of A Archives, we essentially relinquish control and are not willing to do that; ie we will be seeking space we control for storage of GSA files.

Space: Elected officials toured the Power Plant in the company of F&O manager Andy Riddell. The GSA and SU met on Se 9 to discuss PAW.

Handbook and Front Desk Traffic: For the first time in recent memory, we ran out of handbooks – last year we had two boxes left over. Many graduate students came to the front desk for handbooks (the message was definitely out there) and we had more than double the number of dept orientations. Katie has retrieved extras from some departments and we have been able to fill the demand from departments. We considered printing more handbooks (\$3K for 500; \$4K for 1000) but it would take at least two weeks -- and we are not budgeted for this expense. We will begin fundraising efforts so that we can print more handbooks next year.

In talking with students informally, the #1 use of the handbooks is the daytimer, although most students said they had indeed read all the introductory messages.

Front desk traffic was way down from last year – possibly because of the doubling of our departmental orientations.

Telephones: Phones have been removed from my desk, Heather Hogg’s and Dorte Sheik’s – we will have one phone to share in what we call the “quiet space” near Sherrie Blake’s old desk.

Phones have also been removed from the VP offices; and there will be a phone in one of the small meeting rooms. Each line costs \$25/mo. In addition, Casey Germain has deleted long distance codes for six people who are no longer working in the office.

Dorte Sheik: Dorte will work for us up to two days a week. She has a deep background in registrarial issues, excellent contacts, and One Card and UPass experience.

NASA Agreement: we are half way through. **Triffo Lease:** we are at about the 6th draft. **TDMM group insurance:** we are at the 2d draft and almost done.

GU15 Survey: We have had no feedback from U of S, U of C, or UVic on the draft survey. SFU actually filled out the survey instead of providing feedback. We will give this survey one last review, do some minor reformatting and then send it to the GU15 universities and to all western Canadian universities. The resulting data will give us a great deal of information, including information about services offered by other GSAs.

Printer depreciation: The Board asked that we add printer depreciation to the Capital Plan. We lease the office printer and thus no depreciation is needed.

Furniture Inventory: Our auditor, Tom Gee, made reference to a furniture survey when the Board talked about the inventory Casey Germain has done regarding computer equipment and software. Casey will now do a furniture inventory.

**Executive Director Ellen Schoeck (ES), Director of Operations Heather Hogg (HH) Report to
GSAB September 21, 2011**

Financial

The **quarterly reports** envisioned when the new budget was passed in March 2010 are now a reality – and in fact are prepared monthly. This allows for very close monitoring of revenue and expenditure. Big thanks to FM Bernadette Elliott, who has been instrumental in diving in to several thorny financial “fixes” that needed to be completed.

We have been seeking a **back-up financial person** the past several months. If we can secure this bench-strength, we will never be at risk if the FM is not instantly available.

Overall, this is **the plan for all critical functions** – to have a primary person, a back-up and someone to act as the bench-strength.

Operational, Advocacy and Office

Dorte Sheikh: Dorte has 33 years’ experience in the RO, and has, amongst other resume stunners, been responsible for in-person registration. She is a well-seasoned professional with a

knowledge base beyond what Heather and I know, and she has excellent contacts. We have had Dorte temporarily in the office this September, in a Researcher position, helping with orientation and front desk traffic. She has now agreed to help us out regularly, in several shifting capacities (including financial) at least two days a week.

Katie Biittner's leave and Jo Chan's leave: Katie will be on leave from Dec 2011-April 2012, teaching at Okanagan College. We have a plan for covering her duties. Jo Chan will be on leave in November, visiting/meeting family in Hong Kong and Italy. Dyan Semple will cover Jo's position.

PAW: This **big-ticket topic** hangs heavily on us in terms of staff time. Heather and I -- plus at least three of your elected officials -- will be in 7 straight hours of meetings on PAW the week of Sep 19. A giant coloured binder of **Detailed Design** was hand-delivered to the office Friday. **Come look!** Once Council votes on the PAW Agreement, there is \$29 fee per term for grad students each semester, for 30 years. The GSA has had on-the-spot-consultation on this project since its inception.

Elected office: There is now someone interested in each elected position and all are in various stages of final decision-making. If successful, this would give us relatively seamless transition. Other early candidates may declare later on in 2010, or in the normal election mode in early 2012.

Funding for events: The office is working on a master plan for continuous sponsorship so we don't bleed off staff human resources in constant fundraising and are ensured a stable set of funding sources.

The last of the **departmental orientations** occurred last week. We are revising our thoughts on **how many handbooks to produce**. They went like hotcakes this year.

We are reviewing our **front desk stats** (who comes to us, how many, how referred, why do they come etc). We will chew this over and then meet with Hillary. Front desk stats were not produced prior to 2010. FYI we changed signage in 2010 to direct grad student with questions about Health and Dental right over to SUB, ie without coming to our desk.

University meetings: Jo Chan receives up to 70 agendas; I flag key points for elected officials.

Fun: We closed the office Friday am and cleaned our windows inside and out. (The U of A has completely cut its window washing budget.) Lunch at the Faculty Club after.

Agreements currently being worked on include: NASA agreement, Triffo lease and TDMM insurance agreement. Heather and I have had seven hours of meetings with NASA re the

current staff Agreement in the past two weeks. The original Agreement was written by a non-professional and is full of anomalies. We are sorting those out.

Heather and I are happy with the new draft and have sought to align the GSA with the U of A on various issues, eg vacation time. (Pay has already been benchmarked). Louise Rogers, NASA Labour Relations Manager, meets with all of us Se 19 and then with the staff privately.

Graduate student problems: Heather has had initial meetings with some students; she is in close touch with Tamara.

AEGS funds: we continue working on a format for monthly reporting to the Board. The challenge here has to do with **Emergency Bursaries**.

Financial

With audit now completed, we are focusing on a half dozen smaller financial projects, including whether we can secure charitable status. Dorte Sheik will move from a Researcher position to the position of Financial and Operations Manager on Friday and will work part-time 2-3 days a week. I will have more to report at the Board today regarding the hiring of a CA 2-3x/month. Bernadette will stay on call as needed, supplying our "bench strength".

Operational, Advocacy and Office

The main matters we have been dealing with this week are Council and Council follow up, PAW, TDMM contract, candidates for elected office and mountains of central admin committee material and front desk stats.

Executive Director Ellen Schoeck (ES), Director of Operations Heather Hogg (HH) Report to GSAB October 5, 2011

Vacation

I am taking my first real vacation in 15 months. I will be in Rome for five days; then a Mediterranean cruise, free except for port fees thanks to a friend who is a cruise agent (this could be my third career); and then 5 days in Istanbul. I have packed in many 60-70 hour weeks this year and it's a thrill to see the GSA on top of its game.

While away, I will be on email and Skype as needed.

Financial

We are **monitoring enrollment numbers** in relation to the estimated fees in the four-year rolling budget.

CA Shirley Ball has joined us 2-4 days a month as **the GSA Chartered Accountant**. Shirley joins Dorte Sheikh, our new Financial and Operations Manager, and Bernadette Elliott, who remains in touch and on call. We now have a financial *team* – all part-time and operating at different levels. Should any one team member leave us, we have *two others* who will guard and shepherd our finances. In addition, both Heather and I, who have had experience as budget heads, are now involved in budget. Our auditor, Tom Gee, has partnered with us through these changes and was the person who recommended Shirley Ball to us.

Operational, Advocacy and Office

Vijay and I met with two **potential candidates for elected office** on Thursday and with two more on Friday. We have one candidate who has declared publicly for President, and one each interested in Academic, Labour and Student Services. One person is considering running for President: this would give us a contested election. Another is not yet sure which position he will run for.

Last July, Roy, Heather and I talked about **hours and duties associated with VP portfolios** as so many new committees have been created by Administration. We will continue to monitor hours and have been asked about time commitment by those graduate students who are contemplating running for office.

Website renovation: Over the next two months, Casey will renovate our website with input from all the staff, so **please send Heather or me any initial thoughts you have** so we can incorporate your suggestions into this project. Our website will be hosted by the U of A, which will mean we do not have to maintain infrastructure and will have the highest quality, intuitive content management system. We will be able to edit templates, change the look and feel of the site whenever we wish, add sections to the menu, add more than three stories at the bottom, and will be able to track usage of various sections.

GU15/Western Summit Survey: I have reported on this survey before and now we are **poised to launch it**. Many of the survey questions came from work three EDs did at the December 2010 Western Summit. Dyan Semple has added questions and made sure that they are worded in a way which allows us to produce usable data. We will be asking the VPL to check over the labour-related questions. Anyone who wants to see the draft is asked to contact Heather or me ASAP as we are ready to send this out. Let me add that several universities have seen the draft and their suggestions have been incorporated.

GU15 Conference: We will host this conference in late April. I have asked Katie to apply her considerable skills to drafting a program and to look in to logistics/dates. She and I are at the second draft stage and will shortly show a draft to Roy, after which we will place this on a Board agenda so you all can see where we are headed with this key federal lobby group.

Negotiations Institutional Memory: We will be scribing Roy and Tamara to drain their memory banks on this topic and have background information on file.

PGMEs (and PGMDs): These Med/Dent groups are allowed by the U of A to pay GSA fees. Originally this was just to have access to appeals and committee opportunities, but recently, the only thing they want is UPASS. We will be looking at this matter to make decision as to whether any other services should/could be available to these groups.

Front Desk Statistics: When I came to the GSA 15 months ago, the “receptionist” was making coffee, taking small amounts of cash for faxing and photocopying, and answering enquiries. The incumbent was an energetic and intelligent individual whose talents were not being put to use. Coffee is now supplied by Dewey’s, faxing is done in nearby HUB (not one complaint), and the photocopiers have been One-carded (not one complaint). Today, our two half-time Front Desk Assessors and Researchers (Dyan Semple and Casey Germain) answer complex questions brought to the GSA by individual students in person, by email or by phone. They research an array of topics. Dyan Semple has produced excellent stats, with input from Casey, to be sent out tomorrow. Let me know if you want to talk with Heather or me about these stats.

Administrative Unit Review Team – RO: We received an invitation to provide input about the review of the RO. We were not aware that external examiners would be present. We are seeking information about how these review processes work.

Acronyms List: Thanks to Katie and Dyan, this list will be emailed to you shortly.

Council Composition: One of the risks I identified last year was that, while there was a membership list of who is on Council, there was no authority-based list showing the composition of Council. There is a vast difference between two such lists. One tells you who is showing up at a Council meeting and the other tells you who is legally allowed a voting seat (and who the rep is). I have discussed this matter with both the former and current Speakers. Thanks to Katie for ground work producing the list. Thanks to former Speaker Steve Melenchuk and current Speaker Fred Wu for partnering on this.

Lunch and Learn: We have four free GSAP workshops to use. Heather and I suggest Building Working Relationships and Creating a Culture of Inclusion for the Board, office and potential candidates for elected office; and Stress Busters and Committing to a Healthy Lifestyle for Council and committee members.

Best,

Ellen Schoeck

GSA Executive Director

**GSA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
REPORT TO COUNCIL FOR OCTOBER 24, 2011**

To: Council Colleagues
From: Executive Director, Ellen Schoeck
Date: October 13, 2011

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**Executive Director Ellen Schoeck (ES), Director of Operations Heather Hogg (HH): Report to
GSAB September 14, 2011**

Financial

The final audit will proceed to Council in September.

As noted, we continue to refine our **internal controls**: we have a guideline for one-up signatures for credit card expenditures and for stale-dated cheques. Catrin Berghoff has been trained to produce emergency bursary and other cheques. We will train other staff to produce cheques, eg for invoices and AEGS funds. Our auditor has encouraged us in this effort, whereby we separate out bookkeeping tasks from financial management duties; this will provide interesting new duties for office staff and will reduce the workload of the Financial Manager. All

cheques require a sign-off by the Financial Manager and either the ED or DO and then two signatures, one of which must be an elected official (we aim for signatures by two elected officials).

Operational, Advocacy and Office

Speaker: We had two excellent meetings with Speaker Fred Wu about support the GSA professional staff can provide in managing Council. Jo Chan and Catrin Berhoff have been central to this support.

Files/Archive: Mikaela Ediger and Sarah Barnes have made huge progress on sorting through stacks of files. They have identified new file categories for GSA, especially those that need institutional memory (eg Collective Agreement negotiations). They have drafted excellent summaries of thorny and/or pressing issues, eg the Social Spaces Fund.

The GSA archive located in the Power Plant (the ‘cave’) has a substance dripping from the ceiling. The files stored there are covered with thick dust. I have asked that this area be checked for asbestos and also that F&O conduct a general safety check before staff enter again. This is also not good space for files storage and we will be making a case to use the former PDF office in Triffo Hall. Of note is that fact that if we send our old files to the U of A Archives, we essentially relinquish control and are not willing to do that; ie we will be seeking space we control for storage of GSA files.

Space: Elected officials toured the Power Plant in the company of F&O manager Andy Riddell. The GSA and SU met on Se 9 to discuss PAW.

Handbook and Front Desk Traffic: For the first time in recent memory, we ran out of handbooks – last year we had two boxes left over. Many graduate students came to the front desk for handbooks (the message was definitely out there) and we had more than double the number of dept orientations. Katie has retrieved extras from some departments and we have been able to fill the demand from departments. We considered printing more handbooks (\$3K for 500; \$4K for 1000) but it would take at least two weeks -- and we are not budgeted for this expense. We will begin fundraising efforts so that we can print more handbooks next year.

In talking with students informally, the #1 use of the handbooks is the daytimer, although most students said they had indeed read all the introductory messages.

Front desk traffic was way down from last year – possibly because of the doubling of our departmental orientations.

Telephones: Phones have been removed from my desk, Heather Hogg’s and Dorte Sheik’s – we will have one phone to share in what we call the “quiet space” near Sherrie Blake’s old desk.

Phones have also been removed from the VP offices; and there will be a phone in one of the small meeting rooms. Each line costs \$25/mo. In addition, Casey Germain has deleted long distance codes for six people who are no longer working in the office.

Dorte Sheik: Dorte will work for us up to two days a week. She has a deep background in registrarial issues, excellent contacts, and One Card and UPass experience.

NASA Agreement: we are half way through. **Triffo Lease:** we are at about the 6th draft. **TDMM group insurance:** we are at the 2d draft and almost done.

GU15 Survey: We have had no feedback from U of S, U of C, or UVic on the draft survey. SFU actually filled out the survey instead of providing feedback. We will give this survey one last review, do some minor reformatting and then send it to the GU15 universities and to all western Canadian universities. The resulting data will give us a great deal of information, including information about services offered by other GSAs.

Printer depreciation: The Board asked that we add printer depreciation to the Capital Plan. We lease the office printer and thus no depreciation is needed.

Furniture Inventory: Our auditor, Tom Gee, made reference to a furniture survey when the Board talked about the inventory Casey Germain has done regarding computer equipment and software. Casey will now do a furniture inventory.

**Executive Director Ellen Schoeck (ES), Director of Operations Heather Hogg (HH) Report to
GSAB September 21, 2011**

Financial

The **quarterly reports** envisioned when the new budget was passed in March 2010 are now a reality – and in fact are prepared monthly. This allows for very close monitoring of revenue and expenditure. Big thanks to FM Bernadette Elliott, who has been instrumental in diving in to several thorny financial “fixes” that needed to be completed.

We have been seeking a **back-up financial person** the past several months. If we can secure this bench-strength, we will never be at risk if the FM is not instantly available.

Overall, this is **the plan for all critical functions** – to have a primary person, a back-up and someone to act as the bench-strength.

Operational, Advocacy and Office

Dorte Sheikh: Dorte has 33 years’ experience in the RO, and has, amongst other resume stunners, been responsible for in-person registration. She is a well-seasoned professional with a

knowledge base beyond what Heather and I know, and she has excellent contacts. We have had Dorte temporarily in the office this September, in a Researcher position, helping with orientation and front desk traffic. She has now agreed to help us out regularly, in several shifting capacities (including financial) at least two days a week.

Katie Biittner's leave and Jo Chan's leave: Katie will be on leave from Dec 2011-April 2012, teaching at Okanagan College. We have a plan for covering her duties. Jo Chan will be on leave in November, visiting/meeting family in Hong Kong and Italy. Dyan Semple will cover Jo's position.

PAW: This **big-ticket topic** hangs heavily on us in terms of staff time. Heather and I -- plus at least three of your elected officials -- will be in 7 straight hours of meetings on PAW the week of Sep 19. A giant coloured binder of **Detailed Design** was hand-delivered to the office Friday. **Come look!** Once Council votes on the PAW Agreement, there is \$29 fee per term for grad students each semester, for 30 years. The GSA has had on-the-spot-consultation on this project since its inception.

Elected office: There is now someone interested in each elected position and all are in various stages of final decision-making. If successful, this would give us relatively seamless transition. Other early candidates may declare later on in 2010, or in the normal election mode in early 2012.

Funding for events: The office is working on a master plan for continuous sponsorship so we don't bleed off staff human resources in constant fundraising and are ensured a stable set of funding sources.

The last of the **departmental orientations** occurred last week. We are revising our thoughts on **how many handbooks to produce**. They went like hotcakes this year.

We are reviewing our **front desk stats** (who comes to us, how many, how referred, why do they come etc). We will chew this over and then meet with Hillary. Front desk stats were not produced prior to 2010. FYI we changed signage in 2010 to direct grad student with questions about Health and Dental right over to SUB, ie without coming to our desk.

University meetings: Jo Chan receives up to 70 agendas; I flag key points for elected officials.

Fun: We closed the office Friday am and cleaned our windows inside and out. (The U of A has completely cut its window washing budget.) Lunch at the Faculty Club after.

Agreements currently being worked on include: NASA agreement, Triffo lease and TDMM insurance agreement. Heather and I have had seven hours of meetings with NASA re the

current staff Agreement in the past two weeks. The original Agreement was written by a non-professional and is full of anomalies. We are sorting those out.

Heather and I are happy with the new draft and have sought to align the GSA with the U of A on various issues, eg vacation time. (Pay has already been benchmarked). Louise Rogers, NASA Labour Relations Manager, meets with all of us Se 19 and then with the staff privately.

Graduate student problems: Heather has had initial meetings with some students; she is in close touch with Tamara.

AEGS funds: we continue working on a format for monthly reporting to the Board. The challenge here has to do with **Emergency Bursaries**.

Financial

With audit now completed, we are focusing on a half dozen smaller financial projects, including whether we can secure charitable status. Dorte Sheik will move from a Researcher position to the position of Financial and Operations Manager on Friday and will work part-time 2-3 days a week. I will have more to report at the Board today regarding the hiring of a CA 2-3x/month. Bernadette will stay on call as needed, supplying our "bench strength".

Operational, Advocacy and Office

The main matters we have been dealing with this week are Council and Council follow up, PAW, TDMM contract, candidates for elected office and mountains of central admin committee material and front desk stats.

Executive Director Ellen Schoeck (ES), Director of Operations Heather Hogg (HH) Report to GSAB October 5, 2011

Vacation

I am taking my first real vacation in 15 months. I will be in Rome for five days; then a Mediterranean cruise, free except for port fees thanks to a friend who is a cruise agent (this could be my third career); and then 5 days in Istanbul. I have packed in many 60-70 hour weeks this year and it's a thrill to see the GSA on top of its game.

While away, I will be on email and Skype as needed.

Financial

We are **monitoring enrollment numbers** in relation to the estimated fees in the four-year rolling budget.

CA Shirley Ball has joined us 2-4 days a month as **the GSA Chartered Accountant**. Shirley joins Dorte Sheikh, our new Financial and Operations Manager, and Bernadette Elliott, who remains in touch and on call. We now have a financial *team* – all part-time and operating at different levels. Should any one team member leave us, we have *two others* who will guard and shepherd our finances. In addition, both Heather and I, who have had experience as budget heads, are now involved in budget. Our auditor, Tom Gee, has partnered with us through these changes and was the person who recommended Shirley Ball to us.

Operational, Advocacy and Office

Vijay and I met with two **potential candidates for elected office** on Thursday and with two more on Friday. We have one candidate who has declared publicly for President, and one each interested in Academic, Labour and Student Services. One person is considering running for President: this would give us a contested election. Another is not yet sure which position he will run for.

Last July, Roy, Heather and I talked about **hours and duties associated with VP portfolios** as so many new committees have been created by Administration. We will continue to monitor hours and have been asked about time commitment by those graduate students who are contemplating running for office.

Website renovation: Over the next two months, Casey will renovate our website with input from all the staff, so **please send Heather or me any initial thoughts you have** so we can incorporate your suggestions into this project. Our website will be hosted by the U of A, which will mean we do not have to maintain infrastructure and will have the highest quality, intuitive content management system. We will be able to edit templates, change the look and feel of the site whenever we wish, add sections to the menu, add more than three stories at the bottom, and will be able to track usage of various sections.

GU15/Western Summit Survey: I have reported on this survey before and now we are **poised to launch it**. Many of the survey questions came from work three EDs did at the December 2010 Western Summit. Dyan Semple has added questions and made sure that they are worded in a way which allows us to produce usable data. We will be asking the VPL to check over the labour-related questions. Anyone who wants to see the draft is asked to contact Heather or me ASAP as we are ready to send this out. Let me add that several universities have seen the draft and their suggestions have been incorporated.

GU15 Conference: We will host this conference in late April. I have asked Katie to apply her considerable skills to drafting a program and to look in to logistics/dates. She and I are at the second draft stage and will shortly show a draft to Roy, after which we will place this on a Board agenda so you all can see where we are headed with this key federal lobby group.

Negotiations Institutional Memory: We will be scribing Roy and Tamara to drain their memory banks on this topic and have background information on file.

PGMEs (and PGMDs): These Med/Dent groups are allowed by the U of A to pay GSA fees. Originally this was just to have access to appeals and committee opportunities, but recently, the only thing they want is UPASS. We will be looking at this matter to make decision as to whether any other services should/could be available to these groups.

Front Desk Statistics: When I came to the GSA 15 months ago, the “receptionist” was making coffee, taking small amounts of cash for faxing and photocopying, and answering enquiries. The incumbent was an energetic and intelligent individual whose talents were not being put to use. Coffee is now supplied by Dewey’s, faxing is done in nearby HUB (not one complaint), and the photocopiers have been One-carded (not one complaint). Today, our two half-time Front Desk Assessors and Researchers (Dyan Semple and Casey Germain) answer complex questions brought to the GSA by individual students in person, by email or by phone. They research an array of topics. Dyan Semple has produced excellent stats, with input from Casey, to be sent out tomorrow. Let me know if you want to talk with Heather or me about these stats.

Administrative Unit Review Team – RO: We received an invitation to provide input about the review of the RO. We were not aware that external examiners would be present. We are seeking information about how these review processes work.

Acronyms List: Thanks to Katie and Dyan, this list will be emailed to you shortly.

Council Composition: One of the risks I identified last year was that, while there was a membership list of who is on Council, there was no authority-based list showing the composition of Council. There is a vast difference between two such lists. One tells you who is showing up at a Council meeting and the other tells you who is legally allowed a voting seat (and who the rep is). I have discussed this matter with both the former and current Speakers. Thanks to Katie for ground work producing the list. Thanks to former Speaker Steve Melenchuk and current Speaker Fred Wu for partnering on this.

Lunch and Learn: We have four free GSAP workshops to use. Heather and I suggest Building Working Relationships and Creating a Culture of Inclusion for the Board, office and potential candidates for elected office; and Stress Busters and Committing to a Healthy Lifestyle for Council and committee members.

Best,

Ellen Schoeck

GSA Executive Director

OUTLINE OF ISSUE:

Election of Representative on the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry Dean Search and Selection Committee

Suggested Motion:

That the Council elect one graduate student to serve on the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry Dean Search and Selection Committee.

Jurisdiction:

Excerpt from UofA UAPPOL- Selection of Faculty Deans Procedure Appendix A- Revised with Friendly Edits August 11, 2011- Medicine and Dentistry f) ... “The graduate student representative(s) shall be selected through the following mechanism. Each Departmental Graduate Student Association shall forward a name to the Graduate Students’ Association and the representative will be elected by the Graduate Students’ Association Council...”

Background:

The GSA received six nominations to fill one position on the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry Dean Search and Selection Committee. Resumes, biographies and recommendation letters have been distributed via email. Council members are asked to review all related documents and be prepared to rank candidates in order of preference.

OUTLINE OF ISSUES

Request to waive advertising for the Provost/VP Academic Review Committee

Suggested Motion: R20111024.1 BIRT Council, upon the recommendation of the GSA Nominating Committee, waive the advertising requirement for the selection of a student representative to serve on the Provost/VP Academic Review Committee.

Jurisdiction: According to the Review Committee's own terms of reference, the GSA may appoint any GSA member to this Committee:

"Composition of Advisory Search and Review Committees for Vice Presidents: [...]Provost and Vice President Academic [...] One member of the Graduate Students' Association appointed by the GSA"

However, according to NoC's terms of reference in the Nominating section of the GSA Policy Manual, advertising is required:

"All vacancies on bodies falling under the mandate of the NoC will be advertised either in the GSA newsletter or in some manner agreed to by the NoC."

Background: The Provost/VP Academic Review Committee is an extraordinary committee that requires an individual with specific and extensive knowledge of the Provost/VP Academic portfolio in order to serve competently. In the past, due to the specific skill set required, the GSA President served on committees such as this. However, this committee will meet for the first time a mere eight days after a new executive takes office, making the new GSA President not a viable option.

NoC is confident that it is already aware of the handful of individuals on campus with the necessary in-depth experience working with the Provost and VP Academic; conducting the advertising process would give the misleading impression that students-at-large may be selected to serve.

We therefore request that Council consider waiving the advertising requirement, so that NoC may proceed to the appointment of the most qualified candidate.