

**GSA Council Meeting - List of Reports Circulated**  
Monday, 20 August 2018  
**Cancelled**

	<b>Attached Numbered Pages</b>
1. Minutes from the 16 July 2018 GSA Council Meeting <i>Attachments:</i>	
• Minutes from the 16 July 2018 GSA Council Meeting	<b>1.0 - 1.5</b>
2. President ( <b>Sasha van der Klein, GSA President</b> )	
i. President's Report	<b>2.0 - 2.1</b>
ii. GSA Board	<b>2.2</b>
iii. GSA Budget and Finance Committee ( <b>no meetings this reporting period</b> )	
iv. GSA Governance Committee ( <b>no meetings this reporting period, the next GSA GC meeting is scheduled for 11 September 2018</b> )	
3. Vice-President Academic ( <b>Masoud Aliramezani, GSA Vice-President Academic</b> )	
i. Vice-President Academic's Report	<b>3.0</b>
4. Vice-President External ( <b>Zhihong Pan, GSA Vice-President External</b> )	
i. Vice-President External's Report	<b>4.0</b>
ii. GSA Awards Selection Committee ( <b>no meetings this reporting period</b> )	
5. Vice-President Labour ( <b>Beth Richardson, GSA Vice-President Labour</b> )	
i. Vice-President Labour's Report	<b>5.0 - 5.1</b>
ii. GSA Labour Relations Committee ( <b>no meetings this reporting period</b> )	
6. Vice-President Student Services ( <b>Fahed Elian, GSA Vice-President Student Services</b> )	
i. Vice-President Student Services' Report	<b>6.0 - 6.1</b>
7. Senator ( <b>Ahsan Ahmed, GSA Senator</b> )	
i. Senator's Report ( <b>no written report at this time</b> )	
8. Speaker ( <b>Pranidhi Baddam, GSA Speaker</b> )	
i. Speaker's Report ( <b>no written report at this time</b> )	
9. Chief Returning Officer ( <b>Vahid Ayan, GSA Chief Returning Officer</b> )	
i. Chief Returning Officer's Report ( <b>no written report at this time</b> )	
10. GSA Nominating Committee ( <b>Radim Barta, GSA Nominating Committee Chair</b> )	
i. GSA Nominating Committee Report	<b>10.0</b>
11. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee ( <b>Leigh Spinner, GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Chair</b> )	
i. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Report	<b>11.0</b>
12. GSA Management ( <b>Courtney Thomas, GSA Executive Director</b> )	
i. Executive Director's Report	<b>12.0 - 12.4</b>

**GSA Council Meeting MINUTES**  
Monday, 16 July 2018 at 6:00 pm  
2-100 University Hall, Van Vliet Complex

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Sasha van der Klein (President)	Hongbing Fan (AFNS)	Chantal Labonté (Educational Psychology)	Braden Chow (Oncology)
Masoud Aliramezani (VP Academic)	Brianna Greenwood (Biochemistry)	Nicole Jamison (Elementary Education)	Ty Kim (Paediatrics)
Zhihong Pan (VP External)	Ashmita De (Biomedical Engineering)	Jonathan Lai (Human Ecology)	David Tandio; Nicholas Ruel (Pharmacology)
Beth Richardson (VP Labour)	Rongrong Zhang (Business PhD)	Kunjai Pundeer (Internetworking)	Hamdah Al Nebaihi (Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences)
Fahed Elian (VP Student Services)	Karl Roesner (Cell Biology)	Janita Frantsi (Kinesiology, Sport & Recreation)	Tugba Yoldas (Philosophy)
Pranidhi Baddam (Deputy Speaker)	Anika Benozir Asha (Chemical & Materials Engineering)	Jiaao Yu (Lab Med & Pathology)	Megan Aiken (Political Science)
Ahsan Ahmed (Senator)	Alyssa Fu (Chemistry)	Tabatha Plesuk (Library & Info Studies)	Daniela Gomez (Psychiatry)
Radhika Chakraberty (Councillor-at-Large)	Pedro Mateo (Civil & Environmental Engineering)	Michelle Michelle (Math & Statistical Sciences)	William Service (Psychology)
Osman Hojanepesov (Councillor-at-Large)	Dylan Ashley (Computing Science)	Milad Nazarahari (Mechanical Engineering)	Alexandra Loverock (Public Health)
Natalie Liang (Councillor-at-Large)	Julie Piche (Dentistry)	Nicole Noel (Medical Genetics)	Alesha Reed (Rehabilitation Science)
Dasha Smirnow (Councillor-at-Large)	Kenzie Gordon (Digital Humanities)	Brendan Todd (Medical Microbiology & Immunology)	Jared Fath (Renewable Resources)
Melissa Woghiren (Councillor-at-Large)	Alison Thomas (Earth & Atmospheric Sciences)	Shahnaz Shahtoosi (Modern Languages and Cultural Studies)	Robert Piazza (Secondary Education)
Andrew Woodman (Councillor-at-Large)	Areej Alshammiry (Educational Policy Studies)	Trevor Poitras (Neuroscience)	Jon Mora (Surgery)

**Guests:** Tom Gee (GSA Auditor, Collins Barrow LLP); Colten Yamagishi (Studentcare); Darcy Bemister (Former CRO, AFNS); Andrew Schmaus (Neuroscience); Debarati Biswas (Mechanical Engineering); Yi Wan (Computing Science).

Deputy Speaker Pranidhi Baddam in the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm.

**Roll Call****1. Roll Call of GSA Council Members in Attendance****Approval of Agenda****2. Approval of the 16 July 2018 Consolidated Agenda**

Members had before them the 16 July 2018 Consolidated Agenda, which had been previously distributed on 13 July 2018. K Gordon **MOVED**; M Aiken **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes****3. Minutes from the 18 June 2018 GSA Council Meeting**

Members had before them the 18 June 2018 GSA Council Minutes, which had been previously distributed on 6 July 2018. D Ashley **MOVED**; T Poitras **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

#### **Changes in Council Membership**

##### **4. Changes in GSA Council Membership**

###### **i. Introduction of New Councillors:**

This was the first meeting for a number of Councillors: D Tandio (Pharmacology).

###### **ii. Farewell to Departing Councillors**

This was the last meeting for a number of Councillors: T Poitras (Neurology), T Kim (Pediatrics).

#### **Councillor Announcements**

##### **5. Councillor Announcements**

None at this time.

#### **Action Items:**

##### **6. 2017-2018 GSA Audited Financial Statements**

S van der Klein (GSA President) presented the item and introduced the guest, Tom Gee (GSA Auditor, Collins Barrow LLP).

**MOTION BEFORE GSA COUNCIL:** That GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the 2017-2018 GSA Audited Financial Statements.

T Gee highlighted some of the main areas of the audit. He noted that the GSA's current ratio between assets and liabilities was 2.71:1 and that, generally, a non-profit organization wanted to see a ratio of at least 2:1 to ensure that the organization had enough resources to cover any liabilities. He reminded GSA Council that five to six years ago, the GSA's finances were not in good condition, whereas today the GSA's financial position was strong. He reported that the overall revenue for 2018 had increased by 3.75%. He discussed the GSA's various restricted funds and, regarding the Financial Stabilization Fund, he noted that the standard for non-profit organizations was to have a reserve to cover at least three months of operations, but that some of his clients had built up reserve funds to cover six or nine months depending on their specific situation. Overall, he summarized that the GSA's financial position remained very strong, and had improved from the previous year.

GSA Councillors then posed a series of questions including, but not limited to, how much the GSA fee has increased in the past six years (following a series of GSA Council approved fee increases several years ago (done to improve the health of the GSA), GSA fees were now increased annually by the Consumer Price Index as part of the GSA Council approved budget), and the discrepancy in the schedule of revenues for the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council fees between 2017 and 2018 (the way in which the GSA funded the fees of this organization had changed, previously the GSA collected \$1/student and the rest of the membership fee was paid through the GSA's operating budget and now the fee was fully paid through the GSA's operating budget. This change had been included in the GSA Council approved budget for 2018-2019).

**MOTION:** That GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the 2017-2018 GSA Audited Financial Statements. J Fath **MOVED**; A Thomas **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously

##### **7. 2018-2019 GSA Spring/Summer Term Budget and Expenditure Report**

S van der Klein (GSA President) presented the item.

**MOTION BEFORE GSA COUNCIL:** That GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the GSA 2018-2019 Spring/Summer Term Budget and Expenditure Report.

S van der Klein noted that this report covered the first two months of the 2018-2019 fiscal year. She summarized some of the key points, including that the GSA was continuing to assess whether to join the newly formed national organization of graduate students' associations, ThinkGrad, that it was anticipated that the GSA would be underspent in the human resources budget line for the year, and that, as the Alberta Labour Relations Board had recently approved the GSA Bylaw and Policy on collective bargaining, the GSA would be hiring a consultant to examine the establishment and administration of a strike fund. There were no questions.

**MOTION:** That GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the GSA 2018-2019 Spring/Summer Term Budget and Expenditure Report. K Gorden **MOVED**; M Aiken **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously

#### 8. Proposed Changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy, GSA Policy, Section K: Budget Principles, Practices, and Procedures

S van der Klein (GSA President) presented the item.

**MOTION BEFORE GSA COUNCIL:** That GSA Council, following on a recommendation from the GSA Budget and Finance Committee and the GSA Board, **APPROVE** the proposed changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy, GSA Policy, Section K: Budget Principles, Practices, and Procedures, as shown in the attached double column document and effective upon approval by GSA Council.

S van der Klein noted that the GSA office regularly reviewed GSA Bylaw and Policy to ensure that they aligned with practice and that these changes were administrative in nature and included revising the current section on business travel to align with practice, as well as adding a parallel section concerning non-travel related external and University relations and advocacy expenses. There were no questions.

**MOTION:** That GSA Council, following on a recommendation from the GSA Budget and Finance Committee and the GSA Board, **APPROVE** the proposed changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy, GSA Policy, Section K: Budget Principles, Practices, and Procedures, as shown in the attached double column document and effective upon approval by GSA Council. F Elian **MOVED**; D Ashley **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously

#### For Discussion:

#### 9. GSA Health and Dental Plan Orientation

F Elian (Vice-President Student Services) presented the item and introduced the guest, Colten Yamagishi (Program Manager, Studentcare).

C Yamagishi gave GSA Council a short orientation to the GSA Health and Dental Plan (hereafter “the Plan”). He explained that Studentcare administered the Plan and noted that Studentcare had been working with the GSA for over 10 years. He briefly reviewed coverage included in the Plan, such as prescriptions drugs, other health practitioners, vision, laser surgery, basic dental care, and travel coverage. He noted that all full-time graduate students were automatically assessed the fees and enrolled in the Plan and that part-time graduate students were not automatically enrolled in but could opt-in. He added that, during the change of coverage period, full-time graduate students could also opt-in their spouse and dependents or could opt-out by providing proof of alternate coverage.

C Yamagashi noted that Studentcare began over 20 years ago as a student start-up in Quebec and now represented 85 students’ associations with about 800,000 students enrolled in their plans. He added that Studentcare’s role was to ensure that students’ associations received the best-valued plans by lobbying insurance companies. He added that the Plan’s insurer was Desjardins. He indicated that the GSA’s role was to provide feedback to Studentcare so Studentcare was aware of the particular needs of U of A graduate students. He added that information on the Plan could be found on the Studentcare website and the Plan brochure. He also noted that Studentcare worked to develop a network of health and dental practitioners who offered services to graduate students at a discounted rate. C Yamagashi invited GSA Council members to share the information about the network with their departmental colleagues.

C Yamagishi highlighted the annual cycle with respect to the Plan: in summer, discussion any feedback that GSA Council might have about the Plan; in October or November, presentation of the annual claims report to highlight different trends year to year; and in March, setting the Plan fee (done by GSA Council) and making any changes to coverage for the coming year. He explained the difference between the Plan premium (cost of the plan, which varied year to year based on the amount of claims made, including Studentcare fees) and the Plan fees (what students paid as part of their University fees). He indicated that the Plan fees was usually the same as the Plan premium but they could differ for a variety of reasons including a reduction in the Premium after the Plan fee was set and the planned growth of the Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund (HDPRF). He added that the HDPRF could be used to partially offset a high increase to Plan premiums.

GSA Councillors then posed a series of questions including, but not limited to, the new psychologist services added for the coverage year starting on 1 September 2018 (from \$30 per visit to 80% per visit up to an annual maximum of \$600/per policy year); if there were updates regarding the inclusion of Occupational Therapy services (Studentcare priced this out at a 1% increase to the current GSA Health premium (around \$2.66 per person) and C Yamagishi noted that Studentcare would pursue this inclusion if GSA Council wished to do so); further explanation about travel coverage (it was suggested to call the Plan provider before travelling for ease of claims processing and it was noted to call the insurer right away if you need medical

treatment abroad); how prescription drugs coverage compared to other plans such as Alberta Blue Cross (the Plan included a 80% coverage on prescription drugs); if network practitioners were evaluated before being added (no immediate barriers to access, basic vetting step, problematic providers were removed); if a health spending account could be added to the Plan (cost prohibitive for a student plan); and some discussion about the inclusion of osteopathic and naturopathic services in the Plan, and the merits of those services (removing these services would decrease the Plan premium very minimally). Additionally, GSA Council members further discussed adding coverage for Occupational Therapy services. GSA Council took a straw poll on the addition of Occupational Therapy services to the Plan and members voted in majority to support this. It was noted that the GSA office would develop a formal proposal to add Occupational Therapy services to the Plan for approval by GSA Council at its September meeting.

#### Action Items:

##### **10. GSA Board 2018-2019 Strategic Work Plan**

S van der Klein (GSA President) presented the item.

**MOTION BEFORE GSA COUNCIL:** That GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the GSA Board 2018-2019 Strategic Work Plan.

S van der Klein, GSA President, presented the GSA Board 2018-2019 Strategic Work Plan (SWP). She thanked the GSA office for putting the SWP brochure together and noted that, so far, the feedback had been very positive. She noted that GSA Council members also received a paper copy of an associated internal task list, which was intended to be a living document that would be updated regularly as initiatives are completed or otherwise altered. She added that feedback received during last month's GSA Council meeting, through an online survey, and through participation in an engagement session on 14 June 2018 had been added to the internal task list.

GSA Councillors provided positive feedback on the SWP's design and then posed a series of questions including, but not limited to, where and how the SWP would be distributed (the audience for the document was the University Administration; the brochure would not be printed en masse but would be available in the GSA lounge and electronically on the GSA website); how GSA Council's feedback had been incorporated (it was noted that it had been added to the internal task list, which was intended to be the corresponding inward facing document); the mechanism for reporting back to GSA Council on progress (the internal task list would be used as a guide for the SWP updates to GSA Council in October, January, and April); concerns about measuring diversity and inclusion when those were difficult to measure and data was hard to acquire, and how to make meaningful change rather than simply lip service (measurement was a general problem for the University as a whole and the GSA must ensure that the University's diversity efforts would be met). The GSA Board agreed to add advocating for better availability of data on the diversity of the graduate student community to the internal task list.

**MOTION:** That GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the GSA Board 2018-2019 Strategic Work Plan. K Gordon **MOVED**; A Thomas **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously

#### Elections

##### **11. GSA Council Elections**

K Gordon (Vice-Chair of the GSA Nominating Committee) presented the item and introduced the nominees, who were given the opportunity to address GSA Council by responding to a question provided in advance. K Gordon asked the following question of the candidate for GSA Speaker and the candidate were given 45 seconds to respond: "Please tell GSA Council what motivated you to run for this position." The candidate for GSA Deputy Returning Officer was not in attendance.

##### Nominees for GSA Speaker:

Pranidhi Baddam (Medical Sciences)

##### Nominees for GSA Deputy Returning Officer:

Amritha Prasad (Agricultural, Food, and Nutritional Science)

#### GSA Standing Committees

##### a. GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (3 vacancies)

K Gordon (Vice-Chair of the GSA Nominating Committee) presented the item and introduced the nominee, who was given the opportunity to address GSA Council by responding to a question provided in advance. K Gordon asked the following question of

the candidate and the candidate was given 45 seconds to respond: "Taking 45 seconds, please tell us why you'd like to serve on the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board."

Nominee for GSA Appeals and Complaints Board:

Nicholas Ruel (Pharmacology)

b. GSA Nominating Committee (1 vacancy)

K Gordon presented the item and introduced the nominee, who was given the opportunity to address GSA Council by responding to a question provided in advance. K Gordon asked the following question of the candidate and the candidate was given 45 seconds to respond: "Taking 45 seconds, please tell us why you'd like to serve on the GSA Nominating Committee."

Nominee for GSA Nominating Committee:

David Tandio (Pharmacology)

**Reports**

**12. President**

**i. President's Report:**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 13 July 2018. The report stood as submitted. A GSA Councillor asked about the GSA's position regarding the recent and abrupt closure of the Filistix food outlets on campus. S van der Klein responded that it was not within the mandate of the GSA to have an official position on this matter, but that she encouraged all interested GSA Council members to fill out the petition that had been advertised in The Gateway. She added that the GSA did have a position on the negotiated contract between Aramark and the University, which emphasized the need for Aramark to improve their services, given numerous student complaints over the years.

**ii. GSA Board**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 13 July 2018. The report stood as submitted.

**iii. GSA Budget and Finance Committee**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 13 July 2018. The report stood as submitted.

**iv. GSA Governance Committee**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 13 July 2018. The report stood as submitted.

**13. Vice-President Academic**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 13 July 2018. The report stood as submitted. In addition M Aliramezani asked GSA Councillors to share with him if anyone they knew was not having regularly scheduled supervisory committee meetings and whether this had affected their academic progress.

**14. Vice-President External**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 13 July 2018. The report stood as submitted.

**ii. GSA Awards Selection Committee's Report**

No meetings this reporting period.

**15. Vice-President Labour**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 13 July 2018. The report stood as submitted. In addition B Richardson stated that the GSA Bylaw and Policy on collective bargaining that GSA Council approved at their June meeting had been reviewed and accepted by the Labour Relations Board. A GSA Councillor asked whether the next step was to organize a strike fund (it was clarified that it wasn't a requirement to establish a strike fund but that, through the collective bargaining process, language would be added to the collective agreement outlining the mechanism by which any potential union dues fees would be collected. It was further emphasized that academically-employed graduate students would

need to vote to approve any amount of money that would be collected. Finally, it was noted that the GSA was looking to hire a consultant to explore this matter).

**ii. GSA Labour Relations Committee**

No meetings this reporting period.

**16. Vice-President Student Services**

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 13 July 2018. The report stood as submitted.

**17. Senator**

**i. Senator's Report**

No written report at this time.

**18. Speaker**

**i. Speaker's Report**

No written report at this time.

**19. Chief Returning Officer**

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

No written report at this time.

**20. GSA Nominating Committee**

**i. GSA Nominating Committee Report**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 13 July 2018. The report stood as submitted.

**21. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee**

**ii. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Report**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 13 July 2018. The report stood as submitted. P Baddam noted that the outgoing GSA Chief Returning Officer, D Bemister, had been invited to attend GSA Council as a guest to speak to this report, as the other members of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC) were unable to attend. D Bemister noted that the major substantive changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy on elections that the GSA ERC had discussed the past few months included the prohibition of slates and moderated mailing lists for campaign purposes, and the addition of a more defined complaint process. He further noted that the GSA ERC had reviewed election regulations from other graduate students' associations in Canada while developing their proposed changes, and that other associations did not allow slates and limited the use of mailing lists for campaigning. He reported that the recommended changes would be brought forward to GSA Council in September.

**22. GSA Management**

**i. Executive Director's Report**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 13 July 2018. The report stood as submitted. In addition C Thomas stated the GSA had recently entered into an agreement for a company to handle its shredding needs.

**Question Period**

**23. Written Questions**

None at this time.

**24. Oral Questions**

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:29 pm.

**GSA President**  
**Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 20 August 2018 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Sasha van der Klein  
Date: 17 August 2018

Dear Council Colleagues,

The summer is flying by. Since the end of July, I've been on a research leave back to my home country (the Netherlands), so this will be a fairly short report. Although I can't be there, I would still urge you to drop by our orientation event the afternoon of 28 August in CCIS to meet all the new GSA members!

**External**

**Ab-GPAC** – I have been heavily involved in writing the external advocacy policy on tuition and fees, one of our priorities for this upcoming year. I have also worked with Nicole, the Executive Director of ab-GPAC, and the ab-GPAC Communications Committee, on the advertising materials for ab-GPAC that will be used for educational purposes when we meet with provincial politicians in preparation of the upcoming provincial election.

**ThinkGrad Conference** – Unfortunately, my jetlag and the time difference did not allow me to call into the ThinkGrad meeting while I was on my research leave. Zhihong attended this conference in Winnipeg, and more detail can be found in his report to Council.

**Internal**

**Saudi Arabian Students** – We have been working with the FGSR and UAI to help any students who reach out for support during the current situation.

**Research Data Management** – I had several meetings, together with Beth, around research data management and the institutional response to upcoming policy changes from the Tri-Council Agencies. I was happy to see that there is a lot of support available for students regarding data management. More information can also be found in Beth's report.

**FGSR** – In the past months, two new associate deans have been appointed at the FGSR, responsible for different graduate programs within the University. I met with Dr. Janice Causgrove Dunn before I left, and I will meet with Dr. Victoria Ruétalo when I'm back in Edmonton. As we work closely with the FGSR on many student matters, it's really important we put faces to names and exchange our knowledge of the graduate student experience.

**Indigenous Students** – I met with Teddy Carter, from the Indigenous Graduate Student Group, to update her on Indigenous student matters I had come across in my role as GSA President and ab-GPAC chair. We also discussed the possibility of a seat for a representative of the Indigenous Graduate Student Group on our GSA Council.

Don't feel afraid to shoot me an email, or knock on my door in Triffo Hall when I'm back in September, I always like to hear from you!

Thanks,

Sasha van der Klein, GSA President

## 2.1

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 16 July 2018 and 20 August 2018. The meetings were accurate at the time of printing. Please note that I am away on a research leave from 23 July to 28 August 2018.*

17 July	Meeting with D Williams, Office of Safe Disclosure and Human Rights
18 July	Meeting with Indigenous Graduate Student Group
19 July	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Board of Directors Meeting
19 July	Farewell Event for B Baron, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President (International)
20 July	Meeting with N Kuppeveld, Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Executive Director
20 July	Meeting with Graduate Students
15 August	Meeting with Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Vice-Chair

**GSA Board (GSAB)**  
**Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 20 August 2018 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
 From: Courtney Thomas, Executive Director; Julie Tanguay, Associate Director; and Lisa Hareuther, Assistant Director  
 Date: 17 August 2018

The GSAB reports regularly to GSA Council by listing its agenda items, Motions/agreements, and main items of discussion (meeting reports are also offered at each meeting). Motions of Agenda approval and approval of the Minutes are not included unless there were amendments made. Closed session items are not minuted. GSA Council members are always able to ask questions about items that were discussed in closed session. Open session Minutes are available upon request. The President, Vice-Presidents, and the administrative team will be happy to answer any questions or provide more information at the GSA Council meeting. Also see the weekly Management Reports to the GSAB in Item 12 (Executive Director's Report to GSA Council) on pages 12.1 – 12.4.

**18 July 2018 GSA Board Meeting:**

Main Agenda Items:

Attendance at the ThinkGrad Conference, 1-3 August 2018, in Winnipeg, MB: Estimated Expenses; Actual Expenses for Attendance at the Wellness Summit, 10-12 June 2018, in Calgary, AB: Business Travel Expenses; and Draft Final Report of the Cannabis Working Group.

Motions and Agreements:

That the GSA Board **APPROVE** the estimated expense for one (1) representative of the GSA to attend ThinkGrad, 1-3 August 2018, in Winnipeg, MB. SvK **MOVED**. FE Seconded. **CARRIED**.

The GSA Board is asked to **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the attached summary of actual expenses incurred through attendance at the Wellness Summit, 10-12 June 2018, in Calgary, AB. SvK **MOVED**. MA Seconded. **CARRIED**.

**25 July 2018 GSA Board Meeting:**

Main Agenda Items:

Meeting reports.

Motions and Agreements: None at this time.

**1 August 2018 GSA Board Meeting:** Cancelled

**8 August 2018 GSA Board Meeting:**

Main Agenda Items:

Meeting reports.

Motions and Agreements: None at this time.

**15 August 2018 GSA Board Meeting:**

Main Agenda Items:

Meeting reports.

Motions and Agreements:

Members **AGREED** to move in **CLOSED SESSION**.

Members discussed the **Negotiating Meeting**.

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

Members **AGREED** to move in **CLOSED SESSION**.

Members discussed the **CFSS Meeting**.

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

**GSA Vice-President Academic  
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 20 August 2018 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Masoud Aliramezani  
Date: 17 August 2018

Dear Council Colleagues,

Summer is almost over, and I hope you have more than enough energy to start a wonderful term.

During the past month, I attended several meetings and I will share the highlights with you in this report.

I attended the Residence Budget Advisory Committee on behalf of our Vice-President External. The only point that I would like to highlight from this meeting is the low participation of Michener Park residents in consultation and information sessions with the University to discuss the closure of the residence and the future of campus family housing. On behalf of this committee, I would like to encourage anyone who lives in Michener Park to share your thoughts, comments, and concerns by attending any upcoming consultation sessions and ask Council members to share this message with colleagues and friends who may live there.

As Zhihong also reports, our team also met with staff from the University of Alberta International (UAI) Services Centre. We discussed a variety of topics concerning international graduate students. UAI offers various welcome services for new international students, including an airport welcome and campus check-in services. They also provide a series of workshops and events targeted at students looking to increase their knowledge about career development in Canada through the "[I-Work](#)" program.

This month, I also attended a negotiating meeting concerning collective bargaining. More details about this meeting can be found in Beth's report.

Should you have any questions or comments about this report, please let me know and I will be more than happy to answer. Please do not hesitate to share your suggestions or concerns regarding any academic-related issue you or anyone from your department may have.

Warm Regards,  
Masoud Aliramezani,  
GSA Vice-President Academic

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 16 July 2018 and 20 August 2018. The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

19 July	Residence Budget Advisory Committee (RBAC)
23 July	Meet and Greet with UAlberta International
13 August	Collective Agreement Negotiating Meeting
14 August	Meeting with Graduate Students

**GSA Vice-President External  
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 20 August 2018 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Zhihong Pan  
Date: 17 August 2018

Dear Council Colleagues,

As the fall is approaching, I hope the last few months have been productive for you and that you also had some fun during the summer. As the Council meeting is cancelled in August, it means that I have to wait for another month to see you in-person. However, I wish you an enjoyable rest of the summer and successful preparations for the beginning of the new academic year.

During the last month, I have attended several meetings and been involved with some discussions and I will share the highlights with you in this report.

During August, I attended the Physical Therapy Departmental Orientation to give a short presentation about the GSA. This was my first time presenting the work of the GSA at a departmental orientation, and I am excited about the other orientations in the fall, as they are a good opportunity to communicate directly with our new graduate students. Additionally, I did a presentation for the Global Academic Leadership Development (GALD) Program. The participants of this program come from different universities in China. I talked with them about the structure, mission, goals, and services of the GSA, and they shared the corresponding information about their student associations.

At the end of July, as Masoud also discusses in his report, I and other GSA DEOs had a chance to meet with staff from UAlberta International (UAI). This meeting was a good opportunity to learn about how UAI will focus on graduate students' issues. Meanwhile, we also shared our priorities for the year. They were pretty open to graduate student problems and I am confident that UAI plays an important role in supporting graduate students.

At the beginning of August, I went to the ThinkGrad Conference in Winnipeg, Manitoba. In my opinion, it was an amazing platform to communicate information with different graduate student associations across Canada, and to learn a lot from each other. During the meeting, topics included supports for student parents, online engagement, Indigenous graduate students, students' rights, and paid leaves.

Finally, one of the other meetings that I attended this month was the United Way Committee Meeting. In this meeting, we discussed preparation strategies for their upcoming donation campaign event.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns regarding the report.

Sincerely,  
Zhihong Pan, GSA 2018-2019 Vice-President External

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 16 July 2018 and 20 August 2018. The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

23 July	Meet and Greet with UAlberta International
31 July	Physical Therapy Departmental Orientation
1 - 3 August	ThinkGrad Conference
13 August	Global Academic Leadership Development (GALD) Program Presentation
15 August	United Way Committee Meeting
16 August	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Board of Directors Meeting

**GSA Vice-President Labour  
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 20 August 2018 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Beth Richardson  
Date: 17 August 2018

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope you've all taken the time to rest and recharge over the summer, as the new semester is fast approaching! I only have a few updates for you this month – however, I also have important information on the status of the Collective Agreement, which is set to expire on the 31<sup>st</sup> of August.

**Tri-Council Research and Data Management Policy: Institutional Response**

The Tri-Council funding bodies (NSERC, CIHR, and SSHRC) are updating their policies for storage and accessibility of data, and I have been involved in drafting the institutional response, which will be available soon. Comments from graduate students particularly dealt with how research storage would work for large-scale datasets, and also ethical concerns that arose from storage of human data. The draft framework can be read [here](#). This website includes email addresses for sending individualized feedback to each funding agency, if you have further concerns about the policy that are specific to your research.

**Safety, Security, and Environmental Health**

The Campus and Facilities Safety and Security working group is currently writing up its full report and recommendations based on the data provided to us from the campus community. I'd like to take the opportunity to thank you all once again for your ongoing feedback on this issue. However, if you have any further concerns or any issues that have arisen over the summer, which you believe may not have been brought forward to the working group, it is not too late – please contact me.

**Collective Agreement Negotiations**

We have been in negotiations with the University for several months now regarding the new Collective Agreement and negotiations are still ongoing as we have not yet reached an agreement. As you are aware, the current agreement will expire at the end of the month. However, as per Article 4.02 of the current Collective Agreement, this agreement will remain in effect until a new agreement is concluded. **You will be paid as normal after August 31, under the terms of the 2016-2018 agreement (including 2017-2018 salary scales).**

As always, if you have any questions, comments or concerns about anything regarding graduate student labour at the University of Alberta, please contact me to talk over email or arrange a meeting. I will happily respond to any queries, no matter how large or small.

Best wishes,  
Beth Richardson, your Vice-President Labour.

## 5.1

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 16 July 2018 and 20 August 2018. The meetings were accurate at the time of printing. Please note that I am away 14 August to 2 September 2018*

17 July	Campus Facilities Safety and Security (CFSS) Meeting
19 July	United Way Committee Meeting
19 July	Meeting with a Graduate Student
7 August	Student Homelessness Support Working Group
9 August	Research Data Management (RDM) Institutional Response Meeting
13 August	Collective Agreement Negotiating Meeting

**GSA Vice-President Student Services  
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 20 August 2018 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Fahed Elian  
Date: 17 August 2018

Dear Council Colleagues,

Hey colleagues! Summer is about to end, and school is about to get busy again. I hope you are enjoying your summer so far and have some fun plans before the busy time hits in September. The following report is to summarize my activities for the last month.

**Suicide Prevention Implementation Policy Review Subcommittee Meeting**

The main goal of this committee is to identify suicide prevention, intervention, and postvention policies. In the latest meeting of this committee, I addressed how student-supervisor relationships affect students' mental health either in a positive or negative way. I have brought to the committee's attention that it would be beneficial to create policies that address the student-supervisor relationship from a mental health perspective, similar to the well-established policies regarding physical harassment and discrimination. As Sasha and Beth have also previously reported to Council, they are continuing conversations with the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research regarding the development of new requirements for supervisory training to address topics such as psychological well-being, which are now required under the new Occupational Health and Safety Act.

**All Gender Washroom Meeting**

The University has set-up criteria to prioritize the establishment of new all-gender washroom locations. The criteria is as follows:

- 1) Buildings that have classrooms and lack all-gender washrooms
- 2) Buildings that have food establishments
- 3) Libraries
- 4) Teaching Labs
- 5) Recreational facilities, with the exception of the renovation of the PAW Centre locker rooms, which already include plans for all-gender and family friendly washrooms

**Campus Facilities Safety and Security (CFSS) Meeting**

This past month I also attended some CFSS meetings on Beth's behalf. More details about this working group can also be found in her report. An excel sheet has been created by this committee to address the security issues that were been raised by students and staff. Based on this data, the committee will try to address every building that has concerns and prioritize what are known as "hot spots" for their work plan. The U of A will evaluate security risks based on the following criteria:

- Impact on infrastructure
- Impact on education and research
- Impact on human resources
- Impact on safety and security
- Impact on reputation

Campus safety culture was discussed, including how monitored training and education can improve safety practices on campus. The U of A is also currently in the process of examining security models at other universities in Canada to see if there are improvements that could be implemented at the U of A. Finally, I emphasized that the University should focus not just on physical safety, but on emotional safety as well, and that this should be addressed in their work moving forward.

Sincerely,  
Fahed Elian, 2018-2019 GSA Vice-President Student Services

## 6.1

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between 16 July 2018 and 20 Aug 2018. The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.*

17 July	Days of Action Committee Meeting
17 July	Suicide Prevention Implementation Policy Review Subcommittee
23 July	Meet and Greet with UAlberta International
24 July	All-Gender Washroom Meeting
31 July	Campus Facilities Safety and Security (CFSS) Meeting
1 August	Farewell Event for J Schiebelbein, Student Services - Career Centre Director
14 August	Campus Facilities Safety and Security (CFSS) Meeting
16 August	U-Pass Administration Committee Meeting

**GSA Nominating Committee (GSA NoC)  
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 20 August 2018 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Radim Barta  
Date: 17 August 2018

Dear GSA Council Colleagues,

The report from the GSA NoC this month is a summary of discussions/decisions the Committee has made since its last report, together with a list of all vacancies filled and those which will be filled shortly.

GSA Policy governing the GSA NoC is located in GSA Bylaw and Policy, Section E: Nominating. As provided for in its Terms of Reference, the GSA NoC has been conducting business via e-mail.

Sincerely,

Radim Barta, Chair of the GSA NoC

**GSA Standing Committees**

None to report at this time.

**External Committees**

None to report at this time.

**Current Vacancies**

**1) Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry Council (3 Graduate Student Positions)**

These positions were advertised to graduate students in the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry via email on 8 August and 15 August with a nomination deadline of 20 August 2018.

**2) Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Council (Up to 25 Graduate Student Positions)**

These positions were advertised in the 10 August 2019 GSA newsletter with a nomination deadline of 29 August 2018.

**3) Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Dean Selection Committee (1 Graduate Student Position)**

This position was advertised in the 10 August 2019 GSA newsletter with a nomination deadline of 20 August 2018.

**4) General Faculties Council (GFC) (2 Graduate Student Positions)**

These positions were advertised in the 10 August 2019 GSA newsletter with a nomination deadline of 29 August 2018.

**GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC)  
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 20 August 2018 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Leigh Spanner  
Date: 17 August 2018

Dear GSA Councillors,

As reported to GSA Council over the spring and the summer, the GSA ERC has been working on recommended changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy on elections. On 2 August, the GSA ERC met to review the final proposal and, on 9 August, voted electronically to recommend this proposal to GSA Council.

The recommended changes included in this proposal can be summarized as follows:

- Removal of the extensive list of qualifications for the GSA CRO position, given that it has been difficult to assess the degree to which each candidate for this position possesses these qualifications;
- Removal of slates and emphasizing that candidates will campaign individually (as a means to avoid an overly oppositional environment and to foster an inclusive environment. This is also consistent with GSA Bylaw and Policy that candidates can only be elected as individuals);
- Introduction of a new requirement that candidates will only distribute campaign materials through emails to their personal contacts (current regulations surrounding the use of other campaign tools, such as social media, remain as they currently appear) and a prohibition on utilizing moderated mailing lists;
- New requirement that all candidate campaign printing to be done using SUBPrint (to provide a level playing field for candidates);
- Removal of the prohibition on campaigning in spaces where swipe card access is needed, given that current wording in GSA Bylaw and Policy prohibits candidates from campaigning within their own departments or labs if they are located behind locked doors; *and*
- Introduction of a new section on alleged breaches that outlines the elements candidates will be required to submit when bringing forward a formal complaint about any alleged breach of GSA Bylaw and Policy on elections.

This proposal will be presented to GSA Council for consideration at the 17 September and 15 October meetings. In advance of those meetings, I encourage any GSA Councillors with questions about the proposal to contact me via email.

Sincerely,  
Leigh Spanner, Chair of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee

**GSA Executive Director  
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled 20 August 2018 Meeting**

To: GSA Council  
From: Courtney Thomas  
Date: 17 August 2018

Dear GSA Council members,

Since the last meeting of GSA Council in July, the GSA office has been engaged, alongside our regular work of supporting various GSA committees and the work of the Directly-Elected Officers, with the following projects:

- Planning for our annual Fall Orientation event (being held this year from 1-3:30 pm on 28 August in CCIS 1-440 and the PCL Lounge – we expect the event to be attended by some 300 plus new graduate students and it will feature an information fair, several door prize draws, and light refreshments)
- Planning for the departmental orientations that we offer each year (in collaboration with the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, we hope to visit between 40 and 45 departments this year)
- Ongoing review of GSA Bylaw and Policy for inconsistencies, editorial errors, and needed updates (an array of proposed changes will come before GSA Council in the fall)
- Production of the GSA Planner (this year we did a redesign of the Planner and you are all welcome to come and pick one up by visiting us at the GSA office in Triffo Hall)
- A clean up of the GSA's hard copy and electronic files (done in accordance with our document retention and archiving schedule)

I am happy to answer any questions and, as always, the weekly reports from management to the GSA Board are attached.

Best,

Courtney Thomas  
GSA Executive Director

### Management Report to the GSA Board, 18 July 2018

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 11 July 2018:

#### Strategic

- Release of the GSA Board Strategic Work Plan (circulation to campus partners and stakeholders, posting on the GSA website, etc).
- Preparing GSA Board Strategic Work Plan individualized work plans by portfolio with suggested starting steps associated with each goal.
- Developing strategies to enhance effective communication of GSA budgeting information.
- Working on updating the language concerning the GSA in the University Calendar.
- Planning GSA Funding 101 sessions for the fall, and two small events to foster connections between GSA Graduate Student Groups.
- Updating GSA Bylaw and Policy post-Council and planning training sessions for the CRO and DRO.
- Submission of the GSA's audited financial statements to the University Board of Governors, pursuant to requirements of the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*.
- Work associated with changes to the Collective Agreement and supporting negotiations processes.
- Drafting a background document on previous GSA advocacy strategies with respect to tuition.

#### Grants and Office Operations

- Scheduling GSA departmental orientations (32 requests received so far).
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Nominating Committee (election of the Speaker and DRO, vacancies on the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board and the GSA Nominating Committee).
- Sending the 2018-2019 GSA Planner to the printer and ongoing redesign of the weekly GSA newsletter (almost completed).
- Arranging for the printing of a limited number of hard copy versions of the GSA Board Strategic Work Plan.
- Facebook = 1,153 likes (up 3 from 11 July); Facebook posts reached 912 users this week and our "post engagement" count was 204. Twitter = 860 followers (up 0 from 11 July); our tweets earned 1,600 "impressions" over the last week.
- GSA Academic Travel Awards = new funding period started 1 July; GSA Child Care Grants = new funding period started at 8 am on 1 July and closed at 10:30 am that same day; GSA Emergency Bursaries = new funding year started 1 April (there are no funding periods for GSA Emergency Bursaries); GSA Graduate Student Group Grant = new funding period started 1 July.

### Management Report to the GSA Board, 25 July 2018

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 18 July 2018:

#### Strategic

- Research on mandatory student association membership with particular reference to recent developments in BC.
- Discussions with the SU concerning the Management Committee of the subleased space in PAW occupied by Chopped Leaf.
- Reviewing recommended amendments to GSA Bylaw and Policy on elections and referenda.
- Developing a “definitions” section for each section of GSA Bylaw and Policy.
- Preparing for an introductory meeting with UAI.
- Preparing for the GSA’s participation in the upcoming ThinkGrad conference (advancing agenda discussion items, etc).
- Preparing for procedural fairness training sessions for newly elected GSA Appeals and Complaints Board members.
- Work associated with changes to the Collective Agreement and supporting negotiations processes.
- Drafting a background document on previous GSA advocacy strategies with respect to tuition.

#### Grants and Office Operations

- Scheduling GSA departmental orientations (32 requests received so far).
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (meeting again soon to review recommended amendments to GSA Bylaw and Policy on elections and referenda) and the GSA Nominating Committee.
- Ongoing redesign of the weekly GSA newsletter (almost completed).
- Arranging for meetings with key stakeholders to discuss the GSA Board Strategic Work Plan.
- Meetings with the Student Group Network and Orientation Network.
- Preparing an inventory and estimated value of all GSA office furniture, electronics, etc.
- Facebook = 1,154 likes (up 1 from 18 July); Facebook posts reached 882 users this week and our “post engagement” count was 192. Twitter = 863 followers (up 3 from 18 July); our tweets earned 1,100 “impressions” over the last week.
- GSA Academic Travel Awards = new funding period started 1 July; GSA Child Care Grants = new funding period started at 8 am on 1 July and closed at 10:30 am that same day; GSA Emergency Bursaries = new funding year started 1 April (there are no funding periods for GSA Emergency Bursaries); GSA Graduate Student Group Grant = new funding period started 1 July.

### Management Report to the GSA Board, 8 August 2018

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 25 July 2018:

#### Strategic

- Attending ThinkGrad with the Vice-President External.
- Research on mandatory student association membership with particular reference to recent developments in BC.
- Reviewing recommended amendments to GSA Bylaw and Policy on elections and referenda and facilitating an associated electronic vote of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee.
- Discussing the governance process associated with adding occupational therapy services to the coverage of the GSA Health and Dental Plan.
- Developing a “definitions” section for each section of GSA Bylaw and Policy and continuing with a comprehensive review of GSA Bylaw and Policy for needed editorial updates, etc.
- Preparing for procedural fairness training sessions for newly elected GSA Appeals and Complaints Board members.
- Work associated with changes to the Collective Agreement and supporting negotiations processes.
- Preparing for the submission of the GSA Board Strategic Work Plan to General Faculties Council, the General Faculties Council Executive Committee, and the Board Learning and Discovery Committee.
- Meeting with a labour lawyer to discuss issues related to the administration of a strike fund.

#### Grants and Office Operations

- Scheduling GSA departmental orientations (39 scheduled thus far) and preparing for Fall Orientation.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Nominating Committee.
- Ongoing redesign of the weekly GSA newsletter (almost completed) and updating all GSA 101 and orientation presentations with redesigned slides.
- Arranging for meetings with key stakeholders to discuss the GSA Board Strategic Work Plan.
- Office clean up and Google Drive clean up.
- Facebook = 1,163 likes (up 9 from 25 July); Facebook posts reached 330 users this week and our “post engagement” count was 70. Twitter = 864 followers (up 1 from 25 July); our tweets earned 2,000 “impressions” over the last week.
- GSA Academic Travel Awards = new funding period started 1 July; GSA Child Care Grants = new funding period started at 8 am on 1 July and closed at 10:30 am that same day; GSA Emergency Bursaries = new funding year started 1 April (there are no funding periods for GSA Emergency Bursaries); GSA Graduate Student Group Grant = new funding period started 1 July.

### Management Report to the GSA Board, 15 August 2018

Management has been engaged with the following issues since the last GSA Board meeting on 8 August 2018:

#### Strategic

- Debriefing following the recent ThinkGrad conference.
- Preparing for an upcoming meeting of the GSA Governance Committee.
- Developing a “definitions” section for each section of GSA Bylaw and Policy and continuing with a comprehensive review of GSA Bylaw and Policy for needed editorial updates, etc.
- Discussing collaborations between the GSA and Faculty Club.
- Beginning the planning process associated with the 2018 Early Call for Talent and Training.
- Work associated with changes to the Collective Agreement and supporting negotiations processes.
- Preparing for the submission of the GSA Board Strategic Work Plan to General Faculties Council, the General Faculties Council Executive Committee, and the Board Learning and Discovery Committee.
- Strategizing about the presentation of the first Board Strategic Work Plan update to GSA Council.

#### Grants and Office Operations

- Scheduling GSA departmental orientations and preparing for Fall Orientation.
- Supporting the work of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Nominating Committee (initiating the call for nominations for positions on General Faculties Council, the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Council, the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry Faculty Council, and the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Dean Selection Committee).
- Ongoing redesign of the weekly GSA newsletter (almost completed) and updating all GSA 101 and orientation presentations with redesigned slides and thinking about a redesign of the GSA poster.
- Setting up the GSA’s Instagram account and developing content.
- Coordinating the submission of reports to GSA Council.
- Comprehensive clean up of the office’s Google Drive.
- Facebook = 1,164 likes (up 1 from 8 August); Facebook posts reached 809 users this week and our “post engagement” count was 61. Twitter = 868 followers (up 4 from 8 August); our tweets earned 1,699 “impressions” over the last week.
- GSA Academic Travel Awards = new funding period started 1 July; GSA Child Care Grants = new funding period started at 8 am on 1 July and closed at 10:30 am that same day; GSA Emergency Bursaries = new funding year started 1 April (there are no funding periods for GSA Emergency Bursaries); GSA Graduate Student Group Grant = new funding period started 1 July.