IN ATTENDANCE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anas Fassih (President)</td>
<td>Md Saeed Siddik (Councillor-at-Large)</td>
<td>Gillian Robinson (Educational Policy Studies)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bishoi Aziz (VP Academic)</td>
<td>Pratima Singh (Councillor-at-Large)</td>
<td>Rachel Hislop-Hook (Educational Psychology)</td>
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<td>Janmejay Rao (VP External)</td>
<td>Syed Quadri (Councillor-at-Large)</td>
<td>Kapil Gangwar (Electrical &amp; Computer Engineering)</td>
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<td>Hiren Kaklotar (VP Labour)</td>
<td>Madeleine Fleming (Biochemistry)</td>
<td>Yina Liu (Elementary Education)</td>
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<td>Lauren Hill (Speaker)</td>
<td>Thomas Goodhart (Biomedical Engineering)</td>
<td>Jillian Ames (Indigenous Graduate Students’ Association)</td>
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<td>Sana Amjad (Deputy Speaker)</td>
<td>Natasha Pearson (Business MBA)</td>
<td>Maia Trotter (Library &amp; Information Studies)</td>
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<td>Muneeb Mohiuddin (CRO)</td>
<td>Teddy Carter (Business PhD)</td>
<td>Hannah Lam (Linguistics)</td>
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<td>Peter Isesole (Senator)</td>
<td>Brenna Hourigan (Cell Biology)</td>
<td>Alain Gervais (Mathematical &amp; Statistical Sciences)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eric Beaudry (Councillor-at-Large)</td>
<td>Helia Dehghan Harati (Chemistry)</td>
<td>Michaela Morrow (Media &amp; Technology Studies)</td>
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<td>Md Saiful Hoque (Councillor-at-Large)</td>
<td>Sana Homsi (Communication Sciences &amp; Disorders)</td>
<td>Kara Goodkey (Medical Genetics)</td>
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<td>Jeremy Mahaux (Councillor-at-Large)</td>
<td>Nathalia Fernandes Fagundes (Dentistry)</td>
<td>Asna Latif; Calvin Gordon (Medical Microbiology &amp; Immunology)</td>
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<td>Laura Manerus (Councillor-at-Large)</td>
<td>Xavia Publius (Drama)</td>
<td>Charbel Baaklini (Neuroscience)</td>
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<td>Preetam Panja (Councillor-at-Large)</td>
<td>Avni Patel (Earth &amp; Atmospheric Sciences)</td>
<td>Alicia Chichak (Occupational Therapy)</td>
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Guests: Dr Brooke Milne (Vice-Provost and Dean, FGSR); Dr Micah True (Associate Dean, FGSR); Medha Samarasinghe (Human Resources and Office Coordinator, FGSR).

Speaker Lauren Hill in the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm. Speaker acknowledged the Traditional Territory of Treaty Six.

Approval of Agenda

1. Approval of the 20 June 2022 Consolidated Agenda
Members had before them the 20 June 2022 Consolidated Agenda, which had been previously distributed on 17 June 2022. A Latif MOVED; M Vinod SECONDED.
Motion PASSED.

Approval of Minutes

2. Minutes from the 16 May 2022 GSA Council Meeting
Members had before them the 16 May 2022 GSA Council meeting minutes, which had been previously distributed on 10 June 2022. B Stark MOVED; M Vinod SECONDED.

Prepared by M Toghrai and F Robertson for GSA Council 20 June 2022
2.1

Motion PASSED.

Changes in GSA Council Membership

3. Changes in GSA Council Membership
   i. Introduction of New GSA Council Members: J Ames (IGSA).
   ii. Farewell to Departing GSA Council Members: None.

GSA Council Member Announcements

4. GSA Council Member Announcements

M Vinod noted that the GSA would be engaging in outreach over the summer by contacting departmental representatives to arrange to meet with them to hear about their departmental priorities over the coming year. Members were encouraged to keep an eye out for these emails.

A Fassih reminded members to provide any feedback regarding the development of the GSA Board Strategic Work Plan (SWP) to him at gsa.president@ualberta.ca; the SWP would be shared with GSA Council at the July meeting.

A Fassih also encouraged members to attend the upcoming GSA Coffee Break on 24 June at 1 pm in Triffo Hall. More Coffee Break events would follow over the summer and into the fall.

Discussion Items

5. Update on Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Initiatives

Anas Fassih (President) presented the item and introduced the guests (Dr B Milne, Vice-Provost and Dean, FGSR; Dr M True, Associate Dean, FGSR; and M Samarasinghe, Human Resources and Office Coordinator, FGSR), who presented on policy proposals related to doctoral examinations that are currently under development, noting a desire to hear directly from graduate students.

Dr True noted that the proposals were motivated by a series of reviews of existing policies and by concerns brought forward about them over the years by various parties. FGSR was in the early stages of consultation; this would not go forward imminently and FGSR would allow ample time for input. The current project was initiated to remedy certain recurring problems with graduate examinations and to provide clarity and quality control across all programs. The current draft proposal was developed by a working group made up of graduate coordinators, associate deans, graduate advisors, and a PhD student, from across campus.

It was noted that, in some instances, current policy was unclear and difficult to implement and, in other, more serious instances, current policy could be disadvantageous to graduate students (for example, if a committee chair was not neutral enough or willing to object to unfair treatment in an exam, etc). Other changes (for example, the language describing examiner categories) were aimed at enhancing clarity with more precise language to reduce confusion and strengthening the role of the chair to protect the student’s interest. A new category for ‘Specialized Knowledge Keeper’ had been also added. The proposals also recommended streamlining the size of examination committees, as large committees could be a burden on faculties and could take a long time to put together, resulting in inappropriately long periods to schedule exams and overly long examinations. Changes included counting co-supervisors as one member of the committee for the purposes of composition and voting but not for participating in the exam process by asking questions. Dr True noted that this element of the proposal seemed to provoke a strong reaction among many but that the intention was for co-supervisors to count as a single vote, not that both parties would not be able to be present and ask questions. This practice was not uncommon at several peer institutions – such as Waterloo and Manitoba, among others – which the working group discovered while considering policies from comparator institutions.

Dr True also noted that it was further proposed that doctoral examinations be opened to observers (with certain exceptions), that teleconferencing rules be relaxed, that there be greater clarity around relationships that would preclude service on an examination committee, that the post-examination timeline be clarified and more specific, and that time limits for questioning in exams be adjusted. Dr True also responded directly to feedback that was provided to FGSR by GSA Council members after the May meeting (including whether FGSR had the capacity to manage the proposed

Prepared by M Toghrai and F Robertson for GSA Council 20 June 2022
processes (FGSR was hiring staff to ensure they did) and whether certain departments would have enough faculty within them with doctoral degrees to fully populate examination committees (it was noted it was rare for a department to not be able to achieve this and, should the issue arise, solutions could be brokered)).

Members raised questions regarding: whether the changes consolidated functions within FGSR, as opposed to departments continuing to perform them (it was noted many of the functions had not occurred at the departmental level for some time (or were supported differently across departments) as there were not staff to perform them in all departments; the proposal was meant to create uniform standards that were applied across all departments to ensure outcomes and experiences were not variable); in what circumstances a doctoral examination could be closed (a list of circumstances was noted in the proposal and FGSR was open to expanding it but the proposal was based on practices at other institutions where exams were open to members of the University community unless there were compelling reasons not to, as they constituted the culmination of years of publicly funded research); concerns about chairs being appointed by FGSR who might not have adequate context about departmental relationships that could play into the exam (the chair would be focused on the policy and ensuring proper process was followed, it would fall to other members to bring contextual knowledge to the fore); what would happen in cases of highly interdisciplinary research in which co-supervisors might be from very divergent fields and whether having co-supervisors act as one individual would result in reduced knowledgeable conversation (both co-supervisors would be present and allowed to speak in full and ask questions and nothing was being changed in this regard, they would only be acting as one individual with respect to voting); whether there would be enough time for students to address all the feedback/revisions provided before various post-exam deadlines arose (this was not an issue occasioned by the proposal and was always something to be monitored and addressed); whether some departments that had multiple faculty members with terminal masters degree but not doctoral degrees (for example, Drama) would find that small pool of faculty members with doctoral degrees overloaded in terms of the number of examinations they had to serve on (it was noted it was a base standard that people conducting doctoral examinations should have gone through a doctoral program themselves but the proposal did not preclude exceptions being made in certain instances to permit those with terminal masters degrees from serving); the role of Pro Deans in examinations (this was in the process of being reconceived); when additional specialist staff were expected to be hired by FGSR, where the staff would be situated, if the cost of additional staff would result in increased tuition (staff would be located within FGSR and graduate students could access them directly and FGSR had no role or authority in proposing or setting tuition so that was unrelated to the current discussion); whether the proposals were discouraging of co-supervision as currently drafted (it was expressed that FGSR did not believe that the proposals discouraged co-supervision or significantly change current processes); and what circumstances would preclude people from service on an examination committee (it was noted that the issue currently was that no transparent restrictions were set out and the proposed policies aimed to address this). It was also noted that any policy and process changes would be introduced with a phased approach and that many graduate students had concerns about these operational matters and hoped for greater clarity around them.

**Elections**

6. **GSA Council Elections**

Kenzie Gordan (GSA Nominating Committee Chair) presented the item and explained the voting procedure.

a. **GSA Speaker** (one (1) GSA Member position)
   - Saurav Singh Rathore (Mechanical Engineering)
   - Dweej Shah (Mechanical Engineering)

b. **GSA Chief Returning Officer** (one (1) GSA member position)
   - Sophie Shi (Chemical and Materials Engineering)

**Reports**

7. **President**

   i. **President’s Report:**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 June 2022. The report stood as submitted. In addition, A Fassih brought attention to some of the more salient items described in his report, including the ongoing development of the 2022-2023 GSA Board Strategic Work Plan.
ii. **GSA Board Report**
Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 June 2022. The report stood as submitted.

iii. **GSA Budget and Finance Committee Report**
No written report at this time.

iv. **GSA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee Report**
No written report at this time.

v. **GSA Governance Committee Report**
No written report at this time.

8. **Vice-President Academic**
i. **Vice-President Academic’s Report:**
Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 June 2022. The report stood as submitted. In addition, B Aziz brought attention to ongoing work on an institutional minimum for PhD funding packages, as well as program requirements and credit transfer policies.

9. **Vice-President External**
i. **Vice-President External’s Report**
Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 June 2022. The report stood as submitted. In addition, J Rao drew attention to his involvement with the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC), as well as work relating to graduate student housing on campus.

ii. **GSA Awards Selection Committee Report**
No written report at this time.

iii. **Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) Update to Member Organizations**
No written report at this time.

10. **Vice-President Labour**
i. **Vice-President Labour’s Report**
Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 June 2022. The report stood as submitted. In addition, H Kaklotar noted recent productive meetings relating to collective bargaining.

ii. **GSA Labour Relations Committee Report**
Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 June 2022. The report stood as submitted.

11. **Vice-President Student Services**
i. **Vice-President Student Services’ Report**
Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 June 2022. The report stood as submitted. In addition, M Vinod drew attention to the upcoming pilot project for access to virtual health services attached to the GSA Health and Dental Plan (noting that information about Plan members would be shared with the virtual health service provider (under the terms of a privacy and information sharing agreement) to enable members who wanted to use the service to set up a profile), as well as ongoing work to encourage the University to increase emergency funding for graduate students.

12. **Senator**
i. **Senator’s Report**
No written report at this time.

13. **Speaker**
i. Speaker’s Report
No written report at this time.

14. Chief Returning Officer
i. Chief Returning Officer’s Report
No written report at this time.

15. GSA Nominating Committee
i. GSA Nominating Committee Report
Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 June 2022. The report stood as submitted. In addition K Gordon stated that there were a number of vacancies on GSA Standing Committees which were highly important to the ongoing work of the GSA. Among these were vacancies on the GSA Governance Committee and GSA Board, which could be filled by GSA Councillors, Alternates, or Councillors-at-Large.

16. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee
ii. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Report
No written report at this time.

17. GSA Management
i. Executive Director’s Report
Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 17 June 2022. The report stood as submitted.

Question Period

18. Written Questions

19. Oral Questions

A Fassih expressed his thanks to Lauren Hill whose term as GSA Speaker was set to end in June 2022.

CLOSED SESSION

The meeting moved into closed session at 8:49 pm. A Latif MOVED and M Vinod SECONDED.

Reports

20. GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (GSA ACB) Chair’s Report
Nicholas Ruel (GSA ACB Chair) presented the item.

The meeting moved out of closed session at 8:53 pm. A Latif MOVED and M Vinod SECONDED.

OPEN SESSION

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:54 pm.