

GSA Council Meeting AGENDA
Monday, April 8, 2013 at 6 pm
Telus 1-34

A light dinner will be served at 5:15 pm

OPEN SESSION

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of the 08 April 2013 Agenda
3. Approval of the Minutes from the 11 March 2013 GSA Council meeting
Attachments:
 - Minutes from the 11 March 2013 Council meeting
4. 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

5. Councillor Announcements

Action Items, Elections, Appointments, and Special Business

6. GSA Policy and Bylaw: Proposal to Move Certain Sections to GSA Policy
Ashlyn Bernier (President) will present the item. Please note that this is the **SECOND** reading for this Motion.
Attachments:
 - Outline of Issue
 - Letter to Council from the Executive Director regarding Bylaw and Policy **NOTE: this is same letter that was distributed in support of this item for the March 11, 2013 GSA Council Meeting**

For Discussion

7. GSA Strategic Work Plan 2012-2013: Update to Council
Ashlyn Bernier (President) will present the item.
Attachments:
 - GSA Strategic Work Plan Update to GSA Council from President Bernier (**attached**)

**Attached
Numbered Pages**

3.0-3.20*
**Distributed in first
mailing*

6.0*
6.1*
**Distributed in first
mailing with page
numbers 7.0 and 7.1.*

7.0-7.3

For Information

8. CLE Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies: Final Report for the Joint CLE/TLAT Meeting of April 3, 2013

Nathan Andrews (Vice-President Academic) will present the item.

Attachments:

- Final Report of the CLE Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies

9. Elections (**none at this time**)

10. Special Business (**none at this time**)

8.0-8.19*

**Distributed in first mailing with page numbers 9.0-9.19.*

Reports

11. President

- i. President's Report (**attached**) **11.0-11.1**
- ii. GSA Board (**attached**) **11.2-11.3**
- iii. Budget and Finance Committee (**no meetings this reporting period**)
- iv. Governance Committee (**no report this period**)
- v. Nominating Committee (**attached**) **11.4-11.5**

12. Vice-President Academic

- i. Vice-President Academic's Report (**attached**) **12.0-12.2**

13. Vice-President Student Services

- i. Vice-President Student Services' Report (**attached**) **13.0-13.1**
- ii. Student Affairs Advisory Committee (joint chair: Vice-President Student Life) (**no meetings this reporting period**)

14. Vice-President Student Life

- i. Vice-President Student Life's Report (**attached**) **14.0-14.1**
- ii. Awards Selection Committee (**no meetings this reporting period**)

15. Vice-President Labour

- i. Vice-President Labour's Report (**attached**) **15.0-15.2**
- ii. Negotiating Committee (**no meetings this reporting period**)
- iii. Labour Relations Committee (**no meetings this reporting period**)

16. Senator

- i. Senator's Report (**no report this period**)

17. Speaker

- i. Speaker's Report (**no report this period**)

18. Chief Returning Officer

- i. Chief Returning Officer's Report (**attached**) **18.0**

- ii. Elections and Referenda Committee **(no meetings this reporting period)**

19. GSA Management

- i. Executive Director's Report **(attached)**

19.0-19.9

Question Period

20. Written Questions

- i. Student Feedback Regarding the Semi-Monthly Pay Period Cycle

Attachments:

- Memo to Council from Councillor Hamman Samuel **(attached)**

20.0

- ii. "Is the GSA willing to subsidize and distribute business cards that have the university logo, student's name, supervisor, lab/department/faculty, major, and contact information, to each graduate student at the University of Alberta?"

21. Oral Questions

Adjournment

**Meeting Minutes
11 March 2013
GSA Council Meeting**

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

From 5:30-6 pm a presentation, Open Access 101, was delivered to Council by Denise Koufogiannakis (Collections and Acquisitions Librarian).

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm.

Approval of Agenda

1. Approval of the 11 March 2013 Agenda

Members had before them the 11 March 2013 Consolidated Agenda, which had been distributed on 08 March 2013.

- Ashlyn Bernier (President) MOVED to amend the agenda and add Councillor Announcements as Item 3.5 and to change the President's Report to Council from Item 6i to Item 3.7. No objections.

The amended Agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

Approval of Minutes

2. Minutes

i. **Minutes from the 11 February 2013 GSA Council meeting**

Members had before them the 11 February 2013 GSA Council Minutes, which had been distributed on 26 February 2013.

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 two Councillors: Michaela Santiago (Nursing) and Hannah Madsen (Comparative Literature).

ii. **Farewell to departing Councillors**

None.

3.5. Councillor Announcements

- Ashlyn Bernier (President) announced the official GSA election results and thanked everyone who ran for a position. Ten individuals ran for office this year;

- The successful candidates were introduced to Council: President-Elect Brent Epperson (Political Science); Vice-President Academic-Elect Colin More (Geophysics); Vice-President Labour-Elect Simarjit (Monty) Bal (Political Science); Vice-President Student Services-Elect Megha Bajaj (Biological Sciences); and Vice-President Student Life-Elect Mohammed Hasin Haroon (Chemical Engineering); *and*
- The newly-elected officials were congratulated and Council was told that the GSA is thrilled with the new team.

Speaker Fred Wu announced that if councillors or officials would like an orientation to governance and the GSA, they should talk to Ellen Schoeck (Executive Director). The GSA would especially like to hear from students in Medicine and Dentistry in order to get individuals from these underrepresented departments on Council.

3.7. President's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 08 March 2013. In addition, Ashlyn Bernier (President) noted:

- There were many concerns raised after the provincial budget was announced last Thursday, March 7;
- She felt it was important for the guests of Council to hear her report prior to the presentation by Mazi Shirvani (Dean of FGSR);
- With the provincial budget, the University is looking at a 6.8% cut to Campus Alberta funding. The institution needed a 4% increase to order to maintain current services, therefore, cuts will total almost 11% and the impact will be long-lasting;
- The Change@Ualberta website contains the latest information and there are talks of strategic cuts, removing redundancies, and the possibility of a graduate market modifier being introduced, but no tuition increase;
- There may be opportunity in this and the possibility of doing things more efficiently and better preparing students;
- There will be upcoming discussions about funding and the GSA is positioned to take part in many of these. The GSA wants to create opportunities for its members to take part in these discussions because there is a need to show the importance of graduate student voices
- It is important for councillors to relate information back to their departments;
- Even though she is leaving and will no longer be a graduate student, the talks about the budget and funding will still continue;
- She would like to offer advice to the incoming team and to graduate students;
- Under her leadership, the GSA will engage in balanced constructive criticism as any decisions need to be realistic and feasible and not just suggestions that things need to be done better;

- Graduate students must be open to compromise and be aware of the budget's impact on others, including staff and other students;
- Graduate students must ensure their voice is heard, but also be aware we are just one of many stakeholder groups;
- Change is inevitable and respect should be shown to leaders;
- She would like to provide a brief summary of the GSA engagement plan;
- The Alberta Graduate Council is a lobby group to the provincial government which prepares lobbying documents and schedules meetings with MLAs. However, the AGC is also facing some challenges;
- The recent IGNITE Conference also looked at the future of postsecondary education in Alberta;
- There are many opportunities for graduate students to work with the Administration and Board of Governors. Students are allowed to observe these bodies' meetings during open sessions;
- There is the Board of Governors strategic planning retreat in April and graduate students are encouraged to email their ideas to her;
- The newly elected officials will also be fully briefed on these issues so that there is no period of uncertainty for them during the transition;
- The GSA is currently attempting to schedule a meeting of all the associations at the University of Alberta, including the Students' Union, Non-Academic Staff Association and the Academic Staff Association to explore the possibility of presenting a united front;
- There is an opportunity this Wednesday, March 13 from 12 to 1 pm, to attend a campus-wide forum where Acting Provost and Vice-President (Academic) Martin Ferguson-Pell and Phyllis Clark, Vice-President (Finance and Administration), will talk about the provincial budget and how it will affect this institution and all are welcome to attend;
- The GSA will be sending out an email to alert graduate students about this forum;
- Martin Ferguson-Pell will be attending Council next month to speak officially about graduate education, but Councillors can still ask about budget and student experience then;
- It would be great to see a packed house at Council to ask Martin Ferguson-Pell about the budget, since he is the best person to ask; *and*
- Thank you to our guests of Council. Unfortunately, there will be no answers about the budget at this meeting.

The floor was then opened to questions. No questions.

Presentations

4. Graduate Education at the University of Alberta

Ashlyn Bernier (President) introduced the guest, Dr. Mazi Shirvani (Dean of FGSR), and noted that Dr. Catherine Swindlehurst (Special Advisor to the Provost) would be arriving late. Ashlyn Bernier (President) presented the item. Materials associated with the item (a letter from President Ashlyn Bernier to Council about the Graduate Plan, the Graduate Education Administration Draft Action Plan, and the Draft Report from the Graduate Studies Consultation) had been previously distributed on 26 February 2013. In addition, Ashlyn Bernier (President) noted:

- The consultative plan was based upon student opinions and that the Graduate Draft Action Plan was from Administration.

Dr. Mazi Shirvani (Dean of FGSR) then spoke to the item and noted the following:

- He had previously talked about developments at his last visit to Council with Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic);
- These draft documents were still in the making at that time;
- The Graduate Action Plan is like the blueprint of a car, where the design of the vehicle is graduate education administration;
- This blueprint doesn't really tell you where it is going to take you or what graduate education actually delivers. That is what strategic planning does;
- The Graduate Action Plan asks for faculties to produce their own strategic plans and it suggests where graduate education is supposed to go and not how it will happen;
- It is about how to organize graduate education most efficiently;
- The role of graduate students and the GSA is crucial; *and*
- Graduate students need a loud voice in order to contribute in deciding what is being delivered.

Dr. Catherine Swindlehurst (Special Advisor to the Provost) had arrived at Council by this time and contributed the following remarks on the item:

- The data for this report was collected across campus over a 6-week period;
- It provides a snapshot of what is happening now in graduate education and gives views on what administration and recruitment is like now and what it should be like in the future for graduate education;
- In the report, over 200 people were interviewed, including 40 graduate students from across campus;
- Forty departments were represented and all but one faculty;

- This gave a good indication of the views on campus and, as seen in report, there are a wide variety of viewpoints; *and*
- The intention is to pull actions and recommendations from this report.

Following the presentation, there were a number of questions:

Ashlyn Bernier (President) asked: There have been a couple of allusions to a second draft of this report. From those who have seen the Graduate Education Administration Action Plan, what can we potentially expect to see in a second draft?

Dr. Catherine Swindlehurst (Special Advisor to the Provost) responded: We've gotten a lot of feedback from the Deans and are working on a second reiteration and on a vision of where graduate education is going. A vision document.

Ashlyn Bernier (President) supplementary: This the Collegium VOCALE (Vision for Outstanding Campus Learning Experiences)?

Dr. Catherine Swindlehurst (Special Advisor to the Provost) responded: Yes, a part of it is that.

Dr. Mazi Shirvani (Dean of FGSR) added: This is not a process that should drag out, but all of those things are going to happen fairly quickly over the next few months.

Amanda Lim (English and Film Studies) requested that her questioning privilege be deferred to Briana Wells (English and Film Studies), who asked: I understand that the Action Plan is presented and is focused on procedural changes. I have a question about quality measures and success and what constitutes success. What is the relationship between the Quality Measures Working Group and these two bodies and how have they have intersected?

Dr. Mazi Shirvani (Dean of FGSR) responded: The Working Group has proceeded in parallel to this. The Working Group is an *ad hoc* committee of FGSR Council and Council cannot enforce their recommendations. Quality measures still need to be incorporated into strategic plans to provide foundational information and for departments to develop their own measures of quality. You can't take levels and apply them to every program.

There is a need for faculties to try and be aligned in what kinds of things they regard as

measures of quality. It doesn't make sense for one faculty to have numeric quality measures and another to use only student satisfaction. Alignment is where the Working Group is going to be useful for faculties to use when developing their own strategic plans.

Brianna Wells (English and Film Studies) supplementary: The Quality Measures Working Group is giving advice to faculties or is it being imposed?

Dr. Mazi Shirvani (Dean of FGSR) responded: They provide a report to FGSR Council with recommendations. If Council adopts a list of quality measures, it will be hard for the faculties to deviate too far from this list. It is more of a suggestion of what things are quality measures. Faculty strategic plans need a mix of both.

Nathan Andrews (Vice-President Academic) asked: The term 'vision' is used at least ten times in your document and is a very interesting concept. Through consultation, did you hear from the Provost Fellow (Naomi Krogman) about consultation about graduate student supervision? If you did, how does that connect with what you're doing?

Dr. Catherine Swindlehurst (Special Advisor to the Provost) responded: Supervision is not explicitly in the report. Naomi Krogman (Provost Fellow) was not consulted. As you've seen in the documents, there are many moving parts like the graduate system, the paper system, IT, recruitment, how we communicate with incoming and current students, and communication with faculties. The vision of graduate studies and graduate experience is much different than five, ten, or fifteen years ago. Naomi Krogman's work on supervision is another moving part of it.

Nathan Andrews (Vice-President Academic) supplementary: We haven't met as a task force all year. Mazi, you might have some insight into how that work is going?

Dr. Mazi Shirvani (Dean of FGSR) responded: Naomi's? Unfortunately, I haven't had a recent update on that project.

Garry Baron (Sociology, guest of Council) responded that he was Dr. Krogman's research assistant on that project and could answer that question. He stated that the literature review of various materials was finished and that the project was currently finishing with the focus groups. Reports were to be written up later that month.

Hamid Ramezani (Chemistry) asked: All the quality measures that the faculties are going to specify as their road map, there are no supervisory committees about that. They are basically on their own and there is no way that FGSR can ask them if they are doing that. I remember you saying you would use public shame to get faculties to be better. This reminds me of a pharmaceutical company with no quality control measures. Is that right?

Dr. Mazi Shirvani (Dean of FGSR) responded: I know for sure I mentioned shaming in regards to professional development, as it is an integral component of graduate education. In terms of quality measures, any time someone writes one down it can be measured and will be measured. How this information will be used, even graduate student satisfaction, it can be done. Unless a quality measure is un-measurable, it will be measured. This is a proposal for the FGSR as an office to become more of a quality assurance unit.

Jean-David Jutras (Oncology) asked: The process you're going to have to have is comparing programs to other institutions. In Canada, we don't focus on grading different schools like that, like Cal Tech. University of Toronto is highly rated but not by all agencies. Will this quality measure be made public or kept within the University?

Dr. Mazi Shirvani (Dean of FGSR) responded: It's a question of how open you want to be. Other places also do a lot of quality measurement. In Saskatchewan, there is a provincial one which provides an assessment every 5 to 7 years. A lot of those results are not made public, but it doesn't mean there can't be an internal conversation about it. Action should be taken but not in absence of information, and this information can go to all the interested parties without posting it on a website. With quality measures, I don't see why they can't be made public.

Brent Epperson (Vice-President Labour) asked: I have a question more for Catherine. I'd like to speak about professional development. I've had some discussions with Mazi about programs like McGill's Skillsets program. I'd like to hear how professional development fits in as a priority.

Dr. Catherine Swindlehurst (Special Advisor to the Provost) responded: It certainly is a priority, as most students don't go into academic settings after they graduate. It is a

huge priority within the vision of graduate studies and experience. It's the future to develop a strong professional development program. What that looks like is unclear right now and under consultation. I'd like to see that conversation pushed up on the priority list. There are great examples on campus of professional development within programs. I'd like to see best practices showcased, like with TEC Edmonton and Renee Polziehn in FGSR, who is doing good work, and bring in external examples like McGill.

Brent Epperson (Vice-President Labour) supplementary: I realize it's early. What about discussions with the Office of Advancement and the Alumni Association?

Dr. Catherine Swindlehurst (Special Advisor to the Provost) responded: Absolutely, a mentorship program with alumni would be fantastic.

Isaac Odoom (Councillor-at-Large) asked: Your report says something about the Edmonton effect and recruitment strategies?

Dr. Catherine Swindlehurst (Special Advisor to the Provost) responded: There were several people in departments that were frustrated about the attractiveness of Edmonton as a destination city, like with the University of British Columbia and Vancouver. How do we counteract that and bring people here? Some ideas include providing more funding and working with the city and the province to promote the University of Alberta, in addition to promoting the excellence of the programs here.

Amanda Lim (English and Film Studies) asked: Catherine, thank you for the report. How do you feel the draft Action Plan reflects your consultations and your own report?

Dr. Catherine Swindlehurst (Special Advisor to the Provost) responded: I would say the Action Plan does reflect parts of the report, but subsequent drafts will really bring the two together.

There were no further questions.

5. 2013 HUB Mall Incident

Ashlyn Bernier (President) introduced the guest, Mr. Philip Stack (Associate Vice-President Risk Management Services). No material was distributed in advance and a PowerPoint presentation was shown to Council. During the presentation, Philip Stack (Associate Vice-President Risk Management Services) made the following points:

- The 2012 HUB mall incident (on June 15, a robbery occurred at the north end of HUB mall resulting in three deaths and a severely injured guard and, during that incident, the crisis management team was activated) was a particularly sad event and its implications are important;
- He wants to share the information that had been gained from various reviews and, particularly, a third-party review of the response to the incident;
- Risk Management Services received some criticism afterwards about how well they had shared information with the University community;
- Specifically, there were two criticisms: the first was that the notification system was not used and the second was that information was not shared well with the University community;
- The crisis management team held a normal debrief to look at their response and what worked, what didn't work, and what could be improved for the future. This included a review of communication;
- These recommendations have been shared and the full reports are available on the Risk Management Services web page;
- There were two internal reviews and then a third-party review of the processes and the responses and communications;
- Bob Wasylyshyn, a former Chief of Police with Edmonton Police Services, provided the third-party review;
- Risk Management Services asked him to look at the existing communication policies and procedures, the existing testing procedures, review the 911 protocols, and coordination between Risk Management Services, Protective Services, crisis management and police;
- There were three primary themes from the report, involving emergency notifications, effectiveness, and training and communication, and there were thirty-two recommendations;
- The most important was the recommendation for the University to orient students and staff to the emergency communication system and do a better job of informing individuals about the different systems, where to go for information, what devices can be used, and what certain terms mean;
- Another recommendation was that the University develop a second category of communication. Previously, a notification was sent only if there was an immediate threat to life or damage to facilities. There was no second category to cover a serious incident without an immediate threat;

- A third recommendation was that the University revise and formalize the testing procedures. Emails seemed to be effective forms of communication at the time, but they weren't getting out due to a glitch in email system. This should have been identified and now this glitch is fixed;
- There need to be protocols surrounding communication between the Edmonton Police Services, 911, and Protective Services about the specifics of the incident. Staff need to know about how to respond, the details of the incident, and have more access to information to inform the community;
- Risk Management Services did not have access to the Edmonton Police Services command post during the incident;
- There is also a need for policies, procedures, and protocols for sheltering during an incident so that students know where to go and what to do;
- Quick and effective notification is a priority;
- One of the key questions was why Risk Management Services didn't use the notification system that night;
- Bob Wasylyshyn stated in his report that Risk Management Services acted correctly in not using the notification system, based on a review of the facts known at the time. This has an impact on peace officers and their decisions;
- The original decision that night was based on unconfirmed initial information about a robbery with no suggestion of ongoing danger to the University community;
- After the initial reports were received, provincial legislation and protocols prevented peace officers from entering a scene if weapons were used or are present;
- Protective Services was concerned about a vague message creating panic and luring onlookers to the site of the incident, as they were already stretched to their limits;
- The supervisor had to choose between staying on site and coordinating matters or sending out a message via the notification system;
- He would like to reassure Council that the University of Alberta is prepared for a major incident. These recommendations are for how that response can be enhanced;
- The next action will be to make the full report public after it goes to the Board of Governors on March 15 and to share the recommendations with other post-secondary institutions; *and*
- Risk Management Services continues to implement the recommendations from both the internal and third-party reports.

The floor was then opened to questions.

Zhengdong Li (Councillor-at-Large) asked: From my understanding, following the incident no one knew where the suspect was?

Philip Stack (Associate Vice-President Risk Management Services) responded: We knew there was a robbery and that the suspect had left the campus.

Zhengdong Li (Councillor-at-Large) supplementary: If he was possibly around campus, then there was a risk. That was a clear mistake. Why isn't the Administration owning up to it?

Philip Stack (Associate Vice-President Risk Management Services) responded: The third-party review was done by a highly-trained individual to make an assessment and draw conclusions about how we responded. We have learned from this experience and also about what students' expectations are. I'm not prepared to say we should have sent out a notification based on the situation these individuals were in at the time. It's easy to look back and critique, but I am confident that our staff applied appropriate judgment.

Leanne Labossiere (Earth and Atmospheric Sciences) asked: I agree with you, and in this case it wouldn't have been the right call. This illustrates the issue with these messages, that there will be trust on the other end. There are changes to this system suggested in the third-party report. How can we trust the notification system since it is a one-way medium? Are there any plans in place for building trust in the system?

Philip Stack (Associate Vice-President Risk Management Services) responded: We are developing a different level of communication out to the community to better understand the systems and how they work. We will never be able to send out a communication to 50,000 people in ten, fifteen, or even thirty minutes. We rely on the fact that, if one in five people get the message, they will tell their friends and that's how we get that message out. We rely on you in terms of feedback on how to improve the system. It is fair to say that we did breach that trust in terms of getting a notification out to community.

Leanne Labossiere (Earth and Atmospheric Sciences) supplementary: Is there any way that students and staff can receive training in order to know the correct response to incidents? Is there any movement towards offering training or information sessions?

Philip Stack (Associate Vice-President Risk Management Services) responded: There is an information campaign involving two-way communication. We have significantly enhanced our capacity to monitor social media, Facebook, and Twitter to respond and hear the concerns of the community. We need to rely on the University community to take responsibility to learn these things and to know what to do.

Simarjit (Monty) Bal (Councillor-at-Large) asked: The Canadian Political Science conference was occurring at the time of the HUB mall incident and we had over 700 guests at the University. If you had sent the warning message, how would those messages been passed along to visitors?

Philip Stack (Associate Vice-President Risk Management Services) responded: We had briefed the grounds people and cordoned off areas we did not want guests to enter. It is a crisis management team responsibility to manage communication and the University webpage also provides information to the community.

Simarjit (Monty) Bal (Councillor-at-Large) supplementary: Can you tell us more about the process where you monitor Facebook?

Philip Stack (Associate Vice-President Risk Management Services) responded: We bring in people to monitor Facebook, Twitter, and there is our own account that people can use to communicate information and determine if we need to respond.

Isaac Odoom (Councillor-at-Large) asked: My view is that this incident affected the image of the University. Do you agree with that?

Philip Stack (Associate Vice-President Risk Management Services) responded: Any negative attention affects the image of the University. There were members of Health and Safety around HUB mall and the International Centre to assure people that we are a safe community and tell individuals that this was not a random event, it was a specific event that happened to occur on campus in an area where students had their residences.

Isaac Odoom (Councillor-at-Large) asked: Are there any measures that go out to reclaim that lost image? Outsiders probably don't know.

Philip Stack (Associate Vice-President Risk Management Services) responded: We received feedback from the political science conference individuals that were from other institutions

that they didn't think their own institutions would have acted as effectively. There were some negative images in the media but this was short-lived. It is a double-edged sword. If you continually put out information to the media, then it reinforces a view that should be short-lived. Based on the facts, we didn't want to have this on the front page of the media continually, because the actual circumstances don't get reflected.

Hamman Samuel (Computing Science) asked: There are some statements that you heard around this incident, like "no further details reported about this event" during the decision-making process. You said that the people in charge didn't have much information, but in social media people were warning their friends. Suppose that after this decision not to notify students, this gunman had killed someone else. Then we'd be looking at this failure to notify in a different manner. Maybe there is something missing in the protocol. Are there some thoughts about that specific direction?

Philip Stack (Associate Vice-President Risk Management Services) responded: That was one of the specific recommendations, to send out a notification and err on the side of caution in the future.

Samuel Hamman Samuel (Computing Science) supplementary: With another incident about a gas leak in HUB mall, I got messages about it, but with the gunman I didn't get an SMS much less an email. Have there been any changes to the system?

Hamman Samuel (Computing Science) asked: Yes we now use an aggregator. That part of the system changed. I can't speak to a specific situation, but go to BearTracks and send a text message to sign on. I encourage you to do that.

Hamid Ramezani (Chemistry): People focus on communication and that's not the main point, because you don't want the campus in chaos. Even if you are informed about a gun on campus there is no way to stop them, as you said. How does the Edmonton Police Service and University respond to something like that? Did the police respond the way that they should and what about coordination?

Philip Stack (Associate Vice-President Risk Management Services) responded: We have a great relationship with EPS and do several exercises with them. I believe that EPS were on site within minutes. They can get here as quickly as our peace officers can. Our staff ensure they get to the

right building as quickly as possible. We have already talked about the need for students and staff to know what “shelter in place” means and the need to inform.

Qiang Li (Councillor-at-Large) asked: What is the role of the residence community associations, such as the HUB Community Association?

Philip Stack (Associate Vice-President Risk Management Services) responded: We can use them as a mechanism to get the message out. Work with them closely and ensure that students are oriented on what to do during an emergency. There is a liaison peace officer now in HUB mall, Monday to Friday, who liaises with the residents’ associations.

There were no further questions.

6. President

i. President’s Report

This item had been moved earlier in the agenda and re-labeled as Item 3.7.

ii. GSA Board

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 08 March 2013. The report stood as submitted.

iii. Budget and Finance Committee

No meetings this reporting period.

iv. Governance Committee

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 08 March 2013. The report stood as submitted.

v. Nominating Committee

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 08 March 2013. The report stood as submitted.

7. Vice-President Academic

i. Vice-President Academic’s Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 08 March 2013. The report stood as submitted. In addition, Nathan Andrews (Vice-President Academic) noted the following:

- That he would like to emphasize the idea of completion times for candidacy;

- There was a discussion at the Policy Review Committee meeting about program requirements and milestones other than for the completion of the thesis;
- The PRC suggested restricting the deadline for completion of candidacy to 3 years and this suggestion will go to FGSR Council;
- This means that students would have three years to complete ethics requirements, courses, and comprehensive exams or candidacy exams;
- The rationale for the deadline of three years was that most funding lasts only for four years. There is no point in pushing the deadline and students running out of money to do their doctoral research;
- There is also the rationale that the old guideline of two years until candidacy is not really followed and that the new guideline should be more enforceable;
- There would still be the option for people to extend their time in a PhD program but this is not a condition for candidacy right now; *and*
- The PRC will suggest to FGSR Council that there be this extension allowance for candidacy.

The floor was then opened to questions.

Hamid Ramezani (Chemistry): Putting a deadline for candidacy doesn't really help. It creates more paperwork for the graduate program administrators. In some situations, a time limit is not possible, as when there is a change in supervisors.

Nathan Andrews (Vice-President Academic) responded: Previously, the deadline for candidacy had specified "normally two years" and the old policy will stand if FGSR Council does not agree with the recommendations. The new time line is still good, based on the funding issue for doctoral students, and students can still ask for extension of the candidacy deadline.

Ashlyn Bernier (President) responded: I am in support of this proposal with a suggestion of specifying what circumstances should warrant an extension, so that not every student gets one who asks for one. This is meant to cover the specific situations Hamid has pointed out. Overall, the recommendations are useful and students might move through their program requirements more efficiently.

Hamid Ramezani (Chemistry) supplementary: I understand the rationale, the problem is that some professors aren't doing the job. The pressure is placed only on the graduate student. If the supervisor doesn't know what he's doing, or the project goes awry, the graduate student is in trouble and not the supervisor.

Nathan Andrews (Vice-President Academic): There is still a requirement that students can finish their program requirements no later than 6 months before their defence date. There is a bit of flexibility and it is not all on the student.

Qiang Li (Councillor-at-Large) made a comment about not agreeing with the deadline and was directed by Fred Wu (Speaker) that discussion about that particular opinion was finished.

Qiang Li (Councillor-at-Large): In my department you have to finish your candidacy within 16 months, but you can do your research before your candidacy. Each department has its own plan and this may not be appropriate for every department.

Anuschka Ataullahjan (Public Health) asked: Does this apply to part-time students, as well? Or will there be other guidelines?

Nathan Andrews (Vice-President Academic) responded: Mazi Shirvani (Dean of FGSR) had stated that we don't want a policy for part-time students and should just address issues on a case-by-case basis for them. There is nothing specifically and, for the masters-to-PhD transitional students, the candidacy deadline is still three years.

Hamman Samuel (Computing Science) asked: What does the University envision would be the outcomes?

Nathan Andrews (Vice-President Academic): The main thing is the completion rate with an overall rationale of students being able to finish early and get real jobs. How many of you are in agreement with the recommendation, with a show of hands?

Note: The number of hands raised was not counted by the minute-taker.

There were no further questions.

8. Vice-President Student Services

i. Vice-President Student Services' Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 08 March 2013. The report stood as submitted. In addition, Naseeb Adnan (Vice-President Student Services) noted the following:

- The 89 Avenue student housing project is on target for substantial completion in August and with move-in dates in September for students;
- The GSA office is currently working on the software for the U-Pass referendum, which will likely occur by the end of March; *and*
- Council will be kept informed.

No questions were asked.

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

It was noted on the Agenda that no meetings were needed for the Student Affairs Advisory Committee that month.

9. Vice-President Student Life

i. Vice-President Student Life's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 08 March 2013. The report stood as submitted. In addition, Huimin Zhong (Vice-President Student Life) noted the following:

- The ASC members have selected the GSA Awards recipients, who will be presented with their award at the GSA Awards Night on March 27
and
- She would like to thank the ASC members for their hard work as there were over 180 GSA Awards applications this year and also thank Courts (GSA Communications Assistant) for arranging the adjudications.

No questions were asked.

ii. Awards Selection Committee

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 08 March 2013. The report stood as submitted.

10. Vice-President Labour

i. Vice-President Labour's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 08 March 2013.

Brent Epperson (Vice-President Labour) MOVED to go into closed session. SECONDED by Ashlyn Bernier (President). No objections, MOTION CARRIED.

Hamman Samuel (Computing Science) MOVED to go out of closed session. SECONDED by Ashlyn Bernier (President). No objections, MOTION CARRIED.

ii. Negotiating Committee

It was noted on the Agenda that no meetings were needed for the Negotiating Committee that month.

iii. **Labour Relations Committee**

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 08 March 2013. The report stood as submitted.

11. Senator

i. **Senator's Report**

No report was required at this time. Roy Coulthard (Senator) was not in attendance for this month's meeting.

12. Speaker

i. **Speaker's Report**

No report was required at this time.

13. Chief Returning Officer

i. **Chief Returning Officer's Report**

Members had before then a written report, which had been distributed on 08 March 2013. The report stood as submitted.

The floor was then opened to questions.

Isaac Odoom (Councillor-at-Large) asked: Thanks to Daniel for an excellent election. Do you want to tell us about problems with the current election bylaw, as mentioned in your report?

Daniel Prins (CRO) responded: It is just a preliminary review. In the current bylaw there are references to paper ballots and other out-of-date references.

Isaac Odoom (Councillor-at-Large) supplementary: Does it include the kind of electoral system we use?

Daniel Prins (CRO): No, there are no significant changes. It will involve just the administration and perhaps the timeline of elections.

Isaac Odoom (Councillor-at-Large) supplementary: Does Council or a student have the right to recommend changes to how elections are conducted?

Fred Wu (Speaker): Tell Dan.

Ashlyn Bernier (President): I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Dan for his hard work on this election.

There were no further questions.

ii. Elections and Referenda Committee

It was noted on the Agenda that no meetings were needed for the Elections and Referenda Committee that month.

14. GSA Management

i. Executive Director's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 08 March 2013. In addition, Ellen Schoeck (Executive Director) noted the following:

- With the elected officials and transition, this is the first time there is a slate with a written platform and an attempt to marry the GSA Strategic Work Plan to the platform;
- A retreat was planned with the newly-elected and outgoing GSA officials;
- On May 1, the new group takes office and will be able to jump right in with the Strategic Work Plan and be ready to talk to senior administration;
- Administration did not expect a Strategic Work Plan from GSA when it was first developed;
- There is currently efforts to clean up bylaw and policy, with a concerted effort to look at policy; *and*
- There are 102 pages of current material, editorial changes, and out-of-date materials.

Action Items, Elections, Appointments, Special Business

15. Elections

No elections at this time.

16. Budget Principles, Practices, and Procedures: Proposed Revisions (second reading)

Ashlyn Bernier (President) presented the item. Members had before them an outline of issue and proposed revisions to GSA Bylaw, Part XII: Finances, which had been previously distributed on 08 March 2013. This was the second reading of the proposed changes.

Ashlyn Bernier (President) MOVED that the GSA Council approve, on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Board and the GSA BFC, the proposed revisions to GSA Bylaw, Part XII: Finances, as outlined in the attached three-column documents, effective immediately. SECONDED by Cathleen Edwards (Physical Education and Recreation).

In addition, Ashlyn Bernier (President) noted that the proposed changes were in regards to clarity, included recommendations from the external audit, and were needed to align the GSA with University policy.

The floor was then opened for debate. No questions.

Motion PASSED, with one abstention by Hamman Samuels (Computing Science).

17. GSA Bylaw and Policy: Proposal to Move Certain Sections to GSA Policy

Ashlyn Bernier (President) presented the item. Members had before them an outline of issue and a letter to Council from the Executive Director regarding Bylaw and Policy, which had been distributed on 08 March 2013. In addition, Fred Wu (Speaker) noted:

- This proposal involved moving some elements from bylaw to policy on the principle that the GSA bylaw should be as simple as possible and should reflect core principles;
- There are no substantive changes proposed with this motion; *and*
- That it is easier for the GSA to change policy than it is to change bylaw.

The floor was then opened for debate. No questions.

Ashlyn Bernier (President) MOVED the GSA Council approve, on the recommendation of the GSA Governance Committee, the proposal to move certain sections of GSA Bylaw to the GSA Policy Manual, as outlined in the attached letter from the Executive Director, effective upon the second reading. SECONDED by Naseeb Adnan (Vice-President Student Services).

Ellen Schoeck (Executive Director) stated that the new document will be searchable and it will be easier to find information.

Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Question Period

18. Written Questions

Prepared by C Borstad and C Thomas for GSA Council 08 April 2013

No written questions were received prior to the meeting.

19. Oral Questions

No questions were asked.

Haman Samuel (Computing Science) announced that on July 1st 2012, the University had introduced the semi-monthly pay cycle and he would like to get feedback on how it is going for graduate students.

Michele Duval (Biological Sciences) announced an addendum to the nominating committee report. There is an early call for nominations for Senator opening on March 13th and the formal call will be on April 10th. The actual election of Senator will hopefully occur before May Council.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:27 pm.

Outline of Issue

GSA Bylaw and Policy: Proposal to Move Certain Sections to GSA Policy

Suggested Motion:

GSA Council is asked to consider the following Motion:

That the GSA Council **approve**, on the recommendation of the GSA Governance Committee, the proposal to move certain sections of GSA Bylaw to the GSA Policy Manual, as outlined in the attached letter from the Executive Director (dated March 8, 2013), effective immediately.

Note: This is the **second** reading of this proposal to move certain sections of GSA Bylaw to the GSA Policy Manual; the first reading took place at the March 11, 2013 meeting of the GSA Council and was approved unanimously.

Jurisdiction:

GSA Bylaw, Part VII, §2.2.1.1

The Governance Committee shall *“advise Council on the Bylaws, matters of policy not in the purview of any other Standing Committee, or other governing issues and provide a report on recommended changes at the next scheduled Council meeting.”*

GSA Bylaw, Part VII, §2.2.1.2

The Governance Committee shall *“make any routine or editorial changes to the governance documents as deemed necessary by the Committee.”*

GSA Bylaw, Part I, §2.1

“The Policy Manual shall contain all policies and procedures passed by Council except as contained in any other governing document.”

GSA Bylaw, Part I, §2.2

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

Background:

The background for the proposed changes is set out in the attached letter from the Executive Director.

March 8, 2013 (reissued on March 27, 2013)

Dear Council,

I am writing to you on behalf of President Ashlyn Bernier, who is in a two-day recovery period from a minor operation and back in action by Monday Council. As background, please read the ED report, which is part of this package of materials, and which has been discussed by the GSA Board.

Succinctly put, the GSA Bylaws and Policy Manual need a complete restructuring before the Board or Governance Committee (GC) can tackle meaty issues for debate by Council. For instance, Council will need to decide, eventually, on how to remove an elected official from office. That is how we are defining “meaty” at this time. We are in the midst of a major **editorial review** overseen by Speaker Fred Wu and me at the behest of former GSA President Roy Coulthard, and with the blessing of the current GSA President Ashlyn Bernier. That review will continue through April under the auspices of the GSA GC.

At issue now is our Bylaws. The GSA must have Bylaws as directed by the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* (the “Act”). The *Act* gives no definition of the term “Bylaw”; nonetheless our working definition is that Bylaw is our top-tier law -- thus short and sweet, to-the-point, therefore requiring two readings of Council. **Bylaws should be brief.**

The GSA Governance Committee now proposes that policy and procedural content currently in Bylaw (two readings) be moved to the GSA Policy Manual (one Council reading). In addition, the GSA Governance Committee will make editorial changes to Bylaw and Policy (ie nothing beyond housekeeping/routine) so we have a “clean” document to work with. Then, beginning this summer, Council will start to see some proposals for major change to GSA Bylaw and Policy – Bylaw and Policy have not been reviewed for some time.

Here now is the proposal from your Governance Committee, with changes regarded as aligning with U of A norms for what is bylaw and what is policy/procedure:

1. **Retain in Bylaw** the names of GSA standing committees and move all detail to the GSA Policy Manual (ie **no changes**, just a move from Bylaw to the Policy Manual, thus remaining under Council control).
2. **Retain in Bylaw** that *ad hoc* committees may be constituted by Council, but move details (1.92-1.99) to the GSA Policy Manual.
3. **Retain in Bylaw** the names of all caucuses and move detail to the GSA Policy Manual.
4. **Retain in Bylaw** sections on “performance of Officers and Councilors” but move to the Policy Manual section 3 on performance of committee members and performance of representatives on University governing bodies and committees to the GSA Policy Manual, an issue now covered by oversight of the new GSA Nominating Committee.

Once these editorial/structural changes are made, Council will have some substantive issues to debate, eg how to remove an elected official from office and what shape our judicial policy should take.

Here are the links to the Bylaw and Policy referenced in this email:

<http://www.gsa.ualberta.ca/05Governance/~media/gsa/GoverningDocuments/Bylaws.pdf> and

<http://www.gsa.ualberta.ca/05Governance/~media/gsa/GoverningDocuments/PolicyManual.pdf>

Ellen

Dear GSA Council,

As you may recall, **the GSA Council received the GSA's 2012-2013 Strategic Work Plan at its October 15, 2012 meeting and then received an update on the SWP at the January 14, 2013 meeting.** The 2012-2013 Plan (which is available online for your review at

<http://www.gsa.ualberta.ca/~media/gsa/AboutTheGSA/GSAstrategicPlan201213ForCirculationOct2012.pdf>) 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.

I want to update you on the current 2012-2013 GSA SWP and the strategic goals that we have achieved this year. As you may remember from my report to you in January, since releasing the GSA SWP, the GSA elected officials have met with ten members of University Administration to discuss common goals, and devise strategies to implement aspects of the plan that are of mutual interest. That process has continued since January and I would like to offer you **a synthesis of the GSA's progress in pursuing the strategic goals outlined in the GSA 2012-2013 SWP.** This progress report will be the spring board for the new team's 2013-2014 SWP.

MARKET MODIFIERS

In the fall of 2012, **the potential introduction of another market modifier** caused us to temporarily redirect our strategic efforts to tackle this prospect. As I informed you in January, I am happy to report that **discussion of market modifiers for this year has ceased.** The recent release of the provincial budget will almost certainly mean that **the issues of market modifiers and potential tuition increases will play a central role in the GSA's activities in the coming year** and the incoming team of elected officials is ready and **fully prepared to engage with both the University and government and advocate to effectively on behalf of graduate students** about these issues. Over the past year **the GSA has built a reputation as a tough, constructive critic** on the issue of market modifiers and this is a role that will continue to be played by the incoming team.

THE GRADUATE EDUCATION INITIATIVE

The graduate education initiative (which began as the possible abolition of FGSR) has kept the GSA elected officials extremely busy throughout their terms and this has been one of my top priorities as GSA President. **The GSA has worked very closely with FGSR and point person Catherine Swindlehurst on the graduate education initiative.** We have updated you regularly on this and created opportunities for you to express your suggestions and concerns to those involved by **inviting University stakeholders such as Dean Shirvani and Acting Provost and Vice-President Martin Ferguson-Pell to attend GSA Council on a regular basis (in November, January, March, and April).** The incoming team of elected officials will continue working with FGSR and the Provost's Office on the graduate education initiative and will **ensure the best interests of the graduate students of this University are the driving force behind this initiative.** The GSA will continue to offer both constructive criticism and its own positive proposals.

COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT

A key strategic goal for the GSA in 2012-2013 was **the negotiation of "a fair collective agreement that supports graduate students who are employed by the University"** and I am happy to report that this has been accomplished. We also worked this year to **develop strategies concerning education and enforcement of the Agreement** and this is something that will continue to be pursued in the coming year. It is a great win for us that Administration is accepting responsibility for enforcement of the CA. Nonetheless, this remains very much a key goal for the GSA and Council will continue to receive progress reports. Thanks are due as well to the VP Labour and the GSA Labour Relations Committee for all their hard work on the bargaining process this past year.

FUNDING

Another strategic goal was continued involvement in the Graduate Student Funding Task Force, which was struck in 2011. However, as I reported to you in January, the work of this Task Force stalled and so we have, in consultation with Phyllis Clark, VP Finance and Administration, struck terms of reference for a new committee, **the Graduate Student**

Tuition and Funding Data Committee, which will meet a few more times to gather information regarding graduate student support. As GSA President, I have served as co-chair of this committee and am **pleased with the progress it has made.** The GSA has been **regarded as a partner in this initiative and that speaks volumes about our strong reputation within Administration.** Working collaboratively within this committee and sharing information, **the GSA and Administration have agreed on data sets related to issues of graduate student support across Canada.** The GSA was also able to contribute important sets of data to this body in the form of a comprehensive report on cost of living standards in a selection of Canadian cities. **Your elected officials will continue their work with this committee and see active participation as vital to engaging with both administration and government on budget and tuition debates.** We will also begin investigating how best to use the data generated.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The current team of elected officials has invested a great deal of time in research into various **professional development programs** which may benefit graduate students at the U of A (including **programs coordinated by Renee Polziehn, Professional Development and Outreach Director, FGSR, and the Skillsets program pioneered at McGill University**). We have had a researcher tackle this and will review her report shortly. Additionally, the VP Academic has worked throughout his term on the Attributes and Competencies subcommittee.

RECOGNITION AND RELIEF

We have worked closely with the University and FGSR to **develop policies surrounding the recognition and relief of GSA elected officials** to ensure that future involvement in graduate student government will be a viable and attractive option for students. **In January 2013 the GSA was successful in having a policy on the recognition and relief of GSA elected officials added the Graduate Program Manual** (the policy can be found here: <http://www.gradstudies.ualberta.ca/gpm/Section7/ConsiderationOfReliefForTheGSAExecutive.aspx>). However, it remains a strategic goal for the incoming team of elected officials to negotiate a **no cost, special registration status** for elected officials (I recently met with the Registrar, Gerry Kendal, to discuss this issue and it is moving forward).

ON-CAMPUS HOUSING AND RENT INCREASES

The VP Student Life has worked diligently throughout the year on a **series of important issues related to graduate student housing.** While this, along with several issues, will remain an area of strategic focus in the coming year, **I am pleased with the progress we have made in this area.** At our retreat, March 22-23, the VPSL suggested a review of the residence contract in light of a number of disparate complaints we received this year.

MENTAL HEALTH

Our participation in the Administration's ongoing mental health review has resulted in an initiative on the part of Provost's Fellow Robin Overall to establish a **dedicated graduate student counseling space in Triffo Hall.** Plans for this are moving forward and **the GSA will continue to participate vigorously in this important area.**

U-PASS

Negotiations for the **continuation of the U-Pass agreement** were completed this year and, by the time you read this, a referendum will have been held. U-Pass is one of the core, essential services that the GSA provides and the VP Student Services has worked with great skill on the re-negotiation of the agreement this year, leading a coalition of graduate students from other affected post secondary education institutions.

CHILD CARE

At the GSA, we continually see the childcare needs of graduate students who apply for Child Care Grants, and thus, increasing the available support for graduate students with families was an important part of the 2012-2013 GSA SWP. To that end, this year we lobbied for increased funding for graduate students with children in the form of GSA grants.

PAW

The GSA's involvement as financial partners (along with the SU and the University) in the Physical Activity and Wellness Centre (PAW) has, likewise, held the attention of your elected officials this year. **We are important financial partners in this project** and will continue to **maintain our involvement in infrastructure planning and financing discussions.**

MODERNIZING GSA INFRASTRUCTURE AND THE GSA'S LONG-TERM HEALTH

There have been a number of strategic goals identified by the GSA concerning infrastructure which I am proud to report we have met. **The implementation of online fillable forms and a modernized direct deposit system** are completed and constitute a huge step forward for the GSA. The ongoing hard work of the GSA staff, management, and financial team have, likewise, ensured **that the GSA is developing into an organization that will remain robust over time.** A comprehensive review of GSA bylaw and policy, as well as the development of a five-year budget (which was presented to Council in February), have been important components of this. **The GSA's Early Call for Talent and associated training program** has also been very successful this year. **Eighteen graduate students expressed interest in running for elected positions** this year and there was an **8.6% voter turnout in the 2012-13 general election** (up from **4.5% in 2011-2012**).

The Board and BFC have received a succession plan for management as Heather Hogg moves to three days a week on April 15, focusing more on her role as Labour Professional and less on her role as Director of Operations. Courtney Thomas will assume the role of Director of Operations on April 15, with continued mentoring from Heather and Ellen. In 2014-2015, Ellen will begin to work part-time and we will be hiring a "junior" manager (as provided for in the 2013-2014 budget) to begin learning the GSA's operations and services.

EXTERNAL ADVOCACY

I have also devoted attention this year to investigating and discussing the **GSA's external lobbying presence.** **I recently attended the CASA AGM as an observer** and the current team of elected officials have worked with AGC on the GSA's lobbying presence. The GSA also participated in the recent march on the legislature to protest the provincial's government's cuts to post-secondary funding and I spoke at the rally which preceded the march. Additionally, the GSA has begun to explore the possibility of a future **relationship with APIRG (as was discussed at Council).**

MOVING FORWARD

As myself and my fellow elected officials near the end of our terms, we have, in consultation with the incoming officials, drafted the 2013-2014 GSA SWP. Like the 2012-2013 SWP, this new version 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 with the University of Alberta's guiding documents - Dare to Discover, Dare to Deliver, and (when it is released by the University) the 2013 Comprehensive Institutional Plan, while at the same time pursuing the GSA's 'agenda'. In particular, the platform of the incoming team of elected officials has guided the development of the SWP. Additionally, **a great deal of strategic thought has gone into the 2013-2014 GSA SWP – to this end it has been greatly streamlined and more precisely focused** while also building in a focus on the recently released provincial budget and its effects of the University and the graduate student community. When the University's revised CIP is released, the new team will need to grapple with the effects of a reduced grant.

The infrastructure surrounding the Early Call, elections, and transition which has been built over the past year has allowed the GSA to greatly reduce the time needed for incoming elected officials to transition into their positions. This is an important achievement which means, to hearken back to an analogy used by the Executive Director in her last report to Council, **the GSA airplane will not be sitting on the tarmac for months as incoming officials prepare and orient themselves – it will take off on May 1.**

In the forthcoming 2013-2014 GSA SWP you will see a number of important strategic goals identified. In addition to the initiatives mentioned throughout my report, the following issues will occupy the efforts on the GSA in the coming year:

- Obtain counseling services and **support for international graduate students who are seeking Canadian Permanent Residence**;
- Advocate for a new **relocation bursary** for graduate students from developing countries to offset initial moving expenses;
- Evaluate the possibility of **waiving international differential fees** or offering new scholarships to cover the international differential fees for top-performing international students;
- Pilot a **Departmental Liaison Initiative** which will focus on:
 - Compliance with the PSLA (*eg* election of a Councillor)
 - Risk assessment and reduction related to graduate student groups affiliated with the GSA (especially regarding alcohol use)
 - Education about and compliance with the CA
 - Orientation needs of departments
 - Representation on Faculty Councils
 - Linking functional departmental GSAs with struggling ones
 - The “proactive search” for graduate student talent as per the Nominating Committee’s terms of reference
 - Advising departments on the process for nominating an individual for an Honorary Degree (at the request of the Chancellor)
- Work to make the U of A **campus free from discrimination and bullying**;
- **Maintain and expand external advocacy efforts** and continue to **be both an advocate and a constructive critic** in interactions with University Administration and government especially as the provincial budget news rolls out;
- Work closely with FGSR and the Alumni Association to develop a **new mentorship program and professional development program for graduate students**; *and*
- Continue to **advocate for accessible and well-maintained graduate student housing**.

Sincerely,

Ashlyn Bernier, GSA President

Graduate Attributes at the University of Alberta

**A report of the Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE) Subcommittee on
Attributes and Competencies**

Submitted to the April 3, 2013 joint meeting of CLE/TLAT

DRAFT

Subcommittee Co-Chairs:

Dustin Chelen, VP (Academic), Students' Union

Nathan Andrews, VP (Academic), Graduate Students' Association

Dr. Steven Dew, Faculty of Engineering

Introduction

Student attributes (used interchangeably with graduate attributes in this document) generally describe the qualities, values and dispositions that students have developed by the time they have completed their university degree program. While not dissociated from disciplinary knowledge, they are fostered in each student regardless of field of study. Student attributes are broader than (but include) skills or technical competencies and are integrated throughout a higher education experience. This understanding helps us to distinguish attributes from disciplinary skills, emphasizes cross-disciplinary commonalities and applies to both graduate and undergraduate students. Prior to engaging in the topic, it is necessary to establish a common definition for student attributes as a means to avoid ambiguous terminology and to encourage productive discourse from all members of the University community. In addition to defining student attributes is also a need to define how and who should assess whether students acquire these qualities through their university program.

Environmental Scan

Although there is no standard definition, generic attributes can be broadly defined as the qualities that assist individuals' ability to succeed in and contribute to society in general and the working world. According to Bowden et al.,

Graduate attributes are the qualities, skills and understandings a university community agrees its students should develop during their time with the institution. These attributes include, but go beyond, the disciplinary expertise or technical knowledge that has traditionally formed the core of most university courses. They are qualities that also prepare graduates as agents of social good in an unknown future (cited in Atlay 2006, p. 212).

Depending on the institution's philosophy and values (e.g. citizenship- or society-centered values vs. work- and employability-centered concerns), different competencies can be espoused. They comprise learning content that are referred to as 'qualities', 'skills', 'competencies', 'understandings', 'attitudes', 'dispositions', 'values' and so on. Regardless of how it is referred to, having a description of graduate attributes (GAs) is one of the key ways through which universities have sought to articulate the outcomes of higher education (Barrie 2006).

In the current climate, in which universities seek to define their unique placement within the provincial, national and international education sector, and in which governments, taxpayers and students seek greater accountability for investments in post-secondary education, GAs are becoming increasingly important to the strategic planning processes for research-intensive

universities worldwide. From the Tuning Project in the European Union to quality assurance agencies in the United Kingdom and the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) in Australia, governments are asserting greater control and demanding an outcomes-based approach to post-secondary education standards (Barrie 2004).

The shift toward greater accountability of student development is driven not only by governments, but also by industry and by students themselves. Research universities are now being pressed to go beyond equipping students with knowledge and produce adults that are culturally aware, adaptive to change, and globally competitive. Within this context and regardless of government mandate, the development of GAs has clear strategic importance to universities who aim to not only educate contributing members of society, but also foster their holistic intellectual development.

The discussion of student attributes began in Australia during the early 1990s, using the term “Personal Transferable Skills”. As a condition of funding, Australian universities now must include a statement on generic outcomes of education in their operational plans. In addition, TEQSA’s initial audit recommendations of major universities have included considerable focus on student attributes (Burgess et al. 2012; Cooper et al. 2012).

Yet the aforementioned factors influencing the shift toward student attributes – massification of post-secondary education, increased investment accountability, and the development of the knowledge economy – are not isolated to universities in Australia. Certain Canadian accreditation agencies have already begun shifting towards an outcome-based approach and, while the creation of a provincial quality assurance agency is not a certainty, projects in other jurisdictions indicate a prevailing trend in this direction (Accreditation Board 2011; Liaison Committee 2012). In fact, the Ontario Council of Academic Vice Presidents created a report in 2005 that explicitly outlined expectations for undergraduate degree program graduates within its public post-secondary education system to monitor the effectiveness of instruction (Working Group on University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations 2005).

For a better outcome, Anderson (2004) argues that among the responsibilities of academic and administrative university leaders is to be able to collect information about student performance indicators in order to “facilitate the development of conceptual frameworks and paradigms that are both discipline specific and that cut across academic areas” (p.19). Various stakeholders could be identified in working with graduate attributes (GAs), but on a dichotomous paradigm: there is the course instructor on the one hand, and the students on the other hand. Models adopted by various universities differ substantially because of the uniqueness of institutions’ mission, purpose and characteristics. However, when we take in consideration instructor/student feedback and input that is longitudinal and formative in nature, the model can be adapted easily to various institutions.

Many examples exist from institutions that have acted in haste to adopt student attributes as a response to quality assurance initiatives; the final product being poorly-conceived attributes that do not reflect the entirety of the institution's academic programs and struggle to achieve consensus and collaboration among faculty for comprehensive implementation. Successful implementation and articulation of attributes stem from an organic, collaborative development process that engages the university community in an introspective discussion. This is the approach that the Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies has been committed to, and should continue to ground the process in the future.

The implementation stage of student attribute introduction is particularly crucial to the project's success. Significant comprehension and proper development of attributes depend critically on the explicit integration of attributes into the university experience. Once chosen, student attributes require widespread communication – through instructors, student leaders and administrators – and support for curriculum updates and instructional incorporation in order to permeate the university experience. Leaving student attributes as an implicit directive has been found to be ineffective.

A commitment to adopting this report's attributes will allow us to define the unique nature of a degree from the University of Alberta, a research-intensive institution. By elucidating what makes a U of A graduate unique, and integrating those attributes throughout each program, we are contributing to the creation of identifiable, cross-disciplinary links between our students that will serve as a distinguishing feature of our institution. The University of Alberta will be seen as a Canadian leader in preparing its students for an unknown future.

University of Alberta Context

In 2009, the Centre for Teaching and Learning provided a discussion paper on student attributes to the Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and the writers of the Academic Plan. This document was circulated for wider discussion, and with substantial support from the University Community, the development of student attributes was decided to be a key objective for the institution.

The University of Alberta's Academic Plan, *Dare to Deliver* 2011-2015, commits to "Articulating and supporting the development of core sets of skills, attributes, and values to be incorporated into graduate and undergraduate programs, while recognizing that each Faculty will best decide how to move in this direction, which could include reviewing and updating the curriculum." In October 2011, the Committee on the Learning Environment struck the Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies. Its mandate is to review literature, define terms, consult, determine commonalities, and develop a model of implementation surrounding student

attributes. (See Appendix A for the CLE-approved Terms of Reference) The subcommittee consists of a diverse group of representatives, including undergraduate and graduate students, administrators, and staff from the Faculties of Arts, Science, Education, Engineering, Medicine and Dentistry, Graduate Studies and Research, as well as Campus Saint-Jean and Augustana Campus.

Since its inception, the Subcommittee has held numerous meetings. It reviewed the literature and research on student attributes so as to better orient itself. Practices at other institutions were surveyed, including Ontario universities and the University of Sydney. Over 5000 undergraduate students provided their feedback on what attributes they developed during the course of their University of Alberta education. Students, both graduate and undergraduate, were consulted on a draft list of attributes via the respective councils of the SU and the GSA. The three co-chairs synthesized this data and presented it to the subcommittee for further discussion. Thus, the list of attributes and the suggested implementation models that follows is the result of a number of meetings and conversations. The aim was to ensure that attributes accurately reflect the needs and aspirations of students, the current academic programs of faculties, and the requirements imposed by accrediting bodies.

Attributes

Imparting advanced knowledge is inherently a core objective of a university education. However, there are additional outcomes of the educational enterprise that form the foundation of success for both students and society as a whole. The Subcommittee believes the list below reflects the values of the University of Alberta and captures the essence of the attributes and competencies expected of a student at the time of graduation. These qualities are interconnected and are developed in a variety of ways through the student experience on campus, paving the way for individual excellence and leadership. Seven attributes have been identified, each with four sub-attributes that have widespread applicability. While the list could certainly be lengthened, the Subcommittee felt these represented the core, essential elements required. These attributes are itemized below.

1 Ethical responsibility

- a Global citizenship
- b Community engagement
- c Social and environmental awareness
- d Professionalism

2 Scholarship

- a. Knowledge breadth and depth
- b. Interdisciplinarity
- c. Life-long learning

d. Investigation

3 Critical thinking

- a Analytic and synthetic reasoning
- b Interpretive proficiency
- c Intellectual curiosity
- d Information literacy

4 Communication

- e Writing skills
- f Oral skills
- g Visual communication
- h Multilingualism

5 Collaboration

- a. Openness to diversity
- b. Interpersonal skills
- c. Adaptability and compromise
- d. Individual contribution

6 Creativity

- a. Imagination
- b. Innovation
- c. Divergent thinking
- d. Artistic sensibility

7 Confidence

- a. Leadership and empowerment
- b. Independence
- c. Initiative
- d. Resilience

It is understood that this list must be taken in the context of the individual program, the level of the degree (undergraduate or postgraduate), and the community and stakeholder expectations associated with it. Development of these characteristics should occur both through formal coursework as well as co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Possible Models of Implementation

The Subcommittee felt it had good consensus on the list of attributes above. However, it recognized that approaches to implementing this list in some formal manner would vary by faculty and by program. Aspects of implementation range from program-level analysis and design to ensuring suitable development opportunities exist, through to the evaluation of student performance against these attributes. Potential users of such evaluation could be current and prospective students, faculties, university administrators, employers, accreditation bodies and

government. Each of these stakeholders has slightly different needs. Ideally, the implementation of graduate attributes would add value to students' experience at the U of A, improve our programs, provide performance reassurance to government and accreditation bodies, yet not overload already very busy faculty members and administrative structures. Three possible models are explored here.

Student-responsible model¹

- Certain activities (courses, workshops, clubs, events, work experience, etc.) could have pre-determined credits assigned to them. Organizers of such activities can provide documentation of student participation as needed. Credits could come in different 'flavours' reflecting the different attributes to be developed.
- Other activities can be retroactively assessed by a designated office to determine credit values based on student-supplied documentation.
- Students must accumulate the required number of credits in various categories (likely one per attribute) to achieve success against the attributes list. Compliance could be either a mandatory requirement for graduation or a certificate of recognition.
 - Target levels should be set/customized by Faculties in accordance to University norms. This allows programs to provide a context and a standard appropriate to the discipline.
- A student information system could be developed for students to track their progress. Faculties/departments could also access this information (in aggregate) to understand gaps in their programs and needs for targeted activities. Accredited programs may require documentation of their performance/compliance.
- Student portfolios could be accumulated to provide auditable content (eg. for accreditation or government review) and concrete examples (e.g. for future job interviews)

Program-responsible model

- At a Faculty level, each Faculty or department could interpret the graduate attributes as relevant to their teaching mission. For an example, see Appendix B.

¹ In Ontario, the strategy Brock University has taken in dealing with the implementation of attributes and competencies (which they refer to as 'Experience Plus') is largely student-driven. There is an office that handles these issues and students are required to individually complete an online portfolio after which they will send proof (such as certificates, volunteering hours, professional development training, etc) to this office for a transcript to be completed. This transcript has the official University seal and students are allowed to use it for different purposes, including finding new jobs or entering into advanced studies. Although this is open to all students, only those who took the initiative to actually complete the online profile ended up with an *Experience Plus Transcript* - and the details on these transcripts vary from student to student.

- At a program level, each Faculty could review their programs for development of student attributes.
- At a program level, Faculties or Departments could then structure or supplement the structure of programs to ensure the development of student attributes, so that students achieve the attributes by design of the program, rather than by student initiative. For an example, see Appendix C.
- Student achievement could be demonstrated by instructor assessment of targeted activities within courses or other formal activities. Students would get a course grade as always, but may also be assessed against more targeted criteria with specific indicators.
 - From a quality control perspective (eg. the perspective of government and/or accreditors), assessment may be attributed only to the program, not necessarily to the student. Measurements could even be done through sampling with students kept anonymous.
- For consistency, standardized tracking and documentation could be developed at the University level. Reporting on some interval basis (for instance, in every five years) could be done to the Provost and Vice President (Academic) by each Faculty.

Hybrid model

- The Faculty takes ownership of most aspects per the Program-responsible model, but some aspects (especially those tied to co-curricular and extra-curricular activities) are tasked to the student to demonstrate with some designated body or bodies authorized to review and approve student documentation.
 - The breakdown of who is doing what (i.e. the responsibilities above) is managed at the Faculty or department level.
- Every student must be assessed against every attribute (by the Faculty or at the initiative of the student) in order to generate a certificate or complete a graduation requirement.

Assessment - Pros & Cons of Each Model

Both Student- and Program-responsible models have pros and cons. The Student-responsible model is very easy to implement (incremental Faculty workload is minimal but resources are required for assessing student activities) and is robust in the face of very diverse and flexible programs. However, responsibility for ensuring outcomes are met (held by students) is separated from those with the authority and resources (the faculties) to create opportunities to demonstrably do so. This separation will limit the effectiveness of the initiative to improve these outcomes. It also does not fit well with the accreditation needs of many professional faculties. It does, however, create a very clear incentive for the student to develop themselves (especially if it's mandatory) and may empower them to be responsible for life-long learning. It also provides

an additional credential (for example, a co-curricular transcript), which may be valued by potential employers.

The Program-responsible model is better suited for government assessment and/or accreditation since it is focused at the level at which those bodies are concerned. It forces Faculties to think holistically about their programs (rather than about individual courses), which could yield benefits for program enhancement. It can minimize and standardize assessments so they are highly consistent and most suitable for a continuous improvement system. In a program-responsible model, sampling can be employed so not every student need be assessed, nor every attribute examined every year. Assessments can also be highly targeted so precise indications of program shortcomings can be identified to inform remediation efforts. However, this approach has limited engagement of the student and provides no direction for individual improvement. It also fails to provide students with a distinct individual credential beyond the standard UofA degree (which may become more significant to an employer).

The Hybrid model delivers the most benefits, particularly if individual Faculties are free to set the balance of how much will be at the student level and how much will be the Program's responsibility. It also has the most potential to meet the distinctive needs of students, educators, potential employers, government, and accreditation bodies. However, it is also the most work, requiring the substantial involvement of both Faculty and student.

Further Recommendations

The following are suggestions of how the University of Alberta as a whole can support the introduction of the concept of GA, regardless of the implementation model(s) selected.

- Review the attributes in a potential revision to GFC Policy 111.
- Encourage instructors to list which attributes are fostered in their courses on syllabi. Some instructors may already be stating similar goals.
- Survey students during the course of their programs on measures and personal perspectives on achievement of attributes. This information can inform a Department or Faculty of the strengths and weaknesses in their programs.
- Create a University-wide online website on student attributes that will provide information, resources, and a channel of communication for best practices for faculty, staff, students, and other key stakeholders.
- Recognize instructors, departments, and faculties that excel at the fostering of attributes. This demonstrates to students the value of their degree and the interest of the university in the student experience.

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Appendix A

University of Alberta Committee on the Learning Environment Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. Committee Mandate:

Following the approval of the University of Alberta's 2011-2015 Academic Plan entitled *Dare to Deliver*, graduate attributes have become a subject of thoughtful discussion across campus. On April 7 2011, the Committee on the Learning Environment Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies was struck at a joint CLE-TLAT meeting. The committee will work in accordance to the statement pertaining to graduate attributes in the Academic Plan:

"Attributes and Competencies Upon Graduation: Articulating and supporting the development of core sets of skills, attributes and values to be incorporated into graduate and undergraduate programs, while recognizing that each Faculty will best decide how to move in this direction, which could include reviewing and updating the curriculum."

2. Committee Roles:

The subcommittee will play numerous roles:

- Engage in a review of graduate attribute literature
- Provide definitions to key terminology in the graduate attributes process in order to clarify committee discussions and consultations
- Consult widely across campus in order to learn about the distinct character of University of Alberta students
- Select several themes that are common to the graduate attributes described by members of different faculties
- Develop a model for the implementation of graduate attributes at the University of Alberta
- Report to the Committee on the Learning Environment on a monthly basis

3. Committee Membership:

The committee membership shall consist of a diverse group of representatives from across the Academy.

- Vice-President Academic, Students' Union – Co-chair: Emerson Csorba (2011-12), Dustin Chelen (2012-13)
- Vice-President Academic, Graduate Students' Association – Co-chair: Nima Yousefi Moghaddam (2011-12), Nathan Andrews (2012-13)
- Academic Staff representative – Co-chair: Dr. Steven Dew
- One (1) undergraduate student at-large representative: Dustin Chelen (2011-12)
- One (1) graduate student at-large representative: Ashlyn Bernier

- One (1) CLE graduate student representative: Anne McIntosh
- One (1) CLE undergraduate student representative: Erendira Cervantes-Altamirano
- One (1) representative from the Faculty of Arts: Dr. Daphne Read (2011-12), Dr. Mickey Adolphson (2012-2013)
- One (1) representative from the Faculty of Science: Dr. Arturo Sanchez
- One (1) representative from the Campus Saint-Jean: Dr. Donald Ipperciel
- One (1) representative from the Augustana Campus: Dr. Paula Marentette
- One (1) representative from the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry: Dr. Fraser Brenneis
- One (1) representative from the Faculty of Education: Dr. Genevieve Gauthier
- One (1) representative from the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research: Dr. Renee Polziehn

In addition to the members serving on the committee, numerous university stakeholders will be consistently invited to committee meetings so that a wide range of perspectives are heard and considered throughout the committee's proceedings.

4. Committee Meetings:

The committee will meet on a biweekly basis, with thorough stakeholder consultations taking place in between meetings when necessary.

Appendix B

Example of Faculty-Specific Interpretation of Graduate Attributes

Below is a table developed by Campus St.-Jean to provide a Faculty-specific context of how these attributes and sub-attributes might be interpreted. Given the many cultures within a large and diverse institution there will be a need to define a specific interpretation of the sub-attributes. The interpretation provided here is meant to serve as an example and it is not intended to be prescriptive.

Attributes	Sub-attributes	Interpretation
Ethical responsibility		Can adopt the perspective of moral principles rather than self-interest
	Global citizenship	Can consider issues from a global perspective
	Community engagement	Can actively contribute to improving communities
	Social and environmental awareness	Can adopt the perspective of the public good and take into consideration our embeddedness within society and nature
	Professionalism	Is eager to meet the level of expertise and deontological expectations of her profession
Scholarship		Can rely on a body of established knowledge to guide her action
	Knowledge breadth and depth	Can make use of a broad range of knowledge while displaying mastery in specific areas
	Interdisciplinarity	Can integrate knowledge drawn from more than one academic discipline

	Life-long learning	Is willing to engage in autonomous self-teaching in or outside the classroom
	Investigation	Can effectively conduct research with the help of established methods and tools
Critical thinking		Can contextually assess given information (incl. self-related) through reflection and debate, taking nothing for granted
	Analytic and synthetic reasoning	Can gather various detailed information and organize it for specific purposes
	Interpretive proficiency	Can convert data into meaningful information and knowledge
	Intellectual curiosity	Is eager to learn beyond what is readily available (in classrooms or in common knowledge)
	Information literacy	Can effectively identify and assess information within its broader societal contexts, including knowledge-dependent contexts requiring scientific, digital or technological literacy
Communication		Can exchange thoughts, feelings and information effectively in various situations
	Writing skills	Can write effectively in multiple formats
	Oral skills	Can speak effectively in various formal and informal settings
	Visual communication	Can convey ideas effectively through visual aid

	Multilingualism	Can communicate effectively in more than one language
Collaboration		Can complete tasks effectively by working jointly with others who share a common goal
	Openness to diversity	Can engage with people of different race, religion, cultures, classes, sex orientation and appearance
	Interpersonal skills	Can demonstrate skills necessary for effective interaction and communication (incl. empathy, active listening, respect)
	Adaptability and compromise	Can change or suspend a personal belief in order to further the realization of a common goal or to adjust to new circumstances
	Individual contribution	Can take an active role in collaborative work
Creativity		Can produce something new and valuable (incl. ideas, works or products)
	Imagination	Can conjure up new ideas and representations in a productive manner
	Innovation	Can devise novel and better ways of doing things through knowledge (scientific, technological, methodological)
	Divergent thinking	Can explore new avenues in a non-conformist and risk-taking fashion

	Artistic sensibility	Can be compelled by artistic work and, ideally, partake in expressive artistic production
Confidence		Can act and think decisively
	Leadership and empowerment	Can be the driving force behind a course of action
	Independence	Can work and think productively with no or little supervision
	Initiative	Can initiate a course of action without prompting
	Resilience	Can follow through on a course of action over time

Appendix C

Faculty of Engineering Model

As part of its procedures, the Canadian Engineering Accreditation Board (CEAB) has developed a set of 12 Graduate Attributes (GAs) for which it requires quantitative metrics of student performance. These are quite analogous to the 7 GAs developed by the CLE Subcommittee. These GAs are used to assess the effectiveness of the engineering programs being accredited. While likely more detailed and rigorous than is appropriate in many UofA contexts, this does serve as an example of a Program-responsible implementation model for GA assessment. The UofA Faculty of Engineering approach to the CEAB requirements is briefly outlined below.

Programs in the Faculty of Engineering are relatively tightly specified. For each course within its programs, the Faculty has assessed alignment with each of the CEAB Gas. A level (0-3) was assigned corresponding to the degree of development of the attribute within the course. From this, a map (see Figure C1) can be created showing the development across the curriculum. This serves as a useful GA development planning tool as well as helps identify courses where GA attribute performance can be measured. A philosophy of sampling has been adopted, and measurements are taken in only a small subset of courses.

Course	Title	Common or Program Core	Graduate Attributes											
			Knowledge Base	Problem Analysis	Investigation	Design	Engineering Tools	Indiv. & Team Work	Communication Skills	Professionalism	Impact on Society	Ethics & Equity	Economics & Mgt	Life-long Learning
		Y/N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
CHEM 103	Introductory University Chemistry I	Y	1		1									
CSOPT 100	Complementary Studies Elective	Y							1					
ENGG 100	Orientation Engineering Prof I	Y					1		1	3		2		1
ENGG 130	Engineering Mechanics	Y	2	2										
MATH 100	Calculus I	Y	3	2	1		2							
PHYS 130	Wave Motion, Optics, and Sound	Y	3	1	2			1						
CHEM 105	Introductory University Chemistry II	Y	2		2									
ENCMP 100	Computer Programming Engineers	Y	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1			1
ENGG 101	Orientation Engineer Prof II	Y							1	3	2			1
EN PH 131	Mechanics	Y	1	2	1									
MATH 101	Calculus II	Y	3	2										
MATH 102	Applied Linear Algebra	Y	3	2	1		2							
MATH 209	Calculus III	Y	3	2										
MATH 201	Differential Equations	Y	3	2										
ENGL ELEC	English	Y*							3					1
ITS ELEC	Impact of Technology on Society	Y							1		3			2
STAT 235	Introductory Statistics for Engineers	Y	3	2	2		2							
MATH 300	Advanced Boundary Value Problems I	Y	3	2										
ENGM 310	Engineering Economics	Y				1	1				1		3	
ENGG 400	Practice Engineering Profes	Y								3	2	2	2	2

MEC E 200	Introduction to Mechanical Engineering	Y						1	2		2		2			1
MEC E 230	Introduction to Thermoscience	Y	1	2												
MEC E 250	Engineering Mechanics II	Y	1	2												
MEC E 260	Mechanical Design I	Y	1	2	1	3	2	2	1	1				1	2	
MEC E 265	Engineering Graphics and CAD	Y	1	1		1	2	2	2	1	1					1
MEC E 300	Mechanical Measurements	Y	1	1	1		1			1						
MEC E 301	Mechanical Engineering Laboratory I	Y	2		3	2	3	2	3							
MEC E 330	Fluid Mechanics	Y	2	2	1		1									
MEC E 340	Applied Thermodynamics	Y	2	3							1					
MEC E 360	Mechanical Design II	Y	1	3		3	2	3	2							1
MEC E 362	Mechanics of Machines	Y	2	3	1		2									
MEC E 370	Heat Transfer	Y	3	3		1										
MEC E 380	Advanced Strength of Material I	Y	2	2												
MEC E 390	Numerical Methods of Mech. Engineers	Y	1	1			3									
MEC E 403	Mechanical Engineering Laboratory II	Y		2	3		2	2	2							
MEC E 451	Vibration and Sound	Y	3	2			2									
MEC E 460	Design Project	Y	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
MEC E 463	Thermo-Fluids Systems Design	Y	3	3		3	2	3	1	1	1			1	1	
MEC E 364	Manufacturing Processes	N	1	1	2	1	2				1	1				
MEC E 415	Busting Myths with Analysis	N	2	3			1									
MEC E 420	Feedback Contr Dsgn of Dynam Systems	N	3	3	3	2	3	1								
MEC E 430	Fluid Mechanics II	N	3	3			2									
MEC E 443	Energy Conversion	N	3	3			2									
MEC E 464	Design For Manufacture	N	2	1	3	2	3	2								
MEC E 466	Building Systems Design	N	3	3	1	3	2	2								
MEC E 468	Numer Sim in Mech Engg Design	N		3	1	1	3									
MEC E 480	Advanced Strengths of Materials II	N	3	2												
MEC E 537	Aerodynamics	N	3	3		1	2									
MEC E 539	Applied Computational Fluid Dynamics	N		3			3									
MEC E 541	Combustion Engines	N	3	2												
MEC E 553	Acoustics and Noise Control	N	3	2												
MEC E 563	Finite Element Method for Mech Engg	N		3	2	3										
MEC E 564	Design and Simulation of MEMS	N	3	2		2	1									
MEC E 569	Mech and Dsgn of Composite Materials	N	3	2		2										
MEC E 585	Biomed Mod of Human Tissue and Sys	N	3	3			1									

Figure C1: Map of CEAB graduate attribute development in the Mechanical Engineering program. The values (0-3) represent the degree of development of that attribute within each course.

As with the approach developed by the CLE Subcommittee, Engineering has developed a list of subattributes for each CEAB attribute. These are indicated below in Table C1. For each subattribute a performance indicator has been developed. These indicators serve as proxies of a direct measure of the actual attribute. If measurements of the indicators are providing values that meet assigned targets, the Faculty can be confident that its students are acquiring the corresponding GA.

Table C1: Subattributes used to elaborate each graduate attribute. While most are common across all Engineering programs, those in italics are unique to Mechanical Engineering.

GA	Description	Subattribute
3.1.1	Knowledge Base	Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, Engineering fundamentals, <i>Thermal sciences, Solid mechanics, Fluid mechanics, Mechanics, Dynamics and control</i>
3.1.2	Problem Analysis	Understands the problem, Assembles knowledge, Applies models, Evaluates result
3.1.3	Investigation	Recognizes unknowns, Measures data, Analyzes data, Reaches conclusions
3.1.4	Design	Requirements, Creativity, Analysis, Iteration, Assessment
3.1.5	Engineering Tools	Computation, System description, System modeling, Analysis, Measurement
3.1.6	Indiv. & Team Work	Time management, Team work (understands roles, meets responsibilities, actively contributes, respects others, leadership)
3.1.7	Communication	Organized message, Writing, Reading, Speaking, Use of graphics
3.1.8	Professionalism	Legal responsibilities, Licensure requirements, Safety, Due diligence
3.1.9	Impact on Society	Aware of impacts on society, Impact assessment, Sustainable design, Assessment of the impacts
3.1.10	Ethics & Equity	Aware of ethical issues, Makes ethical choices, Aware of equity issues, Ethics in writing, Appreciation of socio-economic context
3.1.11	Economics & Project	Engineering economics, Economic assessment, Project management
3.1.12	Lifelong Learning	Curious, Able to assess needs, Resourceful, Discriminating

For each indicator, a specific task or activity within a specific course was identified for measurement of student performance. Then, a four level rubric was developed to aid in the acquisition of objective, reproducible quantitative data that can be compared against predetermined targets and year-over-year trends. The fraction of students meeting levels 3 or 4 of the rubric is used as the primary measure of program performance against that subattribute.

Typically, the measurement will involve a targeted final exam question or capstone design report section in a final year course. In general, course grades are not used as they aggregate too many aspects to be specific. As well, we have generally tried to include a self-assessment indicator (the measure is a question within a survey taken as part of a compulsory course) for each subattribute to corroborate this outcome, although we recognize that self-assessment is as likely to reflect confidence and attitudes as it is competency.

Subattr.	Indicator	Measure	Rubric			
			Unsatisfactory 1	Developing 2	Satisfactory 3	Excellent 4
Understand the problem	Able to state the essential problem to address	MEC E 370 final exam question	Unable to articulate the essential problem	Able to partially articulate problem but missing key details	Able to articulate the problem to be solved	Able to articulate problem and identify constraints on the range of solution
	Self-assessment of ability to understand the problem	ENGG 400 survey "How would you rate your abilities to identify complex engineering problems?"	"Very limited"	"Developing"	"Satisfactory"	"Good"
Assemble knowledge	Assembles the relevant models and formulae	MEC E 370 final exam question	Unable to identify key principles or models needed	Identifies some of the relevant models and formulae, but missing key elements	Able to assemble the necessary formulae and models	Able to derive necessary formulae from first principles

Figure C2: Example of the indicators and rubrics developed for one of the CEAB GAs (Problem Analysis)

Data for each subattribute is collected according to a multi-year schedule for analysis. The subattributes related to a single attribute (Communication Skills) is presented in Figure C3. The nominal target is that 80% of students reach levels 3 or 4.

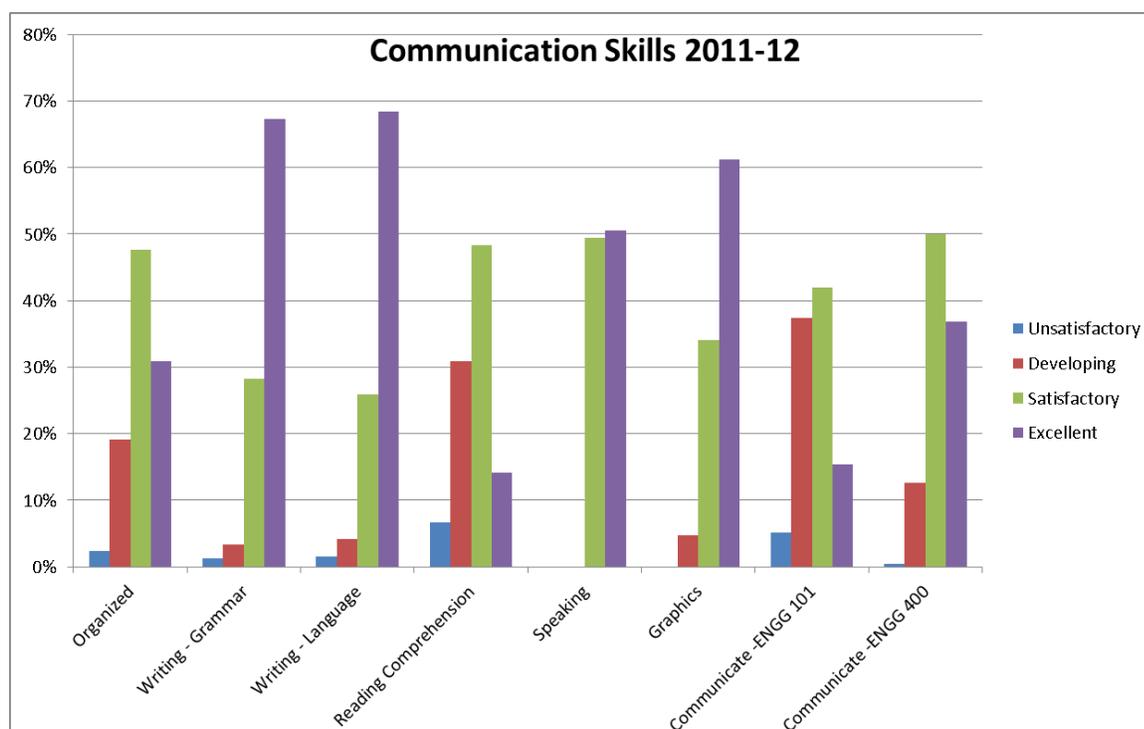


Figure C3: Example data for all the subattributes related to one GA (Communication Skills).

**GSA President
Report to Council**

To: GSA Council
From: Ashlyn Bernier, President
Date: April 5, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

To save you the time of reading two reports, I would like to direct your attention to Item 7: "GSA Strategic Work Plan 2012-2013 Update to Council". My cover letter introducing this item gives a thorough but high-level overview of the GSA's activities over the last year. I would be happy to hear your thoughts or answer any questions you may have on what the GSA has (or hasn't) done this year.

I will be commenting on the Provincial Budget and the GSA's activities in relation to it in my oral report.

It has been an incredible honour serving as your 2012-2013 GSA President. I urge you all to consider getting involved in student governance while at the U of A. It is something I never dreamed I would do, yet it has been one of my most rewarding experiences, professionally and personally, to date.

Best of luck to my successor, the GSA, and you all in 2013-2014!

Sincerely,



The following is a list of meetings that I attended between March 7 and April 3, 2013:

11-Mar	Citizenship Table Discussion Host
11-Mar	GSA Council
12-Mar	Meeting with VP Research
13-Mar	M-BAC/T-BAC
13-Mar	Forum on Provincial Budget
13-Mar	GSA Board
13-Mar	AGC Conference Call
14-Mar	FGSR Working Group on Quality measures
14-Mar	BoG Dinner
15-Mar	Board of Governors

15-Mar	Associations Coalition
15-Mar	Rally Meeting
18-Mar	Meeting with Vdean FGSR
19 Mar-22 Mar	Canadian Alliance of Student Associations
22 Mar-23 Mar	GSA Board Retreat
25-Mar	Meeting with Registrar
25-Mar	Lunch with Provost Amrhein
25-Mar	Meeting with Associate Vice-Provost Academic
27-Mar	Meeting with Dean FGSR
27-Mar	GSA Board
27-Mar	GFC APC
27-Mar	GSA Awards Night
29-Mar	AGC Meeting
02-Apr	ASSUA Town Hall
02-Apr	AGC Dinner

**GSA Board
Report to Council**

To: GSA Council

From: Ellen Schoeck, Executive Director and Coordinator of the GSA Board; Heather Hogg, Director of Operations; and Courtney Thomas, Associate Director

Date: April 04, 2013

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, Associate Director, Financial Manager, and I will be happy to answer any questions or provide more information at the Council meeting.

March 06, 2013 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Awards Night Update; letter on prayer and meditation space; bylaw and policy reform; departmental liaisons and committees and representation; candidacy and program requirement completion; AGC; *and* GFC FDC.

Motions and Agreements: None at this meeting.

March 13, 2013 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Campus Forum on the provincial budget; letter on prayer and meditation space; March on the Legislature; GFC Caucus attendance; *and* Alumni Council presentation on Leadership College.

Motions and Agreements:

Board Members **AGREED** to send the letter on prayer and meditation space to the Dean of Students, copying the Dean of FGSR and the Acting Provost, with the addition of a statement that the GSA is reaching out to potential stakeholders.

Board Members **AGREED** to attend the rally with some representatives but not give a speech.

Board Members **AGREED** that the GSA should prepare a brief public statement regarding Post-Secondary Education in advance of the rally and march, as well as a brief in-case speech and talking points.

March 20, 2013 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

GSA Strategic Work Plan 2013-2014; Studentcare claims update; FGSR Working Group on Quality Measures; GFC Exec Special Session; AGC; *and* Associations meeting and meeting with Minister.

Motions and Agreements: None at this meeting.

March 27, 2013 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Provincial Government Letter of Expectation; GSA Strategic Work Plan 2012-2013: update to Council; GSA Board Retreat debrief; CAPS summary report; CLE Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies final report; Associations Coalition; NoC report; Collective Agreement; *and* U-Pass updates.

Motions and Agreements:

Board Members **AGREED** to draft a letter to grad chairs and Deans regarding graduate student budget consultation and discuss the issue further at the next GSAB.

**GSA Nominating Committee (NoC)
Report to Council**

To: GSA Council
From: Lacey Fleming, Vice-Chair of the NoC
Date: April 5, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

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 Bylaw governing the NoC is located in Part VII, Sections 9.1-9.3. Policy governing NoC is found in of the GSA Policy Manual, "Nominating." As provided for in its terms of reference, the GSA Nominating Committee (NoC) has been conducting business via e-mail.

GSA Standing Committees

1) Labour Relations Committee

Currently the GSA Labour Relations Committee has not yet gone through committee reform. In the meantime, in consultation with the GSA VP Labour, before LRC undergoes committee reform, the GSA NoC Vice-Chair is proposing the following guidelines for the replenishment of LRC, as some members have left or will be leaving the committee shortly, and as 2013-2014 will be a non-negotiating year:

- In consultation with the LRC Chair (GSA VP Labour) LRC will have approximately 6 members-at-large with as broad representation of departments as possible (with no more than two students from any one department), and ideally at least one GSA Councillor.

Continuing Members Serving on this Committee: Daniel Prins (Biochemistry), Alexa DeGagne (Political Science), Md Shirajum Munir (Electrical and Computer Engineering), Qiang (Richard) Li (Chemical and Materials Engineering).

Members Leaving this Committee: Andrés Torres Scott (Political Science), Michele Borowitz (Anthropology), Amir Reshef (MBA), Billal Sultani (Chemical and Materials Engineering/Laboratory Medicine and Pathology), Simarjit S. Bal (Political Science – *takes office of GSA VP Labour on May 1, 2013 and will Chair LRC*), Colin More (Geophysics – *takes office of GSA VP Academic on May 1, 2013 and will be coming off this committee*).

GSA Council-Elected Officers

The **formal call** inviting graduate students to run for the Council-Elected GSA Senator position began **Wednesday March 27, 2013 at 12:00 PM (Noon)**.

The nominations period will **end Wednesday April 10, 2013 at 12:00 PM (Noon)**. At this point, the GSA Nominating Committee will send GSA Council the slate of nominees for

GSA Senator. At that time, GSA Councillors will be invited to make additional nominations. “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” (GSA Bylaws Part IV Officers, 3.2.2).

GSA Councillors will be able to vote for the GSA Senator electronically (*voting instructions to follow*) between Monday April 29, 2013 (10:00 AM) and Wednesday May 1, 2013 (10:00 AM).

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. **No delegates have been selected since the last Council meeting.**

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” (GSA Policy Manual, Nominating, 5.2).

1) General Faculties Council (14 positions)

On April 2, 2013 the GSA Nominating Committee advertised for the 14 graduate student positions on the General Faculties Council, which is the University’s highest level of academic governance. The term of office for these positions will be from **May 1, 2013 – April 30, 2014**. If you are interested in putting your name forward to the GSA NoC for one of these positions, kindly email gsa.nomcomm@ualberta.ca. **The deadline for applications is Monday April 15, 2013 at 10:00 AM.**

GSA Vice-President Academic Report to Council

To: GSA Council
From: Nathan Andrews, Vice-President Academic
Date: April 5, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

I am presently still trying to come to terms with the fact that this is my last report as the GSA VPA. Well, as the saying goes, all is well that ends well ☺. Let me highlight some important things that came from my meetings this past month. Before I do that please be informed that the FGSR Working Group on Quality Measures is making progress with a set of principles around quality measurement and the expected goals and indicators of such measurement. Your incoming VPA, Colin More, will be giving further updates in subsequent reports.

Attributes and Competencies

Finally, I am happy to inform Council that the report of the CLE Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies has been finalized. The report now has, in addition to the list of attributes, some recommendations on how the list will be operationalized. It went to CLE for further discussion on April 3, and will be circulated widely for broader consultation with the University community before it is adopted in any form. The report is attached to the Council agenda for your information as well.

Program Requirement Milestone for Doctoral Students

The discussion has moved from just a focus on Candidacy completion to general deadlines for program requirements. This new statement requires “all program requirements, other than thesis, must be completed **within three years** of commencement of a student’s program. The time limit for the completion of the doctoral degree program is six years.” These requirements include: required or optional courses, the academic integrity and ethics requirement, a candidacy exam, and comprehensive exam in some cases.

Due to opposition from both the Departments of Linguistics and Philosophy, the revised proposal now has a provision for departments who may want to opt out of this policy change. The departments that will be exempted will have to justify why they need these exemptions as this proposal goes through the governance structure. This justification has to align with their existing graduate handbook. Regarding the GSA’s request for a clearly stated provision for extension, there is a consequential amendment to Calendar section 203.15 in order to allow for an extension for both the 3-year and 6-year completion requirement. There will be a vote on this on April 17 at FGSR Council.

Alfresco Demonstration for Student Records

This is an open-access web-based system that is going to scan and save all student documents for students who began in 2012 onwards. Number of pages in a particular student’s file can range from 10-300. The goal is that all student files from all programs will be scanned and made accessible to faculties by end of June 2013. FGSR Council had a demonstration of how Alfresco works – and the software appears to be quite nice and user-friendly. **What is the difference between Alfresco and the ‘grad tracker’** idea that I reported on in my previous report? The

12.1

answer from Lindsey Rose is that these two interfaces may have to work together. As of now, the 'grad tracker' has not been developed. And Alfresco is not readily accessible to students as of now.

I would also like to inform Council on the following changes to the 23 transactions that require FGSR approval (one-over-one approvals). This is part of the measure to improve efficiency and eradicate duplication. Below is a table that shows the distribution of the transactions as proposed by the Policy Review Committee. It will have to go to FGSR Council for approval before it comes into effect.

FGSR approves	Faculty Deans approve	Dept./Unit approves
Admitting a student from another doctoral program	Approval of supervisors for thesis-based master's	Department admission recommendation
Individualized interdisciplinary graduate program proposal	Approval of supervisors for doctoral programs.	Department readmission recommendation
Western Deans' agreement	Approval of External Reader/Examiner for Final Doctoral Oral Examination	Request for program extension (first one – beyond the first one goes to FGSR)
Recommendation for change of category or Academic standing	Approval of Doctoral Final Oral Examining Committee	Leave of absence (parental or medical) but student can go to FGSR if department decision isn't favourable
Leave of absence (compassionate or extraordinary)	Approval of a Master's Final Oral Examining Committee	Transfer of department (both within same faculties or different faculties)
Transfer of department	Approval of minor program changes, including setting requirements above the minimum standards	Approval of Doctoral Candidacy Examining Committee
Completion of program requirements		Restricting Access to a Thesis
Approval of new programs, and exemption from minimum University standards		

Note that two transactions were removed from the existing list entirely. 1) UofA/UofC Agreement for Supervisory Committee Membership – because it is an old agreement that is irrelevant; and 2) Student discipline under the Code of Student Behavior – because the protocol is already spelt out in the Code and the procedures grad students would follow to seek redress are clear.

There are several items out of my meetings but these are the ones I want to emphasize here. Please feel free to let me know if you have questions about any of the other meetings listed below.

Cheers,
Nathan Andrews
GSA VP Academic

The following is a list of meetings that I attended between March 7 and April 3, 2013:

08-Mar	CLE Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies
11-Mar	GFC Nominating Committee
11-Mar	Council
12-Mar	CLE USRIs Working Group
13-Mar	M-BAC/T-BAC
13-Mar	GFC Caucus
13-Mar	Forum on Provincial Budget
13-Mar	GSA Board
14-Mar	FGSR Working Group on Quality Measures
14-Mar	General Faculties Council
15-Mar	Rally
18-Mar	FGSR Caucus
20-Mar	GSA Board
20-Mar	FGSR Council
21-Mar	CLE Attributes and Competencies
21-Mar	University Research Policy Committee
22-23-Mar	GSA Board Retreat
25-Mar	Text-Matching Software Working Group
25-Mar	Lunch with Provost Amrhein
26-Mar	CLE URSIs Working Group
27-Mar	GSA Board
27-Mar	GSA Awards Night
28-Mar	FGSR Policy Review Committee

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

To: GSA Council
From: Naseeb Adnan, VP Student Services
Date: April 5, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

Finally, I am at the end of my term with the GSA. The past year in office was truly an incredible experience for me. My sincere thanks to all of you for continued support and feedback that helped me and the GSA office improve students' experiences about the services we provide. I would like to wish the very best for Megha Bajaj, who I believe will excel in the position of VPSS in the coming year.

The 2013 UPass referendum passed with 92% "yes" votes! Congratulations to all students and my special thanks to Heather Hogg, GSA Director of Operations, for her outstanding support in the whole process. This was one of the biggest items on the GSA's checklist this year and I am glad that finally it is wrapping up well. We are currently working on the agreement details and hopefully it will be signed soon.

I attended the forum on the provincial budget on March 13. You may already know the financial challenges ahead for the institution after the budget cut. This will be an extremely crucial year for the GSA and other constituents and I would like to urge you all to get involved and provide your valuable opinions at all levels possible. Your feedback will help shape the GSA's position on how this challenge can be addressed in a sustainable way.

I attended the Protective Services Advisory Committee meeting on March 7. It was reported that there was a slight increase in mischief reports, however crime dropped by 2%. In Fall 2013, there will be a roll out for a campaign called "If you see something, say something", a successful program at NYU. NYU agreed to provide the U of A with materials for the program. The third-party HUB mall report was also received and reported on at last month's Council.

At the Health Care Advisory meeting it was reported the provincial budget may affect the U of A pharmacy's revenue generation through the sale of generic drugs. Since the pharmacy operates on a break even basis, this may result in an increase in dispensing fees.

In the GFC FDC meeting there were a number of important discussion items. The LRDP for sectors 7 & 8 were presented; it went through a number of community consultation meetings and concerns raised during the consultations were addressed. The Universiade Pavilion renewal of external cladding has not yet started because of the budget cut. Panels were installed incorrectly and it is now essential to replace them. The building is south-facing and there is an opportunity for photovoltaic installation and that would, in turn, increase the Green Globe Standard. A number of possible renderings were presented and it was mentioned that getting a yellow coloured panel similar to the current Butterdome would cost almost double than other colours because of the high manufacturing cost. However, the University will take this approach to integrate the overall look of the Butterdome with the ongoing PAW project.

Sincerely,

Naseeb Adnan

The following is a list of meetings that I attended between March 7 and April 3, 2013:

07-Mar	Protective Services Advisory Committee
11-Mar	GSA Council
13-Mar	Forum on Provincial Budget
13-Mar	GSA Board
15-Mar	HCAG
15-Mar	Rally
19-Mar	PAW Steering
20-Mar	GSA Board
21-Mar	U-Pass Admin
22-23-Mar	GSA Board Retreat
25-Mar	Lunch with Provost Amrhein
27-Mar	Student Financial Aid Task Force
27-Mar	GSA Board
27-Mar	ARFAC
27-Mar	GSA Awards Night
28-Mar	GFC FDC

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

To: GSA Council
From: Huimin Zhong, VPSL
Date: April 5, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

How time flies! This is my final Council report in my term. I would like to express my sincere thanks to all of you for your support of my work and the GSA in the past year. Your insightful thoughts and enthusiasm on student governance have impressed me a lot this year. I am so pleased and honoured to have served as your GSA VP Student Life.

In my last report, I do have four things to bring to your attention.

Firstly, the 2013 GSA Awards Night was a huge success! It was a great opportunity to recognize some of the excellent graduate students and other members from the U of A community. The GSA staff devoted great time and effort in preparing this event. I would like to thank them for their hard work.

Secondly, the Granting Committee (both Individual Engagement and Student Group Grant) met for the final round of adjudications for this academic year. I am pleased to see that more and more applications are from graduate students. However, the ratio of graduate student applications was still lower compared to that of undergraduates. If you want more information on the types of grants available, and their criteria, I am always happy to answer your questions.

Thirdly, I would like to devote the last part of my report to thank the whole GSA! To begin with, I would like to thank all the other elected officials. They are amazing in their jobs, and I have learned a lot from working with them. Moreover, they are really helpful, spending their time covering my portfolio when I needed help from them. It is a fantastic experience working with them. Next, I would like to thank all the GSA staff. They are very professional and considerate. Because they did such a great job, my life as an elected official and, at the same time, a course-based graduate student, has been much easier. And there is a great culture in the GSA office too!

Last, but not the least, I have been working with Hasin during the past month as he transitions into my role. He is very insightful, excellent in communications with various stakeholders around campus, and has great ideas about student governance. I am confident that he will do a great job as the VP Student Life for the GSA in the coming year!

Thanks a lot again and I hope for the best for you in your life!

Sincerely yours,
Huimin Zhong

The following is a list of meetings that I attended between March 7 and April 3, 2013:

08-Mar	SACIE
11-Mar	Council
13-Mar	Alumni Council
13-Mar	Forum on Provincial Budget
13-Mar	GSA Board
20-Mar	GSA Board
22-23-Mar	GSA Board Retreat
25-Mar	Lunch with Provost Amrhein
27-Mar	GSA Board
27-Mar	ARFAC
27-Mar	GSA Awards Night
02-Apr	Individual Engagement Grants Adjudication
03-Apr	GSA Board

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

To: GSA Council
From: Brent Epperson, VPL
Date: April 5, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

March 12 phone meeting with Franco Rizutti, U of C GSA President and AGC Chair

Franco and I discussed AGC Bylaws in the drafting stage and the need for changes in approval for money and time spent lobbying in the coming year.

March 13 AGC Board Meeting Conference Call

I attended the Board meeting. We discussed the need for Bylaw completion and changes in the approval process for time and money spend lobbying in the coming year.

March 15 Board of Governors lunch

I attended the Board of Governors meeting, where I had the opportunity to briefly speak with several members about the provincial budget and priorities for the coming year.

March 15 Coalition meeting

I attended the coalition meeting with AASUA, SU, NASA, and PDFA officials, where we began to form a collective response to the provincial budget, identifying shared priorities and concerns.

March 18 Collective agreement meeting with Heather

Heather Hogg and I met and completed the GSA's final edits to the new collective agreement. It was sent to the university negotiating team for approval.

March 18 Preparation meeting with U of A GSA President and AUGSA President for AGC meeting with Minister Lukaszuk

The three of us met and agreed on questions and points of emphasis for our meeting with the Minister of EAE.

March 18 AGC Meeting with Minister Lukaszuk

This will be presented as part of a closed session discussion on consultation.

March 20 FGSR Council

I attended FGSR Council, where I introduced Colin More and Monty Bal as incoming GSA elected officials and members of FGSR Council. The GSA was asked and agreed to present our view on the provincial budget and FGSR reform discussion at the next FGSR Council.

March 22 GSA Board Retreat

I attended the GSA Board Retreat. We reconciled the platform priorities of the incoming GSA Board with the GSA's Strategic Work Plan and had valuable discussions about portfolios, relationships with other constituencies and stakeholders, and the vital importance of external representation for the GSA.

March 25 Meeting with Gerry Kendall

I met with Gerry Kendall to discuss issues with approved leave for graduate students, special registration, and ongoing access to essential services by payment of non-instructional fees. The GSA is still seeking to solve this issue and continues to work with the Registrar's Office, FGSR, and the Dean of Students for a prompt resolution. University-wide focus on the provincial budget announcement seems to be slowing progress.

March 25 Awards Night Rehearsal

I participated in the awards night rehearsal and editing of the script.

March 25 lunch with Provost Carl Amrhein

The GSA elected officials met with Provost Carl Amrhein and discussed the GSA's priorities for the coming year.

March 27 Meeting with FGSR Dean Mazi Shirvani

Ashlyn and I met with Mazi. We discussed approved leaves of absence and access to essential services during leave for graduate students.

March 27 GSA Awards Night

I attended awards night with the other current and incoming GSA elected officials. Participant feedback indicates that the event was a resounding success.

April 2 AGC Dinner

Ashlyn and I met with Amanda Nielsen, AUGSA President, and Hasin Haroon, GSA VP Student Life-Elect. We discussed the role of AGC and its challenges for the year. It was a good informal first meeting between the two member schools to discuss priorities.

April 3 Meeting with FGSR Dean Mazi Shirvani

Monty Bal, GSA VP Labour-Elect and I met with Mazi. We discussed approved leaves of absence and access to essential services during leave for graduate students. This is an ongoing issue that will require follow up with FGSR, the Registrar, and the Dean of Students. We also discussed the GSA's vision of professional development and agreed to have a more in-depth discussion in the next meeting.

April 3 Meeting for the Provost's Fellow Advisory Group on Supervision

Colin More, VP Academic-Elect and I attended this meeting. We discussed feedback from the graduate student and post-doctoral fellow focus groups. A full report will be complete this summer. The GSA Board will have the opportunity to weigh in on the drafting of the report. The final report will be presented to both the GSA Board and the GSA Council.

Closed Session Remarks:

I will speak briefly on my lessons from the year, the state of consultation at the university and government levels, and the importance of external representation for the GSA.

Sincerely,

Brent Epperson

The following is a list of meetings that I attended between March 7 and April 3, 2013:

08-Mar	Student Financial Aid Task Force
08-Mar	GSA Council
08-Mar	Meeting with President U of C GSA
13-Mar	Forum on Provincial Budget
13-Mar	GSA Board
13-Mar	AGC Conference Call
15-Mar	Associations Coalition Meeting
15-Mar	Rally
18-Mar	AGC Pre-Meeting for Minister
18-Mar	Meeting with Minister Enterprise and Advanced Ed
20-Mar	GSA Board
20-Mar	FGSR Council
22-23 Mar	GSA Board Retreat
25-Mar	Meeting with Registrar
25-Mar	Lunch with Provost Amrhein
25-Mar	Collective Agreement Meeting
27-Mar	Meeting with Dean FGSR
27-Mar	GSA Board
27-Mar	GSA Awards Night
02-Apr	Meeting with student
02-Apr	AGC Meeting
03-Apr	Associations Coalition Meeting
03-Apr	Meeting with Dean FGSR
03-Apr	GSA Board
03-Apr	Provost's Fellow Advisory Committee on Supervision

**Chief Returning Officer
Report to Council**

To: GSA Council
From: Daniel Prins, CRO
Date: April 5, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

This year's U-Pass Referendum has concluded, with 1468 of 1594 (92%) of voters in favor of renewing the U-Pass for another four years. This report serves as official notice to Council of the success of the U-Pass Referendum. As well, preparations for by-elections for vacant Councillor-at-Large positions are underway. I intend to have these by-elections concluded before the May GSA Council meeting so newly elected CALs can serve on Council for an entire year. Finally, review of election bylaws and policies is ongoing, with an eye to overhauling these regulations over the coming months.

As always, feel free to contact me with any questions.

Best,

Daniel Prins, Chief Returning Officer

**GSA Executive Director
Report to Council**

To: GSA Council
From: Ellen Schoeck, GSA Executive Director
Date: March 27, 2013

Section 1

Dear Council,

I report to you at least once a year on staff and management responsibilities. There are two documents attached: one on our staff and one on our management. Attached to the management document is a list of the legal and similar agreements that define us as a corporation. Management oversees these matters with regular reporting to the elected officials. Council receives information on these matters in my monthly reports or reports from elected officials. With respect to these agreements, I can report that we are about to sign new third-party information sharing agreements with the University. This has been a two-year project, with Director of Operations Heather Hogg in the lead. These agreements relate to our ability, for instance, to conduct elections, send out newsletters, and provide for the Health and Dental program.

Continuing Council members have heard me say that over the past 15 years, the GSA has not had one staff member stay with us for longer than one year. Our Auditor has pointed out that there also has been no continuity or institutional memory amongst management, which represents a big risk in the GSA's ability to carry out the basic functions of the GSA with respect to – for instance – advocacy, representation and services.

Our Accountant, Auditor and lead lawyer are all very pleased with how staffing has evolved and with how the GSA is operating. From what we know of other Canadian GSAs, we are the most functional, and I believe the GSA is well-positioned to deal with the critical challenges that lay ahead.

GSA STAFF

The GSA has 4.5 staff positions that are represented by NASA in a special Collective Agreement. Each has a 4-5 page job description. Here are brief snapshots and key stats. (FT=full time; PT=part time). Salaries were benchmarked in 2010-2012 for all staff and management.

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT (EA); Dyan Semple, MA Anthropology, U of A (FT)

Dyan started with the GSA in 2010 as Front Desk Assessor and Researcher and took over as EA from Jo Chan in 2012. Reporting to Ellen and Courtney, she **schedules** elected officials and management (*eg* committees, one-on-ones with senior administrators); is part of the **transition team**; assists Courtney with **Agenda preparation** for Board and Council; **drafts Minutes** for sign-off by Courtney; **receives and skims committee materials** from Administration, which are then read and highlighted for officials by Ellen and Courtney; back up support for the GSA Nominating Committee (NoC).

KET STATS: 1,300 meetings scheduled on over 70+ committees; skims and routes meeting materials for c. 170 committees, councils, etc.

MANAGER OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND IT: Casey Germain, BA Anthropology, UBC (FT)

Casey started at the GSA in 2011 as .5 Front Desk and .5 IT. His IT expertise has transformed multiple aspects of the GSA. Reporting to Ellen and Heather, he assists with all aspects of the GSA's corporate and physical infrastructure. As the grants position was managed down to part-time, Casey volunteered to have grants added to his job description.

KEY IT PROJECTS: Migration to G-Mail & Google Drive; new GSA Website; new elections software; migration to Central Firewall; Evergreening plan; hardware & software inventory; prepared **600+ T4A's** for students and the CRA; Online AEGS forms and Direct Deposit.

KEY AEGS Fund Stats: **1,100 grants** processed; **2,000 communications** to supervisors and students; approximately **\$450,000 in AEGS funds** disbursed.

NOMINATING AND STUDENT GROUPS SPECIALIST: Lisa Hareuther, BA Anthropology, U of A, and MA Candidate, SFU – recently successfully defended (PT, Starting FT April 01, 2013)

Lisa joined the GSA in 2010 as EA, returning in 2012 to take on support for the new NoC and to kick start student groups work. Reporting to Ellen and with a close working relationship with the NoC Vice-Chair, Lisa helps support NoC, Early Call for Talent, transition, supports the ERC, drafts all materials related to election of Senator/CRO/Speaker, and manages weekly calls from administration for grad reps on committees, task forces, etc. In April she will move to FT and assist with the Department Liaison Initiative.

KEY STATS: Early Call for Talent: 18 student responded, up from 7; **grad student representation on some 170+ committees; 180 bios and résumés** in Bank of Names; **since May, 142 graduate students elected** to a broad range of committees; **30 registered student groups**.

COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST: Katie Bittner, PhD Anthropology, U of A (on parental leave); Courtney ("Courts") Borstad, MA Candidate Anthropology, U of A

This position handles communications, plans universal orientations, drafts the GSA Handbook, arranges the adjudications of the Alberta Graduate Citizenship Award and GSA Awards, organizes GSA Awards Night and other events. This position is our point of contact for GSA Council communications, Minute taking, and coordinates with Courtney in preparing Council material.

Key Stats: Organized the adjudication of **188 GSA Award** applications and **157 Graduate Citizenship Award** applications, **140 Newsletters and Bulletins**, **raised \$12,885** in Handbook advertisements.

RESEARCHER AND FRONT DESK ASSESSOR: Mikaela Ediger, BA Art History, Cambridge University (PT)

Mikaela started with the GSA in 2010 and returned throughout 2011 and 2012 on school breaks to assist with various research projects. Reporting jointly to Ellen and Courtney, she has been instrumental in researching and compiling information that will continue to move the GSA into an ever increasing professional organization.

Key Front Desk Stats: Answered **132 questions** in-person, by e-mail, and over the phone **since February 2012** (in 2012 the GSA Staff answered 1,948 Front Desk inquiries)

Key Research Stats: Since Feb 01, 2012: **Bylaw and Policy review** (eg reviewed policies of 11 other Canadian GSAs and SUs for our policy/bylaw review); condensing reports; compiled 4 major reports on

issues related to GSA strategic initiatives; **30 research projects** (including Graduate Student cost of living across Canada, CFS and CASA history and policy, status of Departmental GSAs).

Section 2

GSA MANAGEMENT

Your management team comprises:

Shirley Ball (PT, 1 day a week), an experienced Chartered Accountant and recommended to us by our Auditor. Shirley reports to the GSA President and to Ellen, and has access to the Board or Council directly if she sees anything amiss with our finances. That is one of our financial controls.

Dorte Sheik (PT, 2 days a week, BA from the U of A in Anthropology), who has 33 years' experience in the Registrar's Office, including the role of Assistant Registrar, and a long-standing relationship with Financial Services. Dorte is our Financial Manager. She deals with all banking and reconciliations, deals with the CRA, is our expert on Smart Forms, is our lead in dealing with Financial Services, is our link with Ceridian for payroll, and works with Shirley on monthly financial statements, the quarterly reports to Council, and our annual audit.

Heather Hogg (PT, four days a week, BA Mount Allison in Political Science and History), has 31 years' experience at the U of A, including serving as Assistant Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, and as a member for the Administration on the GSA/University bargaining team. Heather is now on *our* side of the table as Labour Professional and Director of Operations. She also deals with labour cases in concert with the VPL, is the lead on re-writing the CA, and serves as our Privacy Officer (required by law). She provides support for the grants and awards adjudication processes as well as U-Pass issues, which will transfer to Courtney as Heather begins to reduce her time with the GSA – part of the succession plan Council has already heard about. Heather also manages internal HR processes.

Courtney Thomas (FT, BA Honours and MA from the U of A and a PhD from Yale in History), has three years' experience working in the U of A University Secretariat and in University Governance. Courtney has worked with many GFC committees and is trained in delivery of good governance and regulatory framework. As GSA Associate Director, she has trained into support for the GSA Board and Council, privacy, bargaining, awards, and has sat on the joint Administration/GSA Graduate Student Tuition and Funding Data Committee. She also now sits on HCAG. Courtney will be taking on several of Heather's current responsibilities (such as grants, awards, and U-Pass) as well continuing her work alongside Ellen and Heather with the GSA Board and Council.

Ellen Schoeck (FT, BA Honours and MA from the U of A in History). Ellen has 27 years' experience in University Hall as Director of the University Secretariat, Secretary to GFC, Executive Assistant to the President and Information Officer on Appeals and Grievances, ombudsman, sexual harassment advisor, and discipline officer. She served on the AASUA Council and helped form the APO Council on campus. Ellen reported to five university presidents and, post-retirement, had an active consulting practice. She

has written two histories of the U of A and served on two not-for-profit boards. Ellen was hired by the GSA in 2010 as a change-agent and is contractually obligated to transform the GSA into a robust organization that will flourish over time. As Executive Director, Ellen is in overall charge of the entire GSA operation, reporting to the GSA President.

Section 3

Documents that Define the GSA as a Corporate Entity

NAME	SUMMARY	STATUS
Collective Agreement (AEGS)	Sets out terms of employment for certain graduate students and terms for use of AEGS funds.	Negotiations opened in October 2012. Agreement-in-principle.
Semi-Annual Pay Cycle	Governs AEGS pay cycle	Signed in April 2012.
Audit (based on Council-approved budget)	As a separate corporation from the university, we hire our own auditor.	Audit occurs annually in May-June.
Banking and signing authorities	Operating account, GICs, investments.	Actively reviewed with BMO in April 2012.
Campus Food Bank	Regulates GSA involvement with Food Bank.	GSA gives \$9000/annum to Campus Food Bank.
CAPS and Writing Resources Centre Agreement	Provides for subsidy of certain CAPS and WRC courses for grad students.	Annual subsidy of \$7575.
Ceridian (Payroll)	GSA staff and elected officials are now paid by direct deposit.	We are very pleased with Ceridian. Outsourcing is cheaper than in-house production of cheques.
Council bylaws and policies	Regulated by the <i>Post-secondary Learning Act</i> .	Comprehensive review to occur 2013-2014.

NAME	SUMMARY	STATUS
Direct Deposit	Provides for direct deposit of AEGS cheques and T4A production by U of A.	Signed 2012. Major infrastructure change.
U of A Financial Services	Stipulates when GSA receives fees collected by the U of A on our behalf.	Re-negotiated and signed in April 2012. Re-negotiated again in 2013 for two more years. Deals with cash flow issue.
Graduate Student Assistance Program (GSAP)	Provides for a wide range of personal counseling.	Reviewed annually.
Health and Dental Agreement with Studentcare	Provides for Health and Dental Plan.	Re-signed to 2015. Provider changed in 2012.
Info Sharing with Studentcare and University	Allows Studentcare access to graduate students' personal information for strictly defined purposes regarding the GSA's Health and Dental Plan.	Reviewed with the U of A Privacy Officer and Studentcare in 2012.
Personal Information Sharing Agreement with the U of A	Allows the GSA access to graduate students' personal information for strictly defined purposes, e.g. emailing the newsletter.	Reviewed in 2012 and now sitting with General Counsel.
Liability Insurance	As a separate corporation from the university, we carry our own general liability insurance.	We doubled our liability insurance in 2012. We are not covered for alcohol use and yet have GSA students groups who have self-reported that they use alcohol.
Officers/Directors' Insurance	As a separate corporation from the university, we carry insurance that covers the elected officials, and management.	We doubled our coverage in 2013.
TDIMM	Provides for group auto and home insurance.	Re-signed to October 7, 2016.
Management contracts with	Sets out terms of employment	Standard appointment letter has been

NAME	SUMMARY	STATUS
ED/letters of appointment	managers.	reviewed by our lawyers.
Collective Agreement with NASA covering office staff	Sets out terms of employment for GSA staff.	Signed in April 2012.
PAW Centre Agreement	Sets out terms of operation of PAW. SU also involved in the Agreement.	Signed in April 2012. Need to negotiate business terms with SU.
Photocopier Lease	Covers three photocopiers.	Expires in 2015.
Power Plant and Dewey's	The GSA has four agreements with the U of A and/or the SU.	Meetings are ongoing.
Referenda Master File	All referenda questions that actively impact graduate students (eg. UPASS, PAW Centre, GSAP, Health and Dental Plan, etc).	Compiled and filed.
Triffo Lease	Detailed lease covering our use of Triffo office space .	First-ever lease was signed in April 2012; 5-year term, four renewals.
Tuition Agreement Letters	Letters from the University stating the tuition increases for the upcoming academic year.	Received annually.
UBEF	UBEF administers the GSA's emergency bursary funds.	Oral agreement only.
Transit Agreement with the U of A	Governs U-PASS.	Referendum question before Council February 2013. Referendum March 2013.
Agreement with the City of Edmonton	Governs U-PASS.	Reviewed in April 2012-13.

**Executive Director, Director of Operations, and Associate Director
Report to the GSA Board, March 13, 2013**

Dear All,

Week in Review – Strategic:

- Transition and meetings with incoming directly elected officials about incorporating their platform with the SWP and developing tactics regarding the platform are underway.
- The **review of Bylaw and Policy** is rolling along.
- Following discussion at the last Board, we are ready to roll out the upcoming March GSA Awards Night. Management is working on a proposal to streamline awards and award adjudication.
- Management will be working with elected officials and the Nominating Committee regarding possible recruits for next year's general election. A review of election and referendum policy will begin soon.
- Management has some new, out-of-the-box ideas to get vacancies on Council filled and planning for the **Department Liaison Initiative** continues.
- There are plans to hire an undergraduate to update our hard copy filing system.

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- The office team assisted with the **development of a communications roll out plan regarding the results of GSA general elections** – this will ensure a smooth course of events next year in terms of announcements of results.
- Work associated with the **transition plan for elected officials** remains in progress.
- The office team is assisting with tasks associated with **Awards Night planning and with the preparation of materials for the past meeting of the GSA Council on March 11.**

**Executive Director, Director of Operations, and Associate Director
Report to the GSA Board, March 20, 2013**

Dear All,

Week in Review – Strategic:

- **Transition and meetings with incoming directly elected officials** about incorporating their platform with the SWP and developing tactics regarding the platform were extremely productive and a **draft 2013-2014 GSA SWP is in development in advance of the retreat in Red Deer.**

- The **review of Bylaw and Policy** is rolling along – lots of thought and energy and involved in this process, which **will contribute to the GSA’s long-term robustness as an organization**.
- A **review of election and referendum policy** will begin soon and thought regarding **possible recruits for next year’s general election** is being undertaken by management, elected officials, and the Nominating Committee.
- Deep thought surrounding **the release of the provincial budget and its implications for the University** is unfolding. **Ellen attended the most recent BoG meeting as an observer** and took detailed notes.
- Management continues to work on a **proposal to streamline awards and award adjudication** for next year’s competition.

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- Work associated with the **transition plan for elected officials** remains in progress, including planning for the upcoming retreat in Red Deer.
- The process for the **early call for the GSA Senator election** has begun and the **GFC replenishment process** will also soon be underway – the office team will be assisting with this work as well as with **Council elections for GSA Speaker, Deputy Speaker, CRO, and Deputy CRO**.
- The office team has been coordinating to **closely monitor news surrounding the release of the provincial budget, University Administration responses, and the release of mandate letters**.
- Finally, the office team is assisting with tasks associated with **Awards Night planning**, which is in full swing for next Wednesday’s event.

Executive Director, Director of Operations, and Associate Director Report to the GSA Board, March 27, 2013

Dear All,

Week in Review – Strategic:

- We anticipate a **highly productive retreat** this weekend (a debrief and follow up is on the GSAB agenda where we can discuss the retreat in more detail) – in addition to a presentation from Kristin Foster on health and dental, we have scheduled some welcoming remarks from Ashlyn and Ellen **will address the GSA as a corporation, governance and fiduciary duty, and management and staff duties**.

- The retreat will also include **time to focus on the 2013-2014 GSA SWP in terms of incorporating the platforms of the incoming elected officials with the SWP** and developing tactics regarding the platform.
- Work surrounding preparing for the **UPass referendum** has been ongoing the past week.
- Management continues to work on a **proposal to streamline awards and award adjudication** for next year's competition.
- Management continues to engage in deep thought surrounding **the release of the provincial budget and its implications for the University and the GSA.**

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- **Planning for Awards Night has been a major focus for several members of the office team** – we are ready for Wednesday's event and expect it to be the GSA's most successful Awards Night yet.
- The process for the **early call for the GSA Senator election** is rolling along and the **GFC replenishment process** will also soon be underway – the office team will be assisting with this work as well as with **Council elections for GSA Speaker, Deputy Speaker, CRO, and Deputy CRO.**
- The office team continues to coordinate to **closely monitor news surrounding the release of the provincial budget, University Administration responses, and the release of mandate letters.**
- Work associated with the **transition plan for elected officials** remains in progress – the goal is for incoming elected officials to be fully trained, prepared, and ready to begin their terms on May 1.

Executive Director, Director of Operations, and Associate Director Report to the GSA Board, April 3, 2013

Dear All,

Week in Review – Strategic:

- One staff member, daily, **closely monitors news surrounding the release of the provincial budget, University Administration responses, and the release of mandate letters.** This includes checking the local papers in Calgary, Lethbridge, and Edmonton, as well as monitoring the websites of those universities.
- Likewise, management continues to engage in deep thought surrounding **the release of the provincial budget and its implications for the University and the GSA.** A great deal of strategic

thought and planning is being devoted to this.

- **Strategic thinking on an array of issues arising from the March 22-23 GSA Board Retreat** has also been ongoing since the last report from management.
- Following on the Board Retreat, management **continues to evaluate and adapt the transition plans** for newly-elected officials.

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- **As with management, planning for Awards Night was a major focus for several members of the office team** – assisting with preparations for the upcoming GSA Council meeting are also a top priority.
- Preparations for **April 8 GSA Council** are underway.
- The **GSA Senator election** is underway and the **GFC replenishment process** will also soon be underway – the office team will be assisting with this work as well as with **Council elections for GSA Speaker, Deputy Speaker, CRO, and Deputy CRO**.
- Work surrounding preparing for and holding the **UPass referendum**, as well as hosting **Awards Night**, was a top priority last week. Management is engaged with evaluating the processes and planning behind Awards Night, in particular, to improve efficiency in future years.

MEMO

To: GSA Council
From: Hamman Samuel, Councillor, Computing Science
Date: January 28, 2013
Subject: Semi-Monthly Payment Cycle Feedback

On July 1, 2012, the University of Alberta moved to a semi-monthly payment cycle. The new arrangement affected graduate students receiving payments through the university such as teaching assistants, research assistants, scholarship recipients, etc. The stipends were split into two payments per month, one at the middle and one at the end of the month plus a 10-day processing cycle delay. As an example, your December payments might have been on December 24th and January 10th.

When changes to the AEGS collective agreement were proposed concerning the semi-monthly cycle in April 2012, a few contentious issues were discussed. For instance, it was a concern that a bi-monthly cycle would be disruptive to students' personal budgets, especially new students. It was also uncertain whether a bi-monthly cycle would in realization actually reduce costs from producing off-cycle cheques. Ultimately, the question was whether the proposed changes to the collective agreement would necessarily benefit graduate students.

It has been over 8 months since this new system was introduced, and I would like to solicit feedback from the various departments represented at the GSA council. For instance, how have students in your department fared with the new system? Have new students enrolled after July 2012 had any issues? Has the new system reduced off-cycle cheques in your department? Have there been any concerns from new recruitments that started in September 2012? Did new students have any issues concerning paying rent in September 2012?

Thank you for your cooperation!

Best regards,
Hamman Samuel