

GSA Council Meeting AGENDA  
Monday, October 15, 2012, 6 pm

**OPEN SESSION**

**Attached  
Numbered**

1. Approval of the 15 October 2012 Agenda
2. Approval of the Minutes from the 10 September 2012 GSA Council meeting (**attached**) **2.0-2.12**
3. Changes in Council Membership
  - i. Introduction of new Councillors (*If you are new to Council, please let us know it is your first meeting*)
  - ii. Farewell to Departing Councillors (*If this is your last Council meeting, or if your last Council meeting is approaching, please let us know*)

**Presentations and Councillor Announcements**

4. Presentations
  - i. Tuition for 2013/14 (Martin Ferguson-Pell, Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic, and VP Finance and Administration Phyllis Clark). **President Ashlyn Bernier will introduce the guests and present the item.**
  - ii. Mental Health; Feedback on Graduate Student Focus Groups (Robin Everall, Provost Fellow) – 15 minute presentation with input from Councillors to follow. **President Ashlyn Bernier will introduce the guests and present the item.**
5. Councillor Announcements

**Reports**

6. President
  - i. President's Report (**attached**) **6.0-6.1**
  - ii. GSA Board (**attached**) **6.2-6.4**
  - iii. Budget and Finance Committee (**no meetings this reporting period**)
  - iv. Governance Committee (**no meetings this reporting period**)
  - v. Nominating Committee (**attached**) **6.5-6.10**
7. Vice-President Academic **7.0-7.2**
  - i. Vice-President Academic's Report (**attached**)

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|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| 8. Vice-President Student Services                                                                                             | <b>8.0-8.1</b>   |
| i. Vice-President Student Services' Report ( <b>attached</b> )                                                                 |                  |
| ii. Student Affairs Advisory Committee (joint chair: Vice President Student Life) ( <b>no meetings this reporting period</b> ) |                  |
| 9. Vice-President Student Life                                                                                                 | <b>9.0-9.1</b>   |
| i. Vice-President Student Life's Report ( <b>attached</b> )                                                                    |                  |
| ii. Awards Selection Committee ( <b>no meetings this reporting period, see Item 16.i</b> )                                     |                  |
| 10. Vice-President Labour                                                                                                      | <b>10.0-10.4</b> |
| i. Vice-President Labour's Report ( <b>attached</b> )                                                                          |                  |
| ii. Negotiating Committee ( <b>see Item 10.i – VP Labour Report &amp; item 17</b> )                                            |                  |
| iii. Labour Relations Committee ( <b>see Item 10.i – VP Labour Report</b> )                                                    |                  |
| 11. Senator                                                                                                                    | <b>11.0</b>      |
| i. Senator's Report ( <b>attached</b> )                                                                                        |                  |
| 12. Speaker                                                                                                                    |                  |
| i. Speaker's Report ( <b>no report at this time</b> )                                                                          |                  |
| 13. Chief Returning Officer                                                                                                    |                  |
| i. Chief Returning Officer's Report ( <b>no report at this time</b> )                                                          |                  |
| ii. Elections and Referenda Committee ( <b>will be meeting to review policy</b> )                                              |                  |
| 14. GSA Management                                                                                                             | <b>14.0-14.5</b> |
| i. Executive Director's Report ( <b>attached</b> )                                                                             |                  |

**Action Items, Elections, Appointments, Special Business**

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|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 15. Action Items                                                                                                                                                                                 |                   |
| i. GSA Strategic Work Plan 2012-2013 ( <b>presented by GSA President Ashlyn Bernier; Motion:</b> That the GSA Council <b>receive</b> the attached 2012-2013 Strategic Work Plan for information) |                   |
| <b>Attached:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                 |                   |
| - Outline of Issue                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>15.0</b>       |
| - Cover Letter                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>15.1</b>       |
| - 2012-2013 Strategic Work Plan                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>15.2-15.13</b> |
| 16. Elections                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>16.0-16.1</b>  |
| i. Slates for GSA Award Selection Committee and for the GSA Labour Relations Committee ( <b>attached</b> )                                                                                       |                   |

17. Special Business

- i. Collective Agreement Negotiations (**CLOSED SESSION; presented by GSA  
VP Labour Brent Epperson; no attachments**)

**Question Period**

18. Written Questions

19. Oral Questions

**Adjournment**

**Meeting Minutes  
10 September 2012  
GSA Council Meeting**

*[Note: All materials referred to in these Minutes are stored in hard copy in the Official File, as well as electronically]*

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm.

**Approval of Agenda**

**1. Approval of the 10 September 2012 Agenda**

Members had before them the 10 September 2012 Consolidated Agenda, which had been distributed on 07 September 2012.

**The Agenda was approved by unanimous consent.**

**Approval of Minutes**

**2. Minutes**

**i. Minutes from the 09 July 2012 GSA Council meeting**

Members had before them the 09 July 2012 GSA Council Minutes, which had been distributed on 07 September 2012.

**The Minutes were approved by unanimous consent.**

**Changes in Council Membership**

**3. Changes in Council Membership**

**i. Introduction of new Councillors**

This was the first meeting for six new Councillors.

**ii. Farewell to departing Councillors**

This was Dr. Vijay Kandalam's last meeting.

**Presentations and Councillor Announcements**

**4. Information Item and Guest**

**i. Audit of 2012 Financial Statements, Karen Gibson (Auditor)**

Councillors had before them four items, which were distributed in advance. Ashlyn Bernier (President) introduced the Audit of 2012 Financial Statements:

- She noted that the audit is required under the *Post-secondary Learning Act* (PSLA) of Alberta. Peterson-Walker LLP has done this for the GSA for the last few years. The audit includes a statement on financial best practices. The audit has been presented to

Council as an information piece; it has already been approved by GSA Board (GSAB) and the GSA Budget and Finance Committee (BFC).

- She also read a statement from Tom Gee regarding the significant progress the GSA has made with respect to financial stability.

GSA Auditor Karen Gibson was given the opportunity to speak to the audit. During the presentation, Karen Gibson:

- Emphasized that in conducting the audit they arrived at a "clean opinion" meaning that no problems were found, and that the GSA is in a good financial position.
- She went through "Item 4i - Report to the Board With Respect to Matters Arising from the Audit" highlighting key points including:
  - The current assets and liabilities of the GSA.
  - Increases in expenditures relating to staffing.
- She also restated Tom Gee's sentiment regarding the robust nature of GSA financials and noted that the GSA staff was very accommodating during the audit process.

Fred Wu (Speaker) opened the floor to questions. There were no questions.

Ashlyn Bernier (President) requested to make a point of clarification before making a Motion. She explained that the GSAB/BFC was provided a detailed line by line explanation of the audit, that the GSAB/BFC feel confident in understanding audit, and that members of GSAB/BFC have a sufficient knowledge base to have approved the audit documents.

**Ashlyn Bernier (President) MOVED that the GSA Council, acting on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Board (GSAB) and the unanimous support of the GSA Budget and Finance Committee (BFC), receive the attached final audited Financial Statements for information. Brent Epperson (VPL) SECONDED. No debate on Motion. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

## ii. GSA 2012-2013 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report

Councillors had before them two items distributed on 06 September 2012. During the presentation, Ashlyn Bernier (President):

- Provided a background to the two documents noting that these high level Quarterly reports were created to track and monitor the budget over the year.
- She noted that this was the first Quarterly Report ever for a GSA budget. It was done to identify areas for fund re-allocation and to inform Council about budgetary matters.
- Further, there is a planned budget deficit for this year with a surplus projected by 2014.

- She noted that, on the advice of the auditors, as a not-for-profit the GSA must be cautious about having an operations surplus.
- Introduced Dorte Sheikh (Financial Manager) and Shirley Ball (Accountant) to answer any questions.

No questions.

As there were no questions Ellen Schoeck (Executive Director) asked to speak to this item:

- She requested to send to Council a four-page backgrounder on the GSA Budget (originally prepared for GSAB).
- She recommended another conversation about budget principles and background before we discuss next budget in Council.
- Further, she welcomes any Councillor to visit the GSA office to learn more about the budget and is willing to organize a GSA Budget 101.

Yasmeen Krameddine (Psychiatry) asked if there is a written report or are there just the items included in the Council mail out?

Ellen Schoeck (Executive Director) responded that the report was in the material in the form of a High-Level Financial Summary Quarterly Report. GSAB sees more detailed reports, and financial team meetings receive even more detailed reports, while GSA Council is provided a higher level of overview.

Qiang Li (CAL) asked if someone could explain why the expenses are greater than the revenue (as indicated on the first page of the audited financial statement).

Ashlyn Bernier (President) responded that the GSA did anticipate a deficit.

Qiang Li (CAL) supplementary: What are the reasons?

Shirley Ball (Accountant) responded: One of the reasons is that the GSA was not a full-bodied organization in previous years. In order to become a viable organization, we had to undertake hiring more staff. Further, the greater involvement/activity of the GSA overall led to greater expenses.

Ashlyn Bernier (President) responded: We are still in rebuilding phase.

Ravi Singh (Business MBA) asked: What are the major ways in which we are going to cover this deficit and on what time line?

Shirley Ball (Accountant) responded: We are hoping this is our last year with a deficit budget. We've had one for three years now. Starting in 2013-14 we are hoping to break even. We will look at our expenses to make sure they are valid and responsible. On the revenue side we will need to look at the establishment of, or changes to, GSA fees. This year the GSA fee went up by \$30 per student as part of a five year plan. Next year, the plan is to have a \$25 increase. This will help us get back into the positive.

Ravi Singh (Business MBA) supplementary: So you will recover with fees?

Shirley Ball (Accountant) responded: Part of it. Before we accumulated a lot of money but the organization was not viable. We have started building it up again.

Colin More (Physics) asked: How does the latest deficit relate to the forecasted deficit?

Shirley Ball (Accountant) responded: We are on target. If you look at the schedule, we were anticipating a deficit of \$88,000 but are now looking at a deficit around \$70,000. It looks like we are doing better but it's a really early view. In November we'll have a half year to review and will be able to identify where funds may be allocated.

Colin More (Physics) supplementary: How does last year deficit relate to this year?

Shirley Ball (Accountant) responded: We are within \$10,000.

Ellen Schoeck (Executive Director): I would like to provide a couple points of information. One of the big leaps in expenditures is in salaries. The office positions underwent benchmarking by NASA, we found GSA staff were underpaid by at least \$5 per hour. Second, with respect to fees, we were raising our fees by small amounts compared to peers. Our students are now paying approximately the same fees as the University of Calgary and McGill University. A backgrounder will help with understanding this; this is one reason we built into the financial policies that you would see these reports at least three times before you see the budget. This provides us with several opportunities, in advance, to look at the GSA's financial health. Incredibly we have received an amazing vote of confidence in the GSA by the University administration and Financial Services. To help with our cash flow, they are advancing us fees instead of holding them back until all fees are collected. They are very happy with the improvements at the GSA.

Hamid Ramezani (Chemistry) asked: Is there a way, when it comes to important items, to give a short presentation about it to provide a sense of what is going on?

Ashlyn Bernier (President) responded: We do have Budget 101 documents and outlines of issues that can be provided. We can also look at opening up some of the sessions we have for the Elected Officials/GSAB members to Councillors.

There was agreement from the floor that training prior to discussion at Council would be useful.

There were no further questions.

**Ashlyn Bernier (President) MOVED that the GSA Council, acting on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Board (GSAB) and the GSA Budget Finance Committee (BFC) receive the first Quarterly Financial Report (High Level Budget/Expenditure Summary). Brent Epperson (VPL) SECONDED. No debate on Motion. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

## 5. Presentations

### i. Miki Andrejevic, Director of the Festival of Ideas

No items were distributed in advance. During the presentation, Miki Andrejevic:

- Presented some background about the Festival of Ideas (FOI), noting that it was conceived of as a flagship event during the University's Centenary in 2008. Since then it has occurred every 2 years.
- FOI brings the University community together to stimulate learning, discussion, and discovery.
- Gave highlights of past FOI speakers including Salman Rushdie and Jared Diamond, among others.
- Noted that students are involved on the FOI planning committee. They are happy to have student voices on the committee, at the table. Student involvement continues during the event, particularly with the children's festival (including Let's Talk Science, Philosophy for Children, etc.).
- There are 15 events scheduled for this year's FOI. It will be multidisciplinary and multicultural. Some highlights of this year's festivities include performances by an Ethiopian Jazz Orchestra, talk by Jian Ghomeshi (from CBC Radio's "Q", new book *1982*), etc.
- For more information students can visit their website: <http://festivalofideas.ca>. There are student ticket prices, and attendance is encouraged.

Scott Travis (Neuroscience) asked: How will events be advertised?

Miki Andrejevic (FOI) responded: On our website, brochure distribution, electronic mailouts, programs, and ads in *Vue Weekly*, on the UofA website, and elsewhere.

Ashlyn Bernier (President) responded: We will also be advertising FOI events in the GSA newsletter.

Vijay Kandalam (Guest): How did you come to the 15 events and are you satisfied with what you have?

Miki Andrejevic (FOI): First of all we have an umbrella theme - shifting social plates - then we invite people to address the theme. We ended up with 15 events. I should note that events will take place in Edmonton, Camrose, and Calgary. This is an Alberta-wide festival.

There were no further questions.

Council offered Miki Andrejevic (FOI) their thanks for his presentation.

## 6. Councillor Announcements

There was no material before members.

- Nathan Andrews (VPA) announced that it was the birthday of VPSS Naseeb Adnan. Acknowledged by Naseeb Adnan (VPSS) with thanks.
- Lacey Fleming (Anthropology) announced that Dyan Semple (GSA staff) passed her MA defense with no revisions. Acknowledged by Dyan Semple (GSA staff) with thanks.

## Reports

### 7. President

#### i. President's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 07 September 2012.

In addition, Ashlyn Bernier (President) noted the following:

- Strategic Planning for this year is completed; the Strategic Work Plan will be brought to Council in October.
- GSAB will be undertaking team building activities this week.
- It is time to start thinking about running for elected office. The early call will go out next month. Noted that we are unique as a GSA in Canada in that we provide four months of training sessions for anyone interested in running or anyone interested in how the GSA runs.
- Provided suggestions for getting involved outside of your field/lab etc.: ABCampus/PDF event, StartUp Demo Camp, ABCampus/Tech Comm launch.

#### ii. GSA Board

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 07 September 2012.

The report stands as submitted.

##### a. Budget and Finance Committee

It was noted on the Agenda that joint Budget and Finance Committee/GSA Board meetings were held. Councillors are directed to the GSA Board report that stands as submitted.

##### b. Governance Committee

It was noted on the Agenda that there was no report as there were no meetings this reporting period.

**c. Nominating Committee**

Councillors had before them a written report distributed on 07 September 2012. Ashlyn Bernier (President) asked Councillors to submit a short biography to the Nominating Committee if they are interested in participating on committees. It was further noted that the GSA has graduate students currently serving on over 165 committees.

**8. Vice-President Academic**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 07 September 2012. The report stands as submitted.

**9. Vice-President Student Services**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 07 September 2012.

**Naseeb Adnan (VPSS) MOVED to move into Closed Session. Lacey Fleming (Anthropology) SECONDED. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Naseeb Adnan (VPSS) MOVED to leave Closed Session and to return to Open Session. Ashlyn Bernier (President) SECONDED. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

In open session, Naseeb Adnan (VPSS) brought to Council's attention that all graduate students need to pick up the new card for the Health & Dental plan because the change in provider means that a new group number is required to process claims.

Michael Akinwumi (Mathematical & Statistical Sciences) asked: Where can graduate students pick up the new card?

Naseeb Adnan (VPSS): Pamphlets with the card are available at the GSA office, at the H&D plan office, and online. We will announce this in the GSA newsletter.

Cathleen Edwards (Physical Education & Recreation) asked: Will the change in provider impact how we make claims?

Naseeb Adnan (VPSS) responded that the process remains the same.

Yasmeen Krameddine (Psychiatry) asked: When does this change begin?

Naseeb Adnan (VPSS) responded September 1st.

Qiang Li (CAL) asked: Can you include more details in the newsletter regarding coverage and not just send a link to the Health and Dental Plan website?

Naseeb Adnan (VPSS) responded: According to the agreement we have with Studentcare, we are not supposed to provide any detailed answers to questions about the plan, about coverage, because we are not trained. We can consider sending out a special bulletin with additional information considering coverage. Studentcare provides the pamphlet but we can advise them in regards to recommended changes (i.e., more details above the specifics of coverage).

Arefeh Boroomand (Electrical and Computer Engineering) commented: I found I could not find precise information on what is covered and I had problems when I went to the dentist (e.g., found out what the coverage was after the dental work had been done).

Fred Wu (Speaker) responded: Questions of this sort we would need to redirect to Studentcare.

Brent Epperson (VPL) further responded: We can make suggestions to Studentcare regarding communications concerning coverage.

Tess Hawkins (Art and Design) commented: I can provide help to Councillors individually with finding information on the Health and Dental plan website but I suggest we conclude discussion at this time.

There was no further discussion, nor any more questions.

**ii. Student Affairs Advisory Committee (joint chair: Vice President Student Life)**

No report as no meetings were required during this reporting period.

**10. Vice-President Student Life**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 07 September 2012. In addition, Huimin Zhong (VPSL) noted the following:

- The final review report for the Community Standards Review Committee is finished and has been submitted to the Campus Law Review Committee for review.
- She also wanted to alert councillors to changes in Break-in-Contract policy to students in Lister Hall, International House, and Residence Saint-Jean. Students need to read these policies closely. If they have any questions they can come to the GSA.
- The Residence Budget Advisory Committee (RBAC) is planning rents for 2013-2014. Councillors with thoughts/concerns about rent are encouraged to contact Huimin directly.

Ravi Singh (Business MBA) asked: do we have a committee to deal with housing?

Huimin Zhong (VPSL) responded: Yes, RBAC.

**ii. Awards Selection Committee**

It was noted on the Agenda that policies are currently under review.

## 11. Vice-President Labour

### i. Vice-President Labour's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 07 September 2012. The report stands as submitted. In addition, Brent Epperson (VPL) provided committee highlights for August - September including:

- GSA Labour Relations Committee (LRC): emphasized the importance of the September meeting, where will be making recommendations for what to take to negotiations, building upon past negotiations, taking on the new role for LRC as a think tank in the bargaining process. He noted that LRC is open to suggestions via email from Councillors, and that the labour liaison training was put on hold during an examination of a merger with the departmental liaison program.
- Ongoing meetings with the Dean of FGSR.
- GSA/FGSR Decanal Team meetings included discussion on Settlement Bursaries for International Students, and inconsistencies in letters to grad students regarding admissions and funding (will take examples of bad letters from Councillors to meetings, submit to any of VPs).
- Protective Services: encourages Councillors to participate in survey (will send link to survey in upcoming newsletter), not just a survey about Safewalk but how safe you feel on campus.

### ii. Negotiating Committee

It was noted on the Agenda that that the Negotiating Committee will be struck shortly.

### iii. Labour Relations Committee

Councillors were directed to review Item 11.i VP Labour's report.

## 12. Senator

### i. Senator's Report

No report required this period.

## 12. Speaker

### i. Speaker's Report

No report required this period. Fred Wu (Speaker) noted that an update to the numbering system for the agenda and associated meeting materials is coming which will help with clarity.

## 13. Chief Returning Officer

### i. Chief Returning Officer's Report

No report required this period.

### ii. Elections and Referenda Committee

It was noted on the Agenda that they will be meeting shortly to review policy.

## 14. GSA Management

### i. Executive Director's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 07 September 2012.

In addition, Ellen Schoeck (Executive Director):

- Provided a self-introduction for new Councillors, emphasized that she is contractually and personally committed to the GSA, to ensure that HR is in place, that Council is functioning, that best budget practices and principles are followed, that the GSA is robust.
- Encourages questions, encourages Councillors to read the detailed management reports she submits to each Council meeting.
- Explained training process of current Elected Officials, something indicated by previous Councils that was once lacking.
- Reiterated that early call for expressions of interest will go out shortly, ensures that training (which is ongoing during term) is provided.
- Commented on role of strong professional staff allowing for strong communications of key services & support including, recently, orientation for 300 students, 36 departmental orientations, high front desk traffic during first weeks.

## Action Items, Elections, Appointments, Special Business

### 16. Action Items

There were no action items.

### 17. Elections

There were no elections.

### 18. Discussion Items

#### i. CLE Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies

Nathan Andrews (VPA) spoke to this item submitted for discussion on 07 September 2012.

- Provided some background on the CLE Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies (what was its purpose, how it was formed to measure of learned experience of graduate students). Previously reported on the work of this committee in the last two Councils.
- Wants to take feedback from Council regarding the list of attributes to the next meeting of this committee.
- Provided the context for this document: if you are finishing school here with "x" number of these attributes then will you be satisfied.
- Noted that the list was meant to be for both undergraduate and graduate students.

Fred Wu (Speaker) noted that the discussion will be moderated following Robert's Rules.

Ashlyn Bernier (President) asked: What is the purpose of this document, and what is this final list going to be used for especially from the perspective of students?

Nathan Andrews (VPA) responded: The Provost's office wanted to do this as part of the academic plan. The end result is still not determined. We know that if we come up with this list, we could potentially have used in a number of ways. For example, as an extra transcript that could be taken to employers.

Cathleen Edwards (Physical Education and Recreation) asked: For some of these items there are quite a few ways to interpret what they mean. Will the final document describe the characteristics that would be associated with the term (e.g. for something like ingenuity)?

Nathan Andrews (VPA) responded: Good point. We realized that these terms would mean different things to different departments and faculties. We appreciate the feedback.

Evan Berry (Biochemistry) asked: How would I learn another language in biochemistry (indicating term 5.c. "multilingualism")?

Nathan Andrews (VPA) responded: It is a generalized attribute, but not every individual would have/acquire all of these. But we are also trying to encourage that all are met; this could support professional development, and other, initiatives within departments to see students acquire these traits.

Hamid Ramezani (Chemistry) asked: It is a nice list but the problem is in how it is valued: how would you quantify if a person has this quality? How would you score people in these areas?

Nathan Andrews (VPA) responded: We haven't reached the point where we are discussing implementation; we are still just looking at making a list. Potentially, using a Brock U example, where if you volunteer for something you would receive a certificate/email outlining what you had done. By what you did, they could determine if you acquired a skill, an attribute. I do not want to pre-empt what the committee will do, but we will be looking at implementation, at how to capture what an individual possesses. We are just not at that point yet.

Hamid Ramezani (Chemistry) supplementary: In that case we are basically pushing people to collect certificates for doing things; this doesn't necessarily mean they are engaged.

Nathan Andrews (VPA): Again that was just an example. I will bring back to Council any additional information about implementation once the committee decides.

Ravi Singh (Business MBA) commented: I wouldn't mind communicating these attributes to any students, but when it comes to a transcript it will be an evaluation of that student. Most of these traits would be applicable to most students. How are you going to change what appears on your transcript?

Nathan Andrews (VPA) responded: Note that the transcript idea is my idea; if it ends up there then that would be something you would gain. I don't think employers would use it for evaluation but rather it would serve as some indication of skills you've acquired at the UofA. I don't know how one would assess characteristics beyond the UofA experience.

Tess Hawkins (Art and Design) asked for clarification on the term 4.b. "synthesis".

Nathan Andrews (VPA): That is a word that not everyone on the committee agreed on. It relates to creativity as by being creative you are also gathering information and analysing it.

“Analysis” not work in that context. “Synthesis” captured what we were trying to get at: being creative with different sources.

Tess Hawkins supplementary: I would recommend you do change “synthesis” to “creativity” because you have “analysis” as a term elsewhere. Also I was just wondering if these are skills acquired in the classroom or general knowledge pulled out from being a student in general?

Nathan Andrews (VPA) responded: I only cited the general document idea as an example, but, again, it’s not supposed to be definite. It would vary between individuals. It is not definite; just at a high level state of finding the terms to use.

Avanthi De Silva (Public Health): I would like to make a comment to start; I think it is a great idea to have attributes to strive for, but think that the transcript might not be feasible. My question is: would there be a commitment by faculties/departments to incorporate these into their syllabi, their course descriptions. Would they make a commitment to certain competencies for each class. The School of Public Health, for example, had to do this as part of an accreditation process.

Nathan Andrews (VPA) responded: Some faculties and departments already this. We did learn from the engineering example. Augustana also has something like this in place. We are trying to make an appeal to the broader community by the time of the end draft.

Arefeh Boroomand (Electrical and Computer Engineering) asked: Again who would be involved in scoring the graduate students on this? Would it be their supervisor?

Ashlyn Bernier (President) commented: It doesn’t have to be an official evaluation tool. This is what we want our students to look like. We can then look at what can we put in place to ensure our students walk away from the UofA with these skills. Students can use it as a tool to develop themselves professionally, and it is an amazing tool to model a resume off of. It does not need to be an official document to be valuable.

Arefeh Boroomand (ECE) supplementary: If it is official and it can be recognized as part of our degree then we can use it in job searches. I have some concerns that some of the terms relate to personality so again wonder how they would be evaluated.

Nathan Andrews (VPA) responded: Again, we still don’t know how will be implemented so don't jump ahead and think about how personal attributes would be assessed or who would assess them.

Andrei Tabirca (Business MBA) asked: What has been the real world application of this document so far?

Nathan Andrews (VPA) responded: I had friends who used their document from Brock to go out in the non-academic world to find jobs; the document showed the specific ways graduate students met/achieved these attributes.

Vijay Kandalam (Guest) commented: I don’t like 2.e. as there might be better term like accommodating but feel the rest are not bad.

Hamman Samuel (Computing Science) asked: I see a lot of cognitive and interpersonal attributes but what about physical attributes

Nathan Andrews (VPA) responded: That thought never crossed our minds. I will definitely take your comment back to the committee.

Zhen Li (CAL) commented: We already have an important evaluation from our supervisor in the form of reference letters. Having some sort of program/form to keep track of these activities, how we acquired these traits, could be very valuable to a supervisor to assist with crafting these letters.

Hamid Ramezani (Chemistry) commented: I liked Ashlyn's comments. I think that it is more reasonable to think of it as a road map for people versus an assessment tool. It is good to direct people and the University to what we think a graduate student should be after their program.

Ellen Schoeck (ED) commented: As someone who has been a referee, I think that you need to think beyond your supervisor for references. Many of the questions I have been asked deal with the so-called soft skills that this list tries to capture. There is a real life application to this list. You need to consider having one of your referees as a non-academic; it automatically shows that you have done these things (e.g., ability to branch out). This is extremely valuable for job searches.

Nathan Andrews (VPA) commented: Agreed. This is not just for studying and learning but the whole embodiment of experience at UofA.

There were no further questions or comments.

## **Question Period**

### **19. Written Questions**

There were no written questions.

Fred Wu (Speaker) noted that if Councillors want to ask question anonymously or if they want to have a question response prepared in advance and in detail, they should submit written questions.

### **20. Oral Questions**

No additional questions were asked.

## **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:49 pm.

**GSA President  
Report to Council**

To: Council Colleagues  
From: Ashlyn Bernier  
Date: October 9, 2012

Dear Colleagues,

I hope September has been as productive and busy for you as it has for us all at the GSA! We are still learning a lot, and going into U-Pass negotiations, Collective Bargaining, tuition discussions, etc. has us going full tilt. Luckily, the amazing staff and management support us in all we do, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them.

Some highlights from the past month:

**Alberta Graduate Council (AGC) Retreat**

Brent Epperson (VPL) and I took a trip down to Calgary Sept 14-15 for the annual AGC retreat. We spent the day with fellow members from U of C, U of L, and Athabasca working on portfolio review and assignment, mission and vision articulation, bylaw review, policy development, and website overview. Brent has been assigned the Policy Development portfolio while I have been assigned Internal Communications. It was an extremely productive weekend and I can say with confidence that this AGC Executive will get a lot done this year. As our lobby documents are finalized, I will provide an update to Council on how we will go about approaching various members of provincial government.

**Celebrate! Teaching and Learning Ceremony**

I had the honor to attend this ceremony and say a few words to the many graduate students who received awards. Congratulations to all recipients (especially Mr. Nathan Andrews, your VPA, who was honored for receiving a Trudeau Foundation Award).

**Academic Freedom Panel**

Unfortunately, Mr. Nathan Andrews became ill and was not able to sit on this panel as planned. Fortunately for me, I was able to take his place and speak on this topic alongside our President, Dr. Samarasekara. It was an engaging and timely conversation, and the panel was attended by many members of the Board of Governors and University Administration. Academic Freedom is a topic that is of extreme import not only to professors, but students as well. I encourage you all to look into this concept and think about how it applies to you – please feel free to come speak to me if you would like some guidance on where information can be found.

**Tuition debate**

Over the next several months, preparation for the tuition debate will be a major focus of mine and the GSA team. In addition to the formal consultative process and presentations, I plan to engage members of University Administration and Board of Governors in conversation to inform them of the issues and concerns surrounding graduate student tuition. I would love to hear your thoughts on this matter – please feel free to speak to me, or email, and share your thoughts and experiences.

Until next time,  
Ashlyn Bernier

*The following is a list of meetings I attended between September 6 – October 9, 2012:*

September 7	Mediashaker Training
September 10	MBAC/TBAC
September 10	GSA Council
September 11	Meeting with SU VP External
September 11	Health Centre Advisory Group
September 12	GSA Board
September 12	GSA Academic Planning Committee
September 13	Myers-Briggs
September 13	North Power Plant Tour
September 13	TDIMM
September 14	AGC Retreat
September 15	AGC Retreat
September 19	Professional Development Round Table
September 19	GSA Board
September 19	FGSR Council
September 20	Meeting with Dean FGSR
September 20	Meeting with Dean FGSR and Acting Provost
September 24	BoG University Relations
September 24	BoG Learning and Discovery
September 24	Chancellor's Reception for International Scholarship Recipients
September 25	Academic Policy and Process and Review Task Force
September 25	Umbrella Committee
September 26	GSA Board
September 26	Meeting with Student
September 27	MNIF Annual Report Technical Briefing
September 27	Celebrate Teaching, Learning, and Research
September 28	Academic Freedom Panel
October 1	General Faculties Council
October 2	Meeting with SU
October 2	Meeting with SU VP Academic
October 2	BoG Finance and Property Committee
October 3	MBAC/TBAC
October 3	GSA Board
October 3	Joint GSA Labour Relations Committee/Negotiating Committee
October 4	Meeting with Dean FGSR
October 4	Lunch and Learn
October 4	Provost's Fellow on Graduate Supervision
October 5	Meeting with Dr. Everall
October 5	Meeting with Acting Provost
October 5	Alberta Graduate Council
October 9	Meeting with AVP Academic

**GSA Board  
Report to Council**

To: Council Colleagues

From: Ellen Schoeck, Executive Director and Coordinator of the GSA Board (on vacation September 21 – October 10); Heather Hogg, Director of Operations; and Courtney Thomas, Associate Director.

Date: October 9, 2012

The Board reports regularly to 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 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 5, 2012 JOINT GSA Board/Budget and Finance Committee Meeting**

Main Agenda Items: Review of and discussion about Audited Financial Statements (GSA Auditor Tom Gee was a guest), discussion of GSA 2012-2013 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report, Human Resources, CTL Interim Director Announcement, and use of the GSA logo.

**MOVED** by AB that GSA BFC receive the Audited Financial Statements for 2011-2012 for information. **SECONDED** by BE. **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**MOVED** by AB that GSA Board approve the draft Audited Financial Statements and, once received from the Auditor, forward the final Audited Financial Statements to Council for information. **SECONDED** by NA. **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**MOVED** by AB that GSA Board and BFC receive the first GSA 2012-2013 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report to be received for information. **SECONDED** by BE. **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Board and BFC members were in **agreement** that the first GSA 2012-2013 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report will be available on the GSA website.

Board and BFC members were in **agreement** that the GSAB and BFC will recommend to Council the second GSA 2012-2013 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report to be received for information in November.

Board and BFC Members **AGREED** to move into CLOSED SESSION.

Members discussed human resources issues.

Board and BFC Members **AGREED** to move out of CLOSED SESSION.

Board and BFC Members asked for a review of benefit plans.

Board and BFC Members **AGREED** to move into CLOSED SESSION.

Members discussed the CTL Interim Director Announcement.

Board and BFC Members **AGREED** to move out of CLOSED SESSION.

**MOVED** by AB that the GSA logo be used in the Joint SU GSA letter on Teaching Professional Development. **SECONDED** by BE. **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **September 12, 2012 GSA Board Meeting**

Main Agenda Items: 2012-2013 GSA Strategic Work Plan, Committee Appointment, Mental Health, Orientation 2012, use of the GSA logo, Residence Budget Advisory Committee Lease and other issues, U-Pass negotiations, GSA Bargaining and composition of the Negotiating Committee.

Board Members **AGREED** to move into CLOSED SESSION.  
 Board Members discussed committee appointments.  
 Board Members **AGREED** to move out of CLOSED SESSION.

The following actions and motions resulted from localized counselling discussion:  
 AB **MOVED** that the GSA Board **supports** having a room in Triffo Hall be used by a counsellor as part of the Localized Counselling Initiative. NA seconded. **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Board Members **AGREED** to review the Strategic Work Plan and be prepared to discuss at next meeting.

AB **MOVED** that the GSA Logo could be used on the PC Caucus materials next week. NA Seconded.  
 Board Members discussed the caucus presentations and scheduling. **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

BE **MOVED** that the five elected officials, having consulted with all members of the Board, will serve as the GSA Negotiating Committee. AB seconded. **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

AB **MOVED** to table the item and members unanimously agreed to table the item in KB's absence.  
 AB **MOVED** to lift the item from the table. BE Seconded. **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Board Members **AGREED** to move into **closed session.**  
 Board Members discussed negotiations.  
 Board Members **AGREED** to move out of **closed session.**  
 Board Members **AGREED** to follow BE's plan with respect to input on negotiations.

Board Members **AGREED** to move into **closed session.**  
 Board Members discussed UPass.  
 Board Members **AGREED** to move out of **closed session.**

### **September 19, 2012 GSA Board Meeting**

Main Agenda Items: 2012-2013 Strategic Work Plan, and the proactive search for talent (Elected Officials 2013-2014).

Board Members **AGREED** to move into CLOSED SESSION.  
 Board Members discussed a student issue.  
 Board Members **AGREED** to move out of CLOSED SESSION.

Board Members **AGREED** that a statement regarding career opportunities and professional development should be added to the first point of the Mission Statement and to point 6 on page 7

and that plans to initiate conversations with CAPS and the Writing Resource Centre regarding subsidies should be added to the SWP as a strategic task.

### **September 26, 2012 GSA Board Meeting**

Main Agenda Items: Academic Freedom Panel, Reports to Council, Open Access Week, GSA Bargaining, and U-Pass negotiations.

Board Members **AGREED** to move into **CLOSED SESSION**.

Board Members discussed reports to Council.

Board Members **AGREED** to move out of **CLOSED SESSION**.

Board Members **AGREED** to move into **CLOSED SESSION**.

Board Members discussed graduate studies.

Board Members **AGREED** to move out of **CLOSED SESSION**.

Board Members **AGREED** to move into **CLOSED SESSION**.

Board Members discussed U-Pass.

Board Members **AGREED** to move out of **CLOSED SESSION**.

### **October 3, 2012 GSA Board Meeting**

Main Agenda Items: Use of GSA logo on PAW Project Signs, and Joint NC/LRC meeting.

NA **MOVED** that: The GSA Board **APPROVES** use of the GSA logo on PAW Project signs with the understanding that the logo will be used solely for project signs and that the user acknowledge the proprietary rights and interests of the GSA and that no right, title or interest in the GSA's logo is transferred to the user except the non-exclusive royalty free license to reproduce the GSA's logo solely for the purpose of promoting the proposed program. The user will at all times reproduce the GSA's logo in such a manner as to protect and preserve all the rights of the GSA. Seconded by HZ. **CARRIED**.

**GSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE (NoC)  
REPORT TO COUNCIL for October 15, 2012 Council Meeting**

To: Council Colleagues  
From: Lacey Fleming, Vice-Chair of the NoC  
Date: October 9, 2012

Dear Council Members,

The report from the GSA Nominating Committee is a summary of discussion/decisions the NoC has made since its last report together with a list of all vacancies filled.

The By-law governing the NoC is in Part VII, #11. Policy governing NoC begins on page 26 of the GSA Policy Manual.

As provided for in its terms of reference, the GSA Nominating Committee (NoC) has been conducting business via e-mail and also held an in-person meeting on June 13, 2012. We also had a transition meeting on September 18, 2012 with Vijay Kandalam, former Vice-Chair of the GSA Nominating Committee.

## **GSA COMMITTEES**

**1) GSA Awards Selection Committee SEE ATTACHED SLATE (ELECTIONS ITEM)**

A slate of nominees for GSA Awards Selection Committee (ASC) has been prepared as a separate elections item for GSA Council (**distributed separately in this mailing of Council**). There are two continuing members and six nominees for the ASC. As there is no set composition for this committee yet, at the request of the VP Student Life, this committee will be comprised of eight to ten members of the GSA. **Due to the work of this committee, it is ideal to have an increased number of members, since this will help to divide up the large workload this committee can have during an adjudication. The ASC is responsible for adjudicating the Alberta Graduate Citizenship Awards; the deadline for applications is October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012, and the final results will be due by November 1, 2012.** According to GSA Policy Part IV 3.1.4: "The Nominating Committee will follow its legislated process in forwarding one or more nominations to Council except that the Nominating Committee may not waive advertising. Note that the legislated Nominating Committee process allows for Councillors to make additional nominations." **(See Elections Items)**

**2) GSA Labour Relations Committee SEE ATTACHED SLATE (ELECTIONS ITEM)**

The GSA VP Labour requested that an additional member be elected to serve on the GSA LRC. There is no set composition of the LRC in the GSA Bylaws. At the request of the VP Labour, this committee will be comprised of eight to ten members of the GSA with at least one being a member of Council. According to GSA Policy Part IV 3.1.4: "The Nominating Committee will follow its legislated process in forwarding one or more

nominations to Council except that the Nominating Committee may not waive advertising. Note that the legislated Nominating Committee process allows for Councillors to make additional nominations.” **(See Elections Item)**

## **DELEGATES SELECTED BY THE GSA PRESIDENT**

For external committees that call for the GSA President, a Vice-President or Delegate in their Terms of Reference, the GSA President, in consultation with the GSA Nominating Committee, is able to select delegates to serve on these committees. Below is a summary of these decisions since the July Council meeting.

### **1) Selection Advisory Committee for Vice-Provost and University Registrar**

The VP Labour had been appointed to serve on this committee but had to submit his resignation. **Leigh Spanner (PhD Political Science) was appointed to serve on this senior committee.**

### **2) GFC Academic Standards Committee and Subcommittee on Standards (GFC ASC SOS)**

**Colin More (PhD Physics)**, Physics Departmental Councillor, was appointed to serve as the GSA VP Student Life’s delegate on GFC ASC and GFC ASC SOS.

### **3) TLAT Council: University Writing Committee**

**Aly Koskela (MA English)**, FGSR Alternate, was appointed to serve as the GSA VP Academic’s delegate on this committee.

### **4) Student Connect Project Student Advisory Committee**

**Hillary Sparkes (PhD Anthropology)**, GSA Councillor at-Large and former GSA VP Student Life, was appointed to serve on this committee on behalf of the GSA.

## **BODIES EXTERNAL TO THE GSA**

As noted above, Council has delegated to the NoC the responsibility of filling positions on all committees external to the GSA. Normally, all vacancies are advertised. According to the Policy Manual, “advertising may be waived in instances where, in the NoC’s view, it is urgent to fill a vacancy.”

### **1) General Faculties Council (GFC):**

In August 2012 a graduate student representative on GFC went on medical leave. **The GSA NoC approved Alina Shchepetkina (PhD Earth and Atmospheric Sciences), to fill this temporary vacancy.**

### **2) General Faculties Council Academic Planning Committee (APC):**

On May 15, 2012 the recently appointed GFC APC graduate student representative informed the NoC they are no longer able to serve in this position after getting a full

time job. The NoC selected **Anna Nilson (PhD Food Science)**, one of the graduate students at-large on GFC, as the new representative for GFC APC. She attended a GSA Governance 101 Session, and met with the VPA Nathan Andrews, who served last year as the graduate student-at-large on GFC APC. **She was officially elected to serve on GFC APC by the GFC Nominating Committee on September 17<sup>th</sup> 2012.**

### **3) FGSR Council:**

Currently the minimum period of appointment of members of this committee is two years. **Seven (7)** current FGSR Councillors expressed interest in continuing on this Council. The NoC advertised for the remaining positions on May 31, 2012. The NoC's original deadline for applications was June 15, 2012 at 12 noon. Four (4) applications were received at this time. Because not enough applications were received after this first call for representatives the NoC advertised a second time in August, giving a deadline of August 31, 2012.

In August 2012 GSA Board sent FGSR a letter requesting compositions changes to the FGSR Council terms of reference that deal with graduate student representation. These changes included: asking for a composition of "twenty graduate students and five alternates from as broad a range of graduate programs as possible, with not more than two graduate students from a given graduate program", and modifying the minimum period of appointment of graduate student members to be one year. This will encourage and facilitate the participation of graduate students on FGSR Council who are enrolled in course-based graduate programs lasting only one year. These changes were approved at the September 19, 2012 FGSR Council meeting.

However, just prior to the approval of the changes, the NoC (indeed, for the first time) received a large number of applicants. We received 38 interested graduate student applications in total. The quality and diversity of the applications received was very strong and for the first time the GSA Nominating Committee was able to fill BOTH FGSR Councillor positions and FGSR Council Alternate positions.

The request to approve changes in composition was in response to not having enough students to fill the 20 Councillor and 20 Alternate positions in the past, and anticipating the same situation for 2012-2013. However, as these composition changes had not yet been approved at the time the NoC was replenishing the Council, and due to the unprecedented number of strong applications received by the NoC, the GSA NoC used the then current composition to fill vacancies on the Council (20 Councillors and 20 Alternates). The composition changes discussed above have been approved by FGSR Council and will be used when repopulating FGSR Council for 2013-2014.

### **The NoC's rationale for the selection of applicants as regular or alternate representatives was as follows:**

1. It is beneficial to have continuing members on FGSR Council in order to ensure institutional memory.

2. It is important to have a close balance of PhD and Masters student voices on FGSR Council since PhD and Masters students' graduate studies experiences can be very different.

3. The Councillors elected reflects as broad a range of departments as possible. This requirement is outlined in the current FGSR Composition and is part of the GSA NoC's mandate.

#### **Nominees elected to serve as FGSR COUNCILLORS**

1. Ahmed Abdelmoneim (Pharmaceutical Science, PhD)
2. Alex Schlacht (Cell Biology, PhD)
3. Farnaz Mani (Chemical and Materials Engineering, PhD)
4. Cesar Poveda (Mechanical Engineering, PhD)
5. John Meston (Educational Policy Studies, PhD)
6. Mihao Zeng (English and Film Studies, PhD)
7. Jessica Stolar (Renewable Resources, PhD)
8. Hajar Amidian (Political Science, PhD)
9. Cristian L. Cortes, (MSc, Electrical and Computer Engineering)
10. Sandra Gawad Gad (Physiology, MSc)
11. Muhammad Furgan Gagan (Internetworking, MINT)
12. Zhang Lei (Psychology, PhD)
13. Joshua Lee (Medical Genetics, MSc)
14. Hua (Olivia) Lian (Business, PhD)
15. Trish (Patricia) Paton (Communications and Technology, MACT)
16. Patrick Alexander Reid (Physical Education and Recreation, PhD)
17. Alina Shchepetkina (Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, PhD)
18. Joel Strautman (Neuroscience, MSc)
19. Nadia Syskova (Modern Language and Cultural Studies, MA)
20. Scott Varga (Human Ecology, MA)

#### **Nominees elected to serve as FGSR ALTERNATES**

1. Ali Utku Akkoc (Business, PhD)
2. Rasoul Aliakbari (Comparative Literature, PhD)
3. Neda Asadi (Educational Policy Studies, PhD)
4. Eyo Aloysius Ekanem (Earth and Atmospheric Science, MSc)
5. Nabi Goudarzi (Civil and Environmental Engineering, PhD)
6. Aly Koskela (English, MA)
7. Fuyong Li (AFNS, PhD)
8. Qiang (Richard) Li (Chemical and Materials Engineering, PhD)
9. Alam Fernanda Sanchez Maldonado (AFNS, PhD)
10. Naureen Mumtaz (Secondary Education, PhD)
11. Reza Navib-Kashani (Civil and Environmental Engineering, MSc)
12. Nikki Nosworthy (Educational Psychology, PhD)
13. Isaac Odoom (Political Science, PhD)
14. Keyur Pandya (Chemistry, PhD)
15. Vivek Poddar (Mechanical Engineering, MSc)
16. Leigh Spanner (Political Science)
17. Ronald Shourav Reberio (Electrical and Computer Engineering, PhD)

18. Hamman Samuel (Computing Science, PhD)  
 19. Ruoqing Zhou (Psychology, PhD)

**a. FGSR Policy Review Committee (2 positions for FGSR Council members)**

John Meston will be continuing his term. NoC elected him to serve on this committee last year and according to the terms of reference “normally the elected members will serve for two years.” The GSA President has recommended that a GSA VP fill the second position on this committee.

**b. FGSR Academic Appeals Committee (4 positions for FGSR Council members)**

FGSR asked that the GSA select 4 representatives from the FGSR Councillors to serve on this committee. According to the terms of reference, the NoC will be selecting representatives to ensure **wide representation**. Three calls were sent out to Councillors. The FGSR Councillors elected to serve on this committee were: **Joshua Lee (MSc Medical Genetics), Hajar Amidian (PhD Political Science), Farnaz Mani (PhD Chemical and Materials Engineering), and Scott Varga (MA Human Ecology).**

**4) Faculty of Science Council**

According to GFC Policy 55.5.16 the Faculty of Science has “two graduate students from Departments in the Faculty of Science, selected through the Graduate Students’ Association.” The GSA Nominating Committee asked the previous members if they were able to serve another term. One is able to sit on this Council again, and the GSA NoC advertised for the remaining vacancy. The deadline for applications was October 3, 2012 at noon. The NoC received three applications. They will be reviewing applications and elected a representative to serve on this committee.

**5) President’s Standing Committee on Convocation**

The GSA NoC advertised for the one vacancy on this committee. The deadline for applications was October 3, 2012. The NoC received seven applications. They will be reviewing applications and electing a representative to serve on this committee.

**6) Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund (TLEF) Selection Committee Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)**

On September 5<sup>th</sup> the GSA NoC advertised for the position for one graduate student on the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund (TLEF) Selection Committee. “The purpose of the [\$800,000] Fund is to support those engaged in teaching at the University to improve their teaching skills, enhance their understanding of teaching and learning processes and provide teaching environments to optimize student learning” (Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund Handbook August 2011). The deadline for applications was September 19, 2012. The NoC received 11 applications in total and after reviewing them, **elected Cathleen (Katie) Edwards (PhD Adapted Physical Activity)** to serve on this committee.

**7) Facilities and Operations' University of Alberta Transportation Demand Management Study Resource Committee**

According to its terms of reference, this committee requires "one representative from the GSA to be appointed (or chosen) by the GSA" (Committee Terms of Reference). On August 28 an advertisement was sent out to the GSA Newsletter and the deadline given as September 4, 2012 at noon. The GSA NoC received five applications. **The GSA NoC Elected Brent Epperson, GSA VP Labour, to serve on this committee.**

**8) Alcohol Policy Review Committee**

The GSA NoC advertised for one vacancy on this committee. The deadline for applications was September 17, 2012. Three applications were received. **Katie Satchwell (MSc Agriculture, Food, and Nutritional Science) was elected to serve on this committee as the GSA VP Student Services' delegate.**

**9) Protective Services Commission**

The GSA NoC advertised for one vacancy on this committee. The deadline for applications was September 19, 2012. One application was received. **Christopher Johnson (PhD Philosophy) was elected to serve on this committee.**

**10) Animal Care and Use Committee: Health Sciences, Overseen by the University Animal Policy and Welfare Committee and Responsible to the Vice-President (Research):**

*Representatives for this committee must be a current animal user on an approved protocol associated with the respective ACUC (ACUC: Health Sciences). There are still two graduate student vacancies on this committee.*

The GSA NoC, with Heather and Ellen's assistance, has asked the Research Ethics office for professors in animal research in the Health Sciences who might know of suitable representatives for this committee that the NoC can contact.

**11) Animal Care and Use Committee: Biosciences, Overseen by the University Animal Policy and Welfare Committee and Responsible to the Vice-President (Research):**

There are two vacancies on this committee for graduate students who are current animal users on an approved protocol associated with the respective ACUC (ACUC: Biosciences). Due to urgency, the NoC waived advertising. **Maureen Murray (PhD Ecology) has been elected to serve on this committee.** The NoC is approaching suitable representatives from the Bank of Names to fill the second vacancy on this committee.

**12) First Alberta Campus Radio Association (CJSR) Board**

The GSA NoC advertised for one vacancy on this committee. The deadline for applications was September 24, 2012. One application was received. **Keren Tang (MPH Health Promotion) was elected to serve on this Board.**

**GSA Vice-President Academic  
Report to Council**

To: Council Colleagues  
From: Nathan Andrews  
Date: October 9, 2012

Dear Councillors,

October is a favourite month for most people with colourful fall leaves, Thanksgiving and even Halloween to come at the end. Well, my first trip to Banff last weekend was simply breathtaking although I'm currently still feeling pain in my muscles after undertaking competitive hiking on Sulphur Mountain. I encourage Councillors to make the best out of October.

Since my September Council report, I've attended several meetings but I'll highlight a few items that are worth noting. Before I get into the detail, I would like Councillors to note that the motion for the proposed establishment of a Department of Women's and Gender Studies passed at the October 1 General Faculties Council (GFC) meeting. It's now going to the Board of Governors for final approval.

**CTL Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies (SAC)**

SAC met to discuss the list that was presented to and discussed at the September Council (by the way, thanks for the great discussion we had on this item last time!). At the subcommittee meeting, we wanted to consolidate the list with feedback from several, different constituents across campus. The two-hour discussion did not result in consensus so we'll meet again on October 25 to potentially finalise the list. After this is done, I'll bring it back to Council both for information and further comments.

**Universal Student Rating of Instruction (USRI)**

This discussion occurred at the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) meeting. There exists a report that details USRI trends at the University of Alberta with recommendations on how the shortcomings can be handled. One of the issues with the current USRI is the point that the language used on those evaluation forms are quite ambiguous and therefore does not result in good responses. In some cases, responses from students are inappropriate. There was also the concern that the motive for USRI needs to be clarified – whether it's meant for the improvement of teaching and learning or for the annual evaluation of faculty members.

Aside from redesigning the questionnaire, some people are suggesting replacing anonymity with confidentiality in which case the students will have to identify themselves on the evaluation forms (I told them this will not be advisable in graduate programs). My suggestion was that more education is needed, because without education, even if we get the best instrument for rating teaching, students will still not complete these forms and those who do will do it

haphazardly. In short, a working group has been struck to look into this and I've volunteered to be involved so I'll update Council appropriately. In the meantime, you can send me your comments on ways to improve USRIs at the UofA; I am particularly interested in feedback from graduate students who are also sessional instructors.

### **Provost's Fellow Advisory Committee**

The good news is that the Provost Fellow on Graduate/Post-Doc supervision, Dr. Naomi Krogman, has begun work, with the goal of preparing a draft report by May 2013. In terms of problems and best practices these points came up at the meeting:

- The issue of completion times: why restrict the PhD to four years when a supervisor can show that adding two more years will add to the students' publication portfolio, for example.
- Supervisor control: super egos do come up and some supervisors end up controlling the student to the extent that they no longer can take initiative.
- There is often clash of expectations because there's no clear definition of what one is supposed to do.
- Who can supervise? There can be conflict of commitment where there's a thin line between academic endeavours and industrial/non-academic work.
- What about officially evaluating supervisors? This can be tricky because students will be reluctant and those who do it may be punished for views expressed – because it will be obvious in the case the supervisor has few students.

There will be at least four more meetings before Dr. Krogman's final report so please feel free to send me your comments on what you expect to see out of the Fellow's work and I'll let her know. These are the key things that have arisen out of my meetings that I would like Council to know about.

Cheers,  
Nathan Andrews

*The following is a list of meetings I attended between September 6 – October 9, 2012:*

September 6	U of A Video Shoot
September 7	Integrated Planning Budgeting Presentations to the Associations
September 8	U of A Ambassador Dinner
September 10	MBAC/TBAC
September 10	GFC Nominating Committee
September 10	GFC Executive Committee
September 10	GSA Council
September 11	TLAT Council

September 12	Meeting with SU VP Academic
September 12	University Writing Committee
September 12	GSA Board
September 13	Myers-Briggs
September 17	FGSR Caucus
September 18	Meeting with Student
September 18	URI Advisory Committee
September 19	Professional Development Round Table
September 19	GSA Board
September 19	FGSR Council
September 22	Alumni Weekend Dinner and Dance
September 26	GSA Caucus
September 26	GSA Board
September 26	Text Matching Software Working Group
September 27	Celebrate Teaching, Learning, and Research
September 28	University Research Policy Committee
October 1	GFC CLE Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies
October 1	General Faculties Council
October 3	GSA Board
October 3	GFC Committee on the Learning Environment
October 3	Joint GSA Labour Relations Committee/Negotiating Committee
October 4	Lunch and Learn
October 4	Provost's Fellow on Graduate Supervision
October 9	GFC Executive Committee

**Vice-President Student Services  
Report to Council**

To: Council Colleagues  
From: Naseeb Adnan, VP Student Services  
Date: October 9, 2012

Dear Colleagues,

In the last GSA Council I updated you on recent developments in the U-Pass contract negotiation. I received a number of thought-provoking and useful suggestions from you in September Council and also later by email. I took those suggestions to the negotiation table and also discussed them with the other association representatives. Transit authorities reviewed our first proposal and we could not reach an agreement on that for number of reasons. Later, the student association representatives met to discuss further steps and we decided to revise the proposal in order to reach consensus. I proposed a price structure that would include a special kind of inflationary index, which the other associations agreed on. Based on these discussions a second proposal was drafted and sent to transit authorities for their consideration. Unfortunately, this time, as well, we could not reach a consensus on price in the advisory committee meeting. Right now ETS has taken the stand that it cannot go beyond its current fare policy. On the other hand, the student associations are unable to agree with the ETS fare policy because of a lack of confidence on the survey data; therefore the student associations have decided to go to the City of Edmonton Council and present our proposal. The City of Edmonton Council has the authority to overrule any recommendation made by ETS on pricing. I'll update GSA Council on the details of our proposal in closed session.

The **89<sup>th</sup> ave student housing** (east campus village phase-2) site preparation works have been underway for the last couple of weeks. Updates related to traffic and community impacts during site preparation were communicated to respective communities by Facilities and Operations (F & O). However, excavation and foundation work was waiting for the order in council from the Provincial Government. The good news is this order in council was received last week and works related to excavation and foundation will take place over the next 4-6 weeks. The project is targeted to finish by August 2013 so that students can move in starting Fall 2013.

The **Physical Activity and Wellness (PAW)** Centre project was also waiting for order in council to begin its construction work. During this time the tender packages were revised to maintain substantial completion deadline of September 2014. Since order in council is received, the

construction work will start shortly and communications related to traffic impacts and others will be sent out by F&O soon.

Sincerely,  
Naseeb Adnan

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between September 6, 2012 and October 9, 2012:

September 7	Integrating Planning Budgeting Presentations to the Associations
September 7	MMI Orientation
September 10	GSA Council
September 11	Health Centre Advisory Group
September 12	U-Pass Advisory Committee
September 12	GSA Board
September 13	Myers-Briggs
September 13	North Power Plant Tour
September 14	89 <sup>th</sup> Ave Student Housing Advisory
September 19	U-Pass Admin
September 19	GSA Board
September 20	U-Pass Discussion with SU, NAITSA and Grant MacEwan SA
September 26	U-Pass Advisory
September 26	GSA Board
September 26	Meeting with VP Facilities and Operations
September 26	South Campus Open House
September 27	U-Pass Admin
September 27	GFC Facilities Development Committee
October 2	PAW Steering Committee
October 2	Meeting with SU on Tuition
October 3	GSA Board
October 3	Joint GSA Labour Relations Committee/Negotiating Committee
October 4	U-Pass Discussion with SU, NAITSA and Grant MacEwan SA
October 4	Lunch and Learn
October 4	Meeting with Councillor Kerry Diotte
October 9	ECEGSA transition meeting

**GSA Vice-President Student Life  
Report to Council**

To: Council Colleagues  
From: Huimin Zhong  
Date: October 9, 2012

Dear Council Members,

I hope everything goes on well in the beginning of this semester for you. I have experienced a busy month this month with coursework and GSA work going at the same time. There are several items that I would like to bring to your attention.

There has been an independent review of the **Hub Mall** incident. I have participated in the interviews conducted by consulting services and expressed graduate students' concerns and questions regarding this issue. University is now aware that more efficient communication system is required by students, and the university community. A formal review report will be released once they finish all the procedures of this independent review.

The **Alumni Weekend** this year was a great success. Alumni Weekend 2012 brought more than 3,000 University of Alberta alumni together to celebrate the University and each other in various activities. The **Alumni Recognition Awards** has recognized many outstanding accomplishments of University of Alberta alumni by nominating those who have made a difference. The Dinner & Dance night was a great event in bringing the U of A alumni, staff, and students together to get to know each other and share their great experience. I encourage all graduate students to take this great opportunity to get involved in the university community in the future and obtain ideas about your development after graduation.

Lastly, the University would make efforts to create more chances for students' global experience. **UAI (University of Alberta International)** has developed many great opportunities and awards for students' education abroad. By now, the number of application for this award from graduate students is significantly lower than that from undergraduate students. If any graduate students would like to have an international education experience, please take advantage of the great opportunities offered by UAI. We frequently advertise these in the GSA Newsletter.

If you have any question or concern regarding this report or other student life related issues, please always feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,  
Huimin Zhong

*The following is a list of meetings I attended between September 6 – October 9, 2012:*

September 7	Integrated Planning Budgeting Presentations to the Associations
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September 7	Philosophy Orientation
September 10	GSA Council
September 11	Residence Budget Advisory Committee
September 12	GSA Board
September 13	Myers-Briggs
September 18	Meeting with Student
September 19	GSA Board
September 20	HUB Mall Review
September 20	Alumni Awards
September 21	SACIE
September 22	Alumni Weekend Dinner and Dance
September 24	Student Alumni Council
September 27	Celebrate Teaching, Learning, and Research
September 28	Student Group Grant Granting Committee
October 2	Student Engagement Grant Adjudication
October 3	GSA Board
October 3	Joint GSA Labour Relations Committee/Negotiating Committee
October 4	Alumni Council
October 4	Lunch and Learn
October 9	Residence Budget Advisory Committee

**GSA Vice-President Labour  
Report to Council**

To: Council Colleagues  
From: Brent Epperson, VP Labour  
Date: October 9, 2012

Dear Councillors,

I attended several committee meetings in September and October.

**Alberta Graduate Council (AGC) Board Retreat in Calgary, September 14-16**

- GSA VPL was assigned to the AGC policy portfolio, in cooperation with Amanda Nielsen of AUGSA (Athabasca University);
- Policy portfolio includes development of AGC objectives and lobbying issues, editing work of policy researcher (Brennan Clarkson, lawyer), preparing budget submission with Amanda Nielsen, liaising with Amanda on Government Relations tasks.

**BSHEC, September 25**

- Unanimous approval of minutes/agenda;
- Rob Munro-Safety Moment presentation: “Normalization of Deviance”=An incremental erosion of normal procedure that would never be tolerated if proposed holistically, based on rationale that “nothing bad has happened yet;”
- Rob’s presentation applied the normalization of deviance concept to risks to the university such as employees texting while driving university vehicles. Rob concluded that it is important to maintain “a sense of vulnerability;”
- There has been a major investment in emergency phones on campus, increasing from 2 to 19;
- Rob Munro: Health and Safety Indicator Report, time loss due to particular injuries— Increase of slips/falls on campus follows a seasonal trend, while increases in muscle strains are believed to be related to increased physical activity;
- No Break and Enters have occurred in hazardous environments (laboratories), but have instead focused on areas like SUB with accessible cash;
- Concerns have been raised about student traffic through the area of SUB where trucks park. Apparently, there is a steep drop where pedestrians may fall if they are not paying attention. The university is considering either making that area safer or keeping the double doors permanently closed;
- Philip Stack-Updated Emergency Master Plan was last updated in 2011, several sub-plans for issues like data loss and pandemics also exist for cases when it is not necessary to activate the full emergency master plan;
- Emergency Master Plan is always under review to ensure the best risk management;
- Health and Safety Report: assaults and property crime are both down;
- Meeting adjourned.

**LRC September 25**

- Members and observers were asked to sign a confidentiality agreement and agreed;
- Members discussed and unanimously agreed to a list of asks to present to the October 3 joint LRC-NC meeting;
- LRC members were thanks for their service and cooperation;
- Meeting adjourned.

**CLRC September 27**

- Chair Steven Penney's opening remarks spoke to dispute over Lister Residence, in response to question from SU member Saadiq Sumar;
- Chair affirmed that "house rules" had been carved out of the jurisdiction of CLRC since a decision of the Board of Governors on February 11, 2011; house rules are based in memorandums of understanding between the administration and relevant residence associations. Negotiations are in progress between Lister Hall Students Association, the SU, and the administration; thus, "it would be unwise" for this committee to intervene in the matter;
- Deborah Eerkes remarked that "house rules" should not be a topic of discussion since they are based on memorandums of understanding, not CLRC rules;
- SU Saadiq Sumar expressed concern with carving out house rules from jurisdiction of CLRC as a reduction in oversight;
- GSA VPL asked for clarification of B of G decision and date of decision to carve out house rules from CLRC jurisdiction;
- Dima Utgoff spoke about the RCSRC Report and restorative justice, briefly summarizing the written report provided, thanked SU and GSA for participation. There were no questions or comments from the CLRC members;
- Deborah Eerkes spoke about the layout of the RCSRC report and wording changes such as "informal resolution" to "community resolution;"
- SU Saadiq Sumar thanked Dima Utgoff and Deborah Eerkes for their work on the report, suggested a few wording changes and pointed out problem of competing definitions for the same term, but suggested changes were minor, SU is supportive of report overall;
- Meeting adjourned.

**University Governance, Stakeholders' Group, Working Group Meeting-September 27**

- Introductions;
- Item by item discussion of changes on agenda;
- When UAPS decides not to pursue a complaint, the student complainant has the right to appeal to a "three person panel" (not the university appeal board), but only 2 students have appealed;
- Office of the Provost in consultation with the Dean of Students Office appoints the members of the three person panel (Code of Conduct, section 30.528) and the Provost's office is responsible for overseeing it;
- Association Deans need help with large cases because they are so time consuming; for example, cases where as many as 50 students in the same class may be accused of plagiarism. Deborah Eerkes' office is looking at this issue;

- All changes appeared editorial and did not incite any debate, VPL did not comment;
- VPL asked for example of an “inappropriate use” offence. Deborah Eerkes cited “trespassing” and alcohol consumption in an inappropriate space as examples;
- “Suspension” has been interpreted different ways by different faculties because wording in code of conduct is confusing, matter is under review to clarify;
- VPL agreed to participate as a member of the Appeals Regulation Group;
- Meeting adjourned.

### **Technical Briefing-Terms of Reference MBAC, Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees, September 27**

- Phillip Stack-“no better source than audited statement by auditor general”
- Sought consistency in language, will update website to reflect;
- Emphasized “decentralized budgeting structure” in which accountability lies with Deans and unit directors;
- Ian-review of first table provided, \$11, 085, 000 collected for CoSSS fee (largest);
- CoSSS related expenses = \$11.4 mil;
- Phillip Stack-because CoSSS fee covers a number of different units, to reconcile expenditure numbers with budgeted amounts (such as transcript and registration fee), expenditures and revenues were left in the RO on the report;
- Appendix 2 of report is budget, not actuals;
- Appendix 3, allocation methodology for CoSSS fee, no easy underlying logic behind it, used item-by-item determination;
- SU Dusten Chellen asked why Dean of Students Office has an approximately \$1 mil budget variance. Phillip Stack stated that units are allowed to carry forward, may be used for capital replacement and may result from unfilled positions, thus difference between budget and actuals is not unusual;
- Staff ratio is prorated because approximately 15% are not on campus at any given time; student ratio is based on average of fall and winter term (based on FTE);
- Phillip Stack will not be able to attend the MBAC meeting, noted that Ian and VP Clark would be able to answer questions at that meeting;
- Phillip Stack noted that, in the report, they had sought to be as precise as possible and to prepare a robust and accurate document;
- GSA Pres asked if CoSSS revenue go to Dean of Students Office and the Registrar’s Office. Phillip Stack essentially said *no but yes*, because it is not directly destined for those sources but does go into the general fund, so some of it may end up in those offices;
- Meeting Adjourned.

### **TBAC/MBAC Meeting, October 3**

- Approval of agenda;
- GSA reports no communication new with government;
- SU reports improved communication with government in recent weeks;
- Acting Provost calls for regular updates to government because this is a new government;

- VP Clark-2.15% increase on eligible fees going forward, consistent with CPI, across-the-board increase, motion will be circulated in next TBAC/MBAC meeting;
- SU Colten asked if tuition increases had ever been under CPI;
- VP Clark replied “no” because she alleges that once it falls below CPI they never get it back;
- Closed session discussion items;
- Meeting adjourned.

### **Joint LRC/NC Meeting, October 3**

- LRC and NC members met to discuss the asks that LRC members collectively developed during the Summer and Fall and unanimously agreed upon at the September 25 meeting;
- Members made minor changes to the list of asks;
- Members collectively edited the Opening Statement for collective bargaining with the university administration and voted unanimously to approve it (submitted to Vice-Provost Jay Spark on October 5, this will be a Council discussion item separate from VPL report);
- Meeting adjourned.

### **Labour Issues**

In cooperation with Heather Hogg, Financial and Operations Manager, I continue to meet with graduate students regarding supervisory disputes, contract, and collective bargaining questions. I will continue to assist graduate students as needed or referring them to the proper channels if their concerns fall outside of the VPL portfolio.

Best regards,  
Brent Epperson

*The following is a list of meetings I attended between September 6 – October 9, 2012:*

September 6	Protective Services Advisory Committee
September 10	GSA Council
September 12	U-Pass Advisory Committee
September 12	GSA Board
September 13	Myers-Briggs
September 14	Alberta Graduate Council Retreat
September 15	Alberta Graduate Council Retreat
September 19	GSA Board
September 19	FGSR Council
September 20	Meeting with Dean FGSR
September 25	GSA Labour Relations Committee
September 26	GSA Board
September 26	Labour Meeting
September 27	GFC Campus Law Review
September 27	Working Group for Policy Changes

September 27	MNIF Technical Briefing
October 2	Meeting with SU
October 2	Meeting with Student
October 3	MBAC/TBAC
October 3	Joint GSA Labour Relations Committee/Negotiating Committee
October 4	Meeting with Dean FGSR
October 4	Meeting with Student
October 4	Lunch and Learn
October 4	Provost's Fellow on Graduate Supervision
October 5	Alberta Graduate Council
October 9	Meeting with Student

**GSA Senator  
Report to Council**

To: Council Colleagues  
From: Roy Coulthard, GSA Senator  
Date: October 9, 2012

Dear Council Colleagues,

This will be my first report to Council in my capacity as GSA Senator. From my previous experience with the GSA, I have found that one of the weak points in student advocacy has been communicating the value of post secondary education to average Albertans. As the University's "connection to the community", the Senate is ideally placed to help carry this message. As the GSA's Senator, I liaise with the GSA Board to ensure the GSA is well represented on Senate. I discussed the Senate with the GSA Board during regular meetings on Sept 26th and Oct 3rd.

Since taking up the GSA's seat on the Senate, I have been involved in a number of Senate activities. I attended the Senate Orientation session and Executive Committee on Sept 18th. Executive Committee discussed recommending a change in the *Post-Secondary Learning Act (PSLA)* regarding the election of the Chancellor. Executive Committee also set out the agenda for the first Senate Plenary meeting on the year on Sept 27th and 28th.

Senate Plenary focused primarily on setting our strategic direction over the next year around the Senate's three cornerstones: Inquire, Promote, and Connect. A great deal of discussion amongst the Senate's 60+ members revolved around how the Senate can best pursue "Inquiry". The Senate has not completed a task force in several years and opinion was split on the best way to move forward. President Samarasekera presented her report and focused on graduate students as a major initiative moving forward. The recommendation to Government to remove the *PSLA* stipulation allowing nominations from the floor for Chancellor was passed by the Senate after a lengthy debate.

Later in October I will be sitting on the Senate Honorary Degree selection committee.

Respectfully submitted,  
Roy Coulthard

GSA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
REPORT TO COUNCIL FOR October 15, 2012

I focus on **one item** in my monthly report. Last month I introduced Council to the GSA managers. Now, the GSA staff are in the limelight. GSA fees support the salaries of our staff and this report is one way we hold ourselves accountable. My weekly Board reports (attached) provide detail about office operations.

In this report, I often **refer to the year 2010**. This was a time when the GSA was in dire straits. Council can be assured that the GSA infrastructure is now strong. More needs to be done, and we have an excellent team of elected officials, staff and managers to keep strengthening the GSA.

When I came to the GSA in June 2010 as a consultant, not one staff member had stayed at the GSA for more than a year in over 11 years. Now, our staff members have been with us for up to two years. They are all cross-trained into every critical function so that there is always a back-up. Here are your staff, in alphabetical order. They keep the GSA operations flowing seamlessly.

**Katie Biittner (PhD)** completed a teaching leave in 2011-12. She handles communications, plans universal orientation, Awards Night and other events, and is organizing the departmental liaison program. **Key stats:** 140 newsletters and bulletins containing 350 ads (*e.g.* Nominating Committee ads); organized events attended by 900 students/staff/guests. Organized record numbers of departmental orientations the past two years; presented at departmental orientations and re-drafted the Handbook. Secured most-ever Handbook ad revenue. Katie is also our point person for Council communications. She has multiple talents, helps with special projects and student group issues, and has backed up almost every office function.

**Casey Germain (BA)** comes to us from an IT position at UBC. In addition to IT, Casey handles the front desk, does research, assists with insurance issues and manages the GSA infrastructure. **Key stats:** assisted with over three dozen research and event projects; completed our first-ever IT inventory, moved us to Gmail, designed a new website, and completed over 60 other IT/infrastructure projects. Casey also now administers grants. (Grants work has been “managed down” from a 1FTE to part-time, with no job loss as there is new work to be done by staff.) **AEGS stats:** Some 1,100 grants and award applications were processed. Over 2,000 notifications (emails) were sent to students and supervisors, and with VP Naseeb Adnan and DO Heather Hogg, approximately \$450K in AEGS funds was disbursed.

**Lisa Hareuther (BA)** is a former GSA Executive Assistant and is completing her MA research. Lisa is one of our student group experts. In 2010, the GSA did not have any information about the groups that carry our name. Lisa, together with Katie and other staff, have now documented all student groups, reviewed their constitutions and are working on ways to support departmental GSAs, many of whom are not registered as student groups with the University. **Key stat:** there are currently about 30 registered graduate student groups.

Lisa is also the Coordinator of the new GSA Nominating Committee. In 2010, the GSA was represented on some **40** committees. **Key stats:** We are now represented on over **170** committees, councils, task forces and working groups. Over 350 ads are sent to graduate students each year advertizing vacancies or new positions. The GSA receives requests almost weekly from Administration for graduate student representation on committees. Three recent examples: Transportation Task Force, President’s Convocation Committee, Advisory Selection Committee for new Registrar.

**Dyan Semple (MA)** is the new GSA Executive Assistant. She has served as one of two part-time Front Desk Assessors and has been at the forefront of answering hundreds of questions from grad students. Dyan

schedules the elected officials; sends out their meeting reports; assists with Board Agendas and Minutes; receives and distributes masses of meeting material from central administration. She is a Nominating Committee coordinator. **Key stats:** scheduled 1,300 meetings; prepared and distributed 60+ committee advertisements; sorted and stored in the Bank of Names some 140 applicant biographies. Dyan also advises on privacy issues. **Front desk stats:** 2,100 questions at the desk, or by email/phone - but going down as our presence in departments, our website, and our signage improves; researched over 500 questions.

### **Record-keeping**

The provincial *Post-secondary Learning Act* sets up the GSA as a corporation. A corporation is required to keep many types of records. In 2010, there was no filing system at the GSA. We now have a robust hard copy and e-filing system as well as a Wiki. The GSA staff have maintained over 500 paper files, kept files for 1,300 meetings, sorted 80 linear feet of old files for filing or shredding, and devised a Document Retention and Destruction Schedule (DRAD).

### **Our “alumni” staff**

Janelle Morin finished her summer position with us and supported the strategic work plan process. Jo Chan, who was EA for two years, is now with Alumni Affairs. Catrin Berghoff, who handled grants, is now teaching English as a second language. They all keep in touch and are a wonderful resource for us.

### **Collective Agreement**

The GSA staff are unionized and are represented by the U of A Non-Academic Staff Association under a separate Collective Agreement. Heather Hogg and I renegotiated that Agreement last year.

**As your managers, we will be pleased to answer any questions at Council. We also welcome you to tour the office and meet us all!**

Ellen Schoeck, Executive Director

Heather Hogg, Director of Operations and Labour Professional

Courtney Thomas, Associate Director

**ED Report to the GSA Board for September 5, 2012**

Dear All,

A short but busy week:

August 29 was a double-barreled day with both **orientation** and a packed Board agenda. A report on orientation will be on an upcoming agenda.

Final plans for departmental orientations were wrapped on August 30 along with the Board agenda and research on **academic subsidies**.

Staff were off on Friday August 31, and Ashlyn and I made great strides on the **Strategic Work Plan**.

**NoC work proceeds apace.**

Today, Tuesday September 4, the **GSA delivered 14 departmental orientations**. We **finalized some audit questions re process**, blocked out the **next 6 weeks Board** and Council agendas, and got out the **September 10 Council agenda**. The management team and Jo **meet with Ashlyn the first working day of the week and we went through 14 items**.

**A great start to a new term – way to go, team!**

Best,  
Ellen and Heather

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**ED Report to the GSA Board for September 12, 2012**

Lots of follow up with respect to Council and I will aim for a **Budget 101 for October**, perhaps over dinner. Also some **follow up re the BFC meeting**.

HR has absorbed most of my time this week. **Joanna has accepted a one-year position at Alumni Affairs** and it is an excellent move for her in terms of career progression. We hate losing her, but at the same time are very happy for her professionally. We gave her an excellent oral reference. She has been vital to the rebuilding of the GSA. **Her last day of work will be September 21**.

In accord with the CA that governs our staff, this vacancy is posted in the office for the required five-day period, which ends Friday. **Dyan Semple has told me she wishes to move into this position**. As you all know, Dyan has been the backup for Jo for well over a year, and will now start shadowing Jo. Katie will move temporarily up to the front of the office to assist with the front desk traffic, and we will move on from there.

You all also know that **Catrin Berghoff has left us for her dream job of teaching English as a second language**.

Both Catrin and Jo are close by to answer questions during transition as a "GSA alumna."

Catrin has told us that she feels her grants and Council support can be handled on a part-time basis because grants in particular have been "managed down" and take less time. The staff are proud of their role in making this happen as it has allowed us to ramp up support for Council (done prior to Speaker Fred by his predecessors). Freeing up staff time by managing down old-fashioned processes also allows us to take on the new NoC work.

Casey is eager to take on grants and we agree with him that it is a natural fit as we hopefully make the move to fillable forms. Council support is now being done by a Team: Katie, Casey, Dyan and, from the management side, Courtney and me.

I will keep you updated as we move forward. We need your patience as we settle in to new roles, but all the cross-training the past two years is paying off nicely.

Best,  
Ellen

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#### ED Report to the Board for September 19, 2012

Dear All,

- I had my **first sick days last week in 27 months** and appreciate all the back-up!
- Heather and I met with **Jay Spark yesterday**; report sent. Heather then had a follow up meeting re the CA presentation at FGSR today.
- Masses of material coming in for the **Board and GFC**.
- **Report writing** for FGSR, Alumni Council, BG and GFC also gearing up.
- **Excellent two hour NoC transition meeting** with Vijay, Lacey, Michele, Lisa and me. Discussion ranged over a broad array of topics including the GSA committee system and the early search for next year's elected officials.
- Excellent **transition meeting with Nathan/Colin More re SOS/ASC**.
- **Jo's last day is this Friday and Dyan has been shadowing her**.
- Another packed **weekly meeting with Ashyn** (Jo, Dyan, Heather, Courtney and me).
- Am writing several **letters of reference** for grad students. **Re- drafting change to budget policies** as BFC follow-up.
- Re-drafting the **Council confidentiality agreement** so it is not so legalistic.
- Casey has a half dozen **insurance follow-ups** he is pursuing including seeing if any grad student groups are incorporated. Casey has researched and written a **Working Alone** procedure for the office that makes us compliant with U of A policy – a requirement of our lease. Work proceeds with **on-line grants forms**.
- **Reminder that I leave for Europe on Friday, returning to work on Friday, October 12. Heather is away the week of October 8 (with the 8<sup>th</sup> being a holiday). Also, the plan is to close the office on Friday, October 6.**
- We had the windows washed (the University no longer has a budget for this; cost was \$120.00) --and also harvested that last of our GSA garden!

Best,  
Ellen, Heather and Courtney

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### Management Report to the GSA Board for September 26, 2012

With Ellen away on vacation the office has been busy! I'm working closely with Heather and other staff members on a number of issues (most notably assisting with the preparation of the GSA's **Opening Position** for the upcoming bargaining process with the University).

The **Nominating Committee**, and Lisa, has filled a number of recent vacancies (the Vice-Chair transition meeting for the NoC took place September 18, so Lacey has been welcomed aboard as the new Vice-Chair). They are currently paying a lot of attention to populating the GSA ASC since this committee needs to be finalized by October 15th Council as the ASC will have to adjudicate the Alberta Graduate Citizenship Award, the deadline which is October 15, 2012. Last year there were about 140 applications submitted for the 20 available Graduate Citizenship Awards, so more members will ensure the workload is distributed evenly. Lisa is also working with the NoC to fill other vacancies and has also started working on preparing the documents and processes for the Early Call for Elected Officials which will begin once Ellen is back in the office. Finally, she's working on keeping the NoC work-plan up to date as well as trying to build the Bank of Names on the wiki and has prepared and sent out the call to GSA Councillors to submit a bio/resume for us to file in the Bank of Names.

The **GSA office** (and Casey in particular) is also currently processing and writing grant cheques along with reconciling Access with Simply Accounting and preparing a report outlining breakdown of AEGS funds for the past 2 fiscal years. Proposals for reforming the shared drive and GSA newsletter are also being drafted, as are recommended changes to the Budget Principles, Practices, and Procedures. Among other financial activities, Dorte ensured that September payroll went smoothly. We've also been working on communications and procedures related to the Graduate Citizenship Award since, as noted above, the GSA has responsibility for administering its adjudication. Heather has also been attending meetings with Naseeb this past week regarding the **ongoing U-Pass negotiations** and communicating with the other student associations concerning our position.

And, last of all, Dyan has been working hard on transitioning into the Executive Assistant role in cooperation with Jo (lots of training has been happening).

Best,  
Courtney

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### Management Report to the GSA Board for October 3, 2012

Heather and I have been busy working with Brent and the members of LRC on getting the GSA's **Opening Statement** drafted – which the NC will be discussing tonight at the joint meeting with LRC. Dorte continues to attend to the day-to-day financial matters of the GSA.

The agenda for October 15 Council is the process of being set and everything is moving forward on that front.

In addition to filling vacancies on various committees, Lisa is working on updating the **Early Call for Talent Documents**. Casey has been busy processing grants (as always), updating the GSA e-mail accounts to reflect

position changes and additions, getting my CCID setup (so now I have an official GSA email ([gsa.associatedirector@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsa.associatedirector@ualberta.ca) or [gsaad@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsaad@ualberta.ca)), and arranging meetings to discuss switching to a centralized firewall.

Katie has been occupied with awards, including getting ready for the adjudication of the **Government of Alberta Graduate Citizenship Award** by assembling the adjudication criteria and training documentation. She's also been drafting proposals for updates to the existing GSA Awards based on the review undertaken by former VPSL Hillary Sparkes (ASC and GSAB will be seeing these at upcoming meetings). Both Casey and Katie have been providing front desk assistance to Dyan as she settles into her new EA role (and until her previous position is filled).

Ellen will be away for one more week and the GSA offices will be closed on Friday and Monday for the Thanksgiving weekend – after that, Heather will be away in Scotland, returning October 15.

Happy early Thanksgiving,  
Courtney

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#### Management Report to the GSA Board for October 10, 2012

Things in the office are running smoothly in Ellen's and Heather's absence – it's been a very busy week with a few potentially big issues appearing on the horizon but everyone has been working exceptionally hard and major issues are being effectively addressed .

The GSA's **Opening Position** in the upcoming collective bargaining negotiations with the University was submitted to Jay Spark last Friday by Brent. Brent, the members of LRC, and the NC did a commendable job with the Position!

Dyan is transitioning smoothly into her new responsibilities and has been engaged in putting together materials from email archives regarding upcoming issues that the GSA will be facing. Dorte continues to attend to the day-to-day financial matters of the GSA. Casey recently met with the U of A regarding switching the GSA Firewall to the Centralized Firewall managed by the U of A and is working with Dorte in regards to preparing questions for their meeting with the U of A about T4A's and Direct Deposit. He has also attended a course about Google Drive and begun working on the file structure for the proposed shared drive upgrade/transition. Lisa is currently working with the NoC to fill vacancies on 6 bodies. She's also working on drafting a standard response on behalf of the GSA and NoC to provide to the coordinators of external committees regarding their composition as concerns graduate students and touches on the responsibility of the GSA to be involved in populating committees as per the PSLA (an issue discussed in last week's GSAB meeting).

The first mailing for Council went out and the second mailing is currently being finalized.

Ellen will be returning to the office this Thursday or Friday and Heather will be back next week.

Regards,  
Courtney

### Outline of Issue: 2012-2013 Strategic Work Plan

#### **Suggested Motion:**

That the GSA Council **receive** the attached 2012-2013 Strategic Work Plan for information.

#### **Jurisdiction:**

##### Post-secondary Learning Act (PSLA) 94(3):

*"The graduate students association of a university shall provide for the administration of graduate student affairs at the university, including ... the promotion of the general welfare of the graduate students consistent with the purposes of the university."*

##### GSA Bylaws Part IV Section 2.2.1:

*"The President is the chief executive officer of the GSA and is responsible for the GSA's overall operations as well as external and university affairs."*

#### **Background:**

The first strategic work plan for the GSA was prepared by the GSA Board in 2010. **Preparing strategic work plans to circulate to the university community is a relatively new activity for the GSA.** The intent behind preparing a SWP is to not only identify and describe the goals of the GSA as an organization, but to describe and discuss the strategies to be used in realizing these goals.

As presented in various past reports to Council, two strategic planning sessions were held by the President and Vice-Presidents in July and August of 2012 at St. Joseph's College. Since then the elected officials have continued to build the 2012-2013 Strategic Work Plan (SWP). The SWP was discussed by the GSA Board on September 12 and 19, 2012.

It has been the practice of the GSA Board to first discuss the SWP with the Provost before circulating it broadly to University administration (e.g., Vice-Provost, Board Chair, etc.).

The GSA Board will retain the SWP as a living document to allow for updates as initiatives are met throughout the year.

Councillors are now asked to receive for information the latest version of the SWP as a high-level summary. If Councillors have questions about specific items within the SWP or strategies associated with the implementation of these items, they are encouraged to contact the GSA elected officials or GSA office ([gsa.execadmin@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsa.execadmin@ualberta.ca)).

#### **Next Steps:**

Distribution of the SWP will commence shortly (a cover letter, also included in the material before members, will also be circulated). The SWP will be presented by President Ashlyn Bernier and the Vice-Presidents during one-on-one meetings with key members of Administration. President Ashlyn Bernier wants to report each month on the SWP progress to Council.



Dear Council,

September 27, 2012

Please find the 2012-2013 Graduate Students' Association Strategic Work Plan (SWP) attached for your review. This Plan was prepared by me along with my fellow Elected Officials and GSA Management to direct our efforts and identify areas where we can work with others in the University community.

The 2012-2013 SWP provides us at the GSA with a planning document for this year and into the future in an effort to not only work towards achieving our vision but that of the University of Alberta as well. It is meant to align closely with the University of Alberta's guiding documents - *Dare to Discover, Dare to Deliver*, and the 2012 Comprehensive Institutional Plan. The SWP builds on the hard work and accomplishments of our predecessors at the GSA and provides a foundation for the work of those to come.

In implementing this Plan, we will strive for transparency, accountability, and reputation building through regular updates to GSA Council and other stakeholders. Through this process, we hope to gain valuable feedback on how we can best achieve what we have set out to accomplish. We look forward to working with our many partners on the implementation of this Plan as we act cooperatively to achieve our common goals.

We are interested in hearing your thoughts on the Strategic Plan - please do not hesitate to contact me to share them.

Sincerely,

Ashlyn Bernier  
2012-2013 GSA President

Attachment

## Graduate Students' Association

Room 1-37, Killam Centre for Advanced Studies  
Triffo Hall, University of Alberta  
Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2E1  
T 780.492.2175 F 780.492.2999

To: Chancellor and Senate, University of Alberta President, Board Chair, Provost, Vice-Presidents, Students' Union, AASUA, NASA, Alumni Association, Dean of Students, Dean of FGSR, etc.

From: Ashlyn Bernier, President, University of Alberta Graduate Students' Association

## UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION (GSA) STRATEGIC WORK PLAN: 2012-13

**Note:** the GSA sees this as a living document, constantly shifting directions as the U of A landscape unfolds and changes.

**VISION:** The GSA envisions an engaging environment that is supportive, healthy, accessible, and inclusive, thus empowering the graduate student community to be agents of change in all endeavours, academic and otherwise, both during their time here and beyond.

### MISSION (working draft):

1. **Advocate for comprehensive, timely, and excellent supports within the university governance system and with government.** The GSA is a vigilant voice for stewardship of the graduate student experience with regard to funding, housing, and services. As graduate enrollment increases, we believe these key infrastructure pieces should be in place *before* new graduate students register and that attention must be paid to the career opportunities and professional development of graduate students.
2. **Negotiate a fair collective agreement that supports graduate students who are employed by the University.**
  - i. *We ensure that employed graduate students are fairly compensated for their work, while also ensuring that such work does not place graduate students at a disadvantage during their studies.*
  - ii. *We ensure that employed graduate students' work environments are safe, free from harassment, discrimination and bullying, and foster a culture of workplace wellness.*
  - iii. *We advocate for "sustainable funding": that through strategic investments and reallocation of central funding, ALL graduate students who are otherwise without funding will have access to enriching graduate student employment to the benefit of the graduate student and the University.*
3. **Foster student engagement.** The GSA believes student engagement occurs from the time a student asks for information about applying for graduate studies through the end-point of convocation. We support continuing student engagement through involvement in governance, networks anchored in residence life, professional development and soft skills opportunities, and in social settings where friendships and research collaboration can occur.
4. **Support academic endeavours of graduate students.** The GSA supports and encourages an empowering environment for graduate students to thrive in their various academic and research endeavours. This entails creating avenues for students to present their research to the larger academic community in and out of the U of A, ensuring a good relationship between graduate students and their supervisor(s), and rewarding deserving students for excellence in academic work and research.

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Strategic Initiative/Focus and Link with *PSLA* or CIP (which incorporates Dare to Deliver 2011-15)

STRATEGIC GOALS/FOCUS and Link with <i>PSLA</i> or CIP	APPROACHES/STRATEGIES
<b>1. INTERFACE WITH UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE</b>	
Intensive, integrated <b>advocacy for and representation of</b> graduate student issues.	<p><b>Develop messages;</b> deliver consistently and professionally.</p> <p>Maintain relationship with <b>President, Provost’s Office and other Vice-Presidents, Board, Governance, Senate, Alumni Association, service providers, and other key partners.</b></p> <p>Approach Governance, committee chairs, Council on Student Affairs (COSA) to discuss issues <b>the GSA would like to include in GFC committees’ work plans, including day care.</b></p> <p><b>Evaluate the GSA’s services for international graduate students</b> in light of the University’s goal of having “an international graduate enrolment target of 30%....” CIP Intro, 1.2.</p> <p>Work with other associations on items of mutual interest</p>
<b>2. REPUTATION</b>	
The GSA has a responsibility to ensure that the GSA maintains an excellent reputation over time.	<p>Maintain a <b>culture of respect and tolerance</b> in the GSA office and in all dealings with the University community.</p> <p>All Elected Officials, Management, and Staff of the GSA will maintain a high level of <b>professionalism.</b></p> <p>Review our progress as part of yearly <b>strategic planning.</b> Commit to the process of strategic planning, regular follow through on the goals and tasks, and regular reporting to Council.</p> <p><b>Proactive search for talent (e.g. Elected Officials, committee members)</b> will be ongoing.</p>
<b>3. TUITION: Responsibility linked to <i>PSLA</i></b>	
Prepare for <b>tuition debate.</b>	<p>Arrange internal meetings to craft <b>GSA position, including the GSA’s view on sustainability.</b></p> <p><b>Maintain a relationship with the Students' Union</b> with regard to tuition.</p>

STRATEGIC GOALS/FOCUS and Link with PSLA or CIP	APPROACHES/STRATEGIES
<b>4. NEGOTIATIONS AND RELATED ISSUES: Responsibility linked to PSLA</b>	
<p><b>Discuss with the Provost's Office the related issues</b> that were identified during 2010-11 negotiations, including <b>education and compliance re Collective Agreement (CA)</b>; dispute resolution; graduate student completion time (see CA 9.3.2); graduate student funding globally; structural issues that lead to excessive use of resources (perhaps to be discussed by the Graduate Funding Task Force); international students; various wordings that need to be refined.</p>	<p>Arrange internal meetings to craft <b>GSA position and then meet with Provost's Office.</b></p> <p>Discuss with LRC and Negotiating Committee prior to negotiations with the University. <b>LRC will act as a "think tank"</b> for Collective Agreement negotiations.</p> <p><b>Pilot a Labour Liaison/Departmental Liaison program.</b></p>
<p><b>5. WORKLOADS OF GSA ELECTED OFFICIALS – The GSA regards this as a risk; i.e. reluctance to run for office because of academic workloads and/or non-support from supervisors.</b> Ellen was asked to reword the previous sentence to the following: <i>In order for graduate students to participate in collegial governance as elected officials, some flexibility is needed with regard to their academic workloads. Support and understanding of supervisors is also needed.</i></p>	
<p><b>A. Negotiate direct relief from academic work during elected terms, e.g. one-year leave, and require that a thesis-based elected official is not responsible to her/his supervisor, but rather only to the Dean of FGSR (clock stops once you are elected).</b></p>	<p>Develop strategies and supports in collaboration with outgoing and incoming elected officials.</p> <p>Developed and reviewed a proposal on Recognition and Relief for GSA Elected Officials.</p>
<p><b>B. Enhance attractiveness of taking on GSA elected positions.</b></p>	<p><b>Early call</b> for nominations and training program.</p> <p><b>Optimal division of labour</b> between elected officials and management/staff so elected officials are well-supported.</p>

STRATEGIC GOALS/FOCUS and Link with PSLA or CIP	APPROACHES/STRATEGIES
<p><b>6. INCREASED NUMBERS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS: CIP Strategy 1.4 – note that the increased number of grad students reverberates throughout each chapter of the CIP, e.g. the 3.1 table in the budget chapter</b></p>	
<p>Partner with Administration to advance the goal of the CIP, Access Strategy 1.4, to differentially “<b>recruit and increase graduate student enrolment</b>” until a <b>1:3 ratio</b> of undergraduate to graduate students is reached.</p> <p>NOTE ALSO ACCESS STRATEGY 16.5 – “<b>Reallocation of existing FLEs to graduate programs.</b>”</p> <p>Seek more information about the <b>\$3M funding “envelope”</b> request related to international students (CIP ref 8.2 Resource Implications: Access “Enriched Student Experience” and table titled “International Student Proportion”</p>	<p>Continue to press for <b>infrastructure to be in place prior to admission</b> of an increasing number of graduate students.</p> <p><b>Work to ensure that attention is paid to the career opportunities open to graduate students and to issues of professional development.</b></p> <p><b>Work continuously to identify gaps in infrastructure and opportunities to improve.</b></p> <p>The GSA has read in <b>CIP how FLEs will be reallocated</b> and wishes to ensure that as grad numbers are increased, the right supports are in place (<i>e.g.</i> writing and language supports, especially for international students).</p> <p>The GSA believes that <b>insufficient supports are in place for international graduate students</b>. Top two supports needed are: the courses and one-on-one support offered by the Writing Resources Centre; and cultural and dietary understanding on the part of the receiving institution (the U of A).</p>

STRATEGIC GOALS/FOCUS and Link with PSLA or CIP	APPROACHES/STRATEGIES
<b>7. GRADUATE STUDENT FUNDING TASK FORCE</b>	
The CIP (Exec Summary 1.5, Access Strategy 2.3, Access Goal 3 and Chapter 8) identifies <b>graduate student funding as a key issue.</b>	The GSA will participate vigorously in the ongoing <b>Graduate Student Funding Task Force.</b>
<b>8. GRADUATE STUDENT SUPERVISION TASK FORCE</b>	
<b>Strong, healthy supervisory relationships advance the CIP goal of attracting and retaining top graduate students.</b>	<p>The GSA will <b>participate vigorously</b> in the new Graduate Student Supervision Task Force (GSS), a joint initiative of the Provost, FGSR and the GSA.</p> <p>The GSA will raise with GSS some of the problems we are aware of with regard to <b>supervisory relationships</b>. We will also ask that Student Ombudservice (SOS) <b>share their views about supervisory relationships with the Task Force as it is the SOS that deals with these matters directly.</b></p> <p>Continue discussions with Administration about the labour-related issues brought to the GSA, especially those that concern <b>supervisory relationships and compliance with the Collective Agreement</b>. We wish to note that a number of departments are in non-compliance with the CA. We believe that Administration should take the lead here, not the GSA.</p> <p>Continue conversations with FGSR about <b>facilitated access to the associate deans when students come to our front desk in immediate crisis mode</b>. Without immediate access, our recourse is to involve our lawyers – not our first choice.</p> <p>The GSA notes that while undergraduate teaching is rated through the standardized USRI, there is no standardized method for graduate students to meaningfully provide feedback on supervisory relationships/learning.</p>

STRATEGIC GOALS/FOCUS and Link with PSLA or CIP	APPROACHES/STRATEGIES
<b>9. STUDENT EXPERIENCE AND ENGAGEMENT</b>	
<p><b>THE GSA WOULD LIKE TO NOTE THAT HEALTHY/PRODUCTIVE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN STUDENTS AND SUPERVISORS, AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES, ARE KEY TO THIS GOAL.</b></p> <p>We note that in CIP 5.4 Access Plan, it is stated that “between 2004-05 and 2009-10, we increased graduate student enrollment by 34%.”</p> <p>CIP Access Strategy 1.5: scholarship funds, orientation, mentoring for grad advisors, counselling and ombuds support, “appealing” housing, professional development.</p> <p>The GSA defines “engagement” and “experiences” as follows:</p> <p><b>Engagement:</b> intellectual, personal and pre-professional involvements that are enriching, rewarding, milestones in maturity, and marked by learning, testing, personal development, success, and sometimes failure.</p> <p><b>Experience:</b> Did I feel welcomed from day one? What are my lodgings like? Are there healthy and culturally appropriate food options on campus? Is my office adequate? Is my supervisor supportive and knowledgeable about the Collective Agreement? Am I succeeding in my program and academic employment? Have I made friends? Do I know where to go for help?</p>	
<p><b>9A.</b> Continued focus on <b>orientation</b> as one of the first contacts with the University for admitted students.</p>	<p>Continue to ensure <b>hard funding from the Dean of Students</b> for fall and winter (“universal”) orientation, and for departmental orientations, continues.</p> <p><b>Collaborate and proactively</b> plan Orientations for all Departments, not just those who ask.</p> <p>Work with GSA service providers to have <b>videos</b> prepared to deliver at departmental orientations (group insurance and the Health and Dental plan).</p> <p><b>Try again to have One Card and U-Pass registration right at the point of orientation so that graduate students do not have to wait in line with thousands of undergraduates.</b></p> <p>Explore ways to connect with new <b>aboriginal graduate</b> students.</p> <p><b>Continue to connect/collaborate with International Centre Orientations.</b></p>

STRATEGIC GOALS/FOCUS and Link with PSLA or CIP	APPROACHES/STRATEGIES
	<p>Continue distribution of \$25K from Provost <b>to foster academically-related student group activities.</b></p> <p>Continue to work with University Administration, Student's Union, and University Health and Wellness on issues and initiatives related to improving mental health on campus.</p>
<p><b>9B. Ramp up work on student groups and departmental GSAs.</b> (Review begun in November 2010).</p>	<p>Continue to work with GPAC and individual departments.</p> <p>Collaborate with Office of the Dean of Students and Student Group Services to develop goals and strategies for Graduate Student Group support and interaction.</p>
<p><b>9C. Rationalize services offered to graduate students.</b></p> <p><b>CIP Access Goal 2.1: “reorganize student services to maximize support for students on campus.”</b></p>	<p>Review FGSR’s handout listing all services. <b>Done?</b></p> <p>Assess services for PGMEs.</p> <p><b>Participate in the Administration’s ongoing mental health review.</b></p> <p><b>Meet with Provost, FGSR Dean and Dean of Students to gain better understanding of the review process.</b></p>
<p><b>9D. Lobby for increased support for Writing Resources at the Academic Support/Student Success Centre in relation to specific needs of graduate students (e.g. grant writing, thesis writing).</b> Also see Access Goal 10: support programs to increase retention and completion rates.</p> <p>CIP ACCESS STRATEGY 10.2: states, “continue to support Student Services and the Writing Centres,” but does not mention the one writing centre that grad students have rated highly -- Writing Resources.</p> <p><b>Note that Access Strategy 10.2 refers back to Access Goal 2, but Access Goal 2 also does not mention the Writing Centre</b></p>	<p><b>Increased support for this Centre is one of the GSA’s top priorities.</b> From our review of the Centre, the GSA feels that there should be two permanent full-time positions with at least a 1FTE devoted to graduate student support.</p>

STRATEGIC GOALS/FOCUS and Link with PSLA or CIP	APPROACHES/STRATEGIES
located in ASC. We applaud the statement in Access Goal 2 that services should be based on “students’ needs and wants.” <b>HERE WE ARE EXPRESSING GRADUATE STUDENTS’ NEEDS AND WANTS.</b>	
E. Lobby for increased support for CAPS in relation to specific needs of graduate students (especially jobs)	
F. Continue answering questions from <b>undergraduates</b> who come to our office for advice about graduate studies.	
<b>10. ATTRIBUTES AND COMPETENCIES: CIP Access Strategy 5.5 Skills, attributes, attitudes, values, and competencies</b>	
<p><b>The GSA knows that some 60% of the grad student population will work in industry.</b> The GSA will keep a watchful eye on how the University proceeds in defining attributes and competencies related to grad students.</p>	<p>Recognizing that the majority of graduate students will not enter academe, <b>the GSA will explore collaboration with external groups to develop linkages and improve communication between students and industry.</b></p>
<b>11. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT: CIP Access Goal 6: Ensure a high level of teaching quality</b>	
<p><b>Access strategy 6.1: Professional development for all instructors through CTL and FGSR.</b></p> <p><b>Access Strategy 6.2 Recognize teaching</b></p> <p><b>Access Strategy 6.3 Assessments and Grading Practices</b></p>	<p>AEGS/PDG funding is important for graduate students.</p> <p>Letting grad students know about PD opportunities is <b>now coordinated with FGSR.</b></p> <p>Support and recognize the contribution of graduate student teaching to the learning environment on campus.</p>

STRATEGIC GOALS/FOCUS and Link with PSLA or CIP	APPROACHES/STRATEGIES
<p align="center"><b>12. LEARNING SPACES: CIP Access Goal 7 is “to ensure the development and maintenance of quality formal and informal learning space.” Space of many kinds, as described in the introduction to the Plan, is key for graduate students. Note CIP table 9.5.3</b></p>	
<p><b>A. Negotiate for student engagement space in the Power Plant</b> in accord with the provisions in the 2010 MOU between the GSA and the University.</p>	<p>Ensure in all localized F&amp;O planning processes, high quality graduate student office space is included.</p> <p>Turn Dewey’s into “quality space.”</p> <p><b>Lobby for decant, in-fill, and other space</b>, as available, for use by graduate students and others for the <b>purposes of collaboration, sharing ideas and meeting informally.</b></p> <p><b>Continue work on PAW</b> and on fit-out of graduate student space.</p> <p><b>Lobby for increased office</b> space for graduate students.</p> <p><b>Ask Administration for their plans regarding daycare.</b> We note that daycare is referred to several times in the capital plan chapter of the CIP. A demographic study of graduate student daycare needs is necessary. At the GSA, we continually see the daycare needs of graduate students who apply for Child Care Subsidies.</p>
<p><b>B. Ask to be actively included in any discussion about pre-design where graduate students may be affected (ref Cap Plan chapter, 6.3.4)</b></p>	

STRATEGIC GOALS/FOCUS and Link with PSLA or CIP	APPROACHES/STRATEGIES
<b>13. GRADUATE STUDENT HOUSING: CIP has various references including Access Strategy 7.2, 6.5.2 (table)</b>	
<p><b>A. Michener Park requires attention.</b> Ref CIP Table 6.2 “Highest Preservation Priorities.”</p> <p><b>B. Stay informed about the 500-700 spaces planned for graduate students on 89<sup>th</sup> avenue:</b> ref same table as above, “Student Housing – East Campus Village”.</p> <p><b>C. Status of amenities building in ECV?</b></p> <p><b>D. Continue to lobby for accessible graduate student housing.</b></p>	<p>Ensure Administration knows we’ve had complaints.</p> <p>We would like to note that the 89th avenue development was intensively fast-tracked. We appreciated the earliest possible notice that this project was going ahead, but it was very limiting in terms of our input into design.</p> <p>Research original plan.</p>
<b>14. UNIT REVIEWS: CIP Access Strategy 5.1 addresses unit review</b>	
<p>Prepare well in advance for unit reviews.</p>	<p>The GSA requests that the Provost <b>advise us about the timetable for these reviews so that we can provide informal input on the process.</b></p>

STRATEGIC GOALS/FOCUS and Link with PSLA or CIP	APPROACHES/STRATEGIES
<b>15. UNIT REVIEWS: CIP Access Strategy 5.1 addresses unit review</b>	
Understanding graduate student demographics is fundamental to lobbying.	<p>In moving forward with a large number of CIP goals, the GSA believes that a demographic study of graduate students should occur in 2012-2013 and subsequently every three years.</p> <p>Such a study would have a significant and informative effect on planning for such matters as orientation, student housing, and academic supports (<i>e.g.</i> writing and English-language supports) and non-academic supports (daycare; grad student family supports, and accommodation regarding dietary issues).</p> <p>Practicalities include: how can the University plan grad student housing without knowing who has/intends to have family responsibilities over a 6-year PhD? Or who has dietary/budgetary restrictions that mean grad students need their own kitchen in order to cook for themselves?</p>
<b>16. INTERNAL/EFFECTIVE GSA</b>	
Aim for the U of A GSA to be the best managed in Canada.	Proceed with 2010 recommendations of consultant, <i>e.g.</i> continue to <b>rebuild infrastructure, review all bylaw, policy, committees, and processes.</b>
<b>17. INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE STUDENTS</b>	
	<p><b>Evaluate the GSA's services for international graduate students</b> in light of the University's goal of having "an international graduate enrolment target of 30%...." CIP Intro, 1.2</p> <p>As per section 6 above, the GSA believes that <b>insufficient supports are in place for international graduate students.</b> Top two supports needed are: the courses and one-on-one support offered by the Writing Resources Centre; and cultural and dietary understanding on the part of the receiving institution (the U of A).</p>

## **AWARDS SELECTION COMMITTEE and LABOUR RELATIONS SLATE OF NOMINEES**

**PREPARED BY THE GSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE (NoC)  
October 2012 COUNCIL**

GSA Policy concerning NoC requires that a slate of nominees be brought forward to Council and, further, that Council be advised that any Councillor may make an additional nomination(s). If you wish to do so, additional nominations must be RECEIVED by **12 (noon) on Friday October 12, 2012** by emailing Lisa Hareuther, Coordinator of the NoC at [gsa.nomcomm@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsa.nomcomm@ualberta.ca). If there are no additional nominations the candidate(s) presented in this report will be declared elected as of the **October 15, 2012 GSA Council meeting**. Nominations are not accepted from the floor at the Council meeting. If there are additional nominations made by Council, in writing, by **October 12 at noon**, there will be a written ballot provided at Council (GSA Policy Manual, Nominating Policy 6.6)

### **Awards Selection Committee (ASC): Vacancy EIGHT TO TEN MEMBERS OF THE GSA**

**No set composition yet. At the request of the VP Student Life, this committee will be comprised of eight to ten members of the GSA.**

**Continuing Members on this Committee (3): Babak Nikbakhtan (PhD Civil and Environmental Engineering), Meimanat Soleimanifar (PhD Civil and Environmental Engineering), Liang Chen (MSc Chemical and Materials Engineering)**

#### **Slate of Nominees:**

1. Eileen Chipchar (MEd Educational Psychology)
2. Samuel David Cardozo D'Armas (MSc Chemical and Materials Engineering)
3. Cathleen (Katie) Edwards (PhD Physical Education and Recreation)
4. Li Mao (PhD Educational Policy Studies)
5. Patrick Reid (PhD Physical Education and Recreation)
6. Ravi Singh (MBA)
7. Leigh Spanner (PhD Political Science)
8. Heather Stewart (MA Political Science)
9. Karen Vera Lyn Turpin (PhD School of Public Health)

### **Labour Relations Committee (LRC):**

**No set composition in the GSA Bylaws. At the request of the VP Labour, this committee will be comprised of eight to ten members of the GSA with at least one being a member of Council.**

**Continuing Members on this Committee: Michelle Borowitz (PhD Anthropology), Daniel Prins (PhD, Biochemistry), Alexa DeGagne (PhD Political Science), Andrés Torres**

**Scott (PhD, Political Science), Simarjit S. Bal (PhD, Political Science), Colin More (PhD Geophysics), Amir Reshef (MBA), Ahmad Billal Sultani (MSc, Chemical and Materials Engineering and Laboratory Medicine and Pathology), Md Shirajum Munir (PhD Electrical and Computer Engineering)**

**Slate of Nominees:**

1. Qiang Li (PhD Chemical and Materials Engineering, Councillor at-Large)