

21 November 2011 GSA Council Agenda

1. Approval of the Agenda
2. Approval of the Minutes
 - (a) 26 September 2011 **(attached)**
 - (b) 24 October 2011 **(attached)**
3. Presentations and Announcements
 - (a) Presentations by Guests
 - i. Residences (Don Hickey, Vice President Facilities & Operations, or delegate) (30 minutes) - waiting for email
 - ii. Academic Integrity (Chris Hackett, Office of Judicial Affairs) (30 minutes) - Catrin to email for advance materials
4. Reports
 - (a) Executive Reports
 - i. President - in progress **(attached)**
 - ii. VP Academic - in progress **(attached)**
 - iii. VP Labour - in progress **(attached)**
 - iv. VP Student Life - in progress **(attached)**
 - v. VP Student Services - in progress **(attached)**
 - (b) Officer Reports
 - i. Speaker
 - ii. Chief Returning Officer
 - iii. Senator **(attached)**
 - (c) Standing Committee Reports
 - i. GSA Board **(attached)**
 - ii. Governance Committee - **Drafts of a Judicial Process are being worked on, as requested by the GC**
 - iii. Budget and Finance Committee - **Nominations for BFC will be before members shortly**
 - vi. Student Affairs Committee - **Nominations are still being sought**
 - vii. Awards Selection Committee **(attached)**
 - viii. Negotiation Committee - **No meetings at present; see VPL report re: Parking Lot Meeting**
 - ix. Labour Relations Committee **(attached)**
 - x. Elections and Referenda Committee - **No meetings at present**
 - xi. Nominating Committee **(attached)**
 - (d) Report from GSA Management **(attached)**

5. Question Period

(a) Written Questions

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

(b) Oral Questions

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

6. Elections and Appointments

(a) Election of Representative for the Faculty of Science Dean Search and Selection Committee **(candidate biographies to be distributed via email by November 16)**

(b) Election of Members to the GSA Budget and Finance Committee **(slate to be distributed by email shortly)**

7. Special Orders

8. Unfinished Business and General Orders

(a) Unfinished Business

(b) General Orders

9. New Business

(a) Scheduled Business

(b) Unscheduled Business

10. Committee of the Whole

11. Adjournment

**GSA Council Minutes
26 September 2011 Meeting**

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

Agenda

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

- **RC/PRES** – For example transferrable skills, soft skills, ability to function in industry and put forward ideas in small meetings rather than lecture to a large class.
- **CA/PRO**: just got some US and EU materials from Universities working on soft skills. Faculty of Extension is well poised to work on those skills. Government may recognize some of those co-curricular activities and credentials.
- In my old job, I worked on getting student placements with industries; companies were looking for skills such as collect evidence, present an argument, write argument, statistical competence, computer competence. But that might have changed since.
- **LN/CAL**: What are you aiming for in terms of ratio between graduate and undergraduate students?
- **CA/PRO**: We are aiming for a student to instructor ratio of 1:16. We started at 1:25, then were briefly down to under 20, now back at 1:21.
- The budgetary confusion of the last two budgets showed up so quickly in statistics like that.
- Recently, the ratios have been stable. The percentage of tenured professors has gone up and of sessionals has gone down, contrary to what you might think.
- We are not pleased to no longer making progress towards 1:16.
- **FW/SP**: I would now entertain a motion to extend the time for the presentation, since time is up.
- **RC/PRES**: How many questions are on the speaker's list?
- **FW/SP**: Three.
- **RC/PRES - TK/VPL: MOTION** to extend presentation until the three questions are exhausted (*unanimous*)
- **TK/VPL**: How can graduate students take advantage of the green and gold awards?
- **CS/VPRO**: They were launched on Monday, and both undergraduate and graduate students are eligible. We recommend applying at least 8 weeks prior, since applications will be adjudicated once a month. Part of the process is to teach you how to put together a grant application, so it matters how well your application is put together.
- **Ashraf Abd-Elmeguid (Graduate Student)**: What did the university do to decrease tuition to Quebec levels?
- **CA/PRO**: Quebec university funding is not transparent. We have no idea how they stay alive. We think their financial model looks like Greece's. We know what we know about their funding and their costs, and it doesn't make sense.
- With salary settlements at 2%, which is 80% of our cost, and government grant staying at 0%, and tuition going up at 1.45%, then there's fiscal constraint up ahead.
- **MS/DGS** Take a look at the numbers in relation to McGill. Their number of grad students is a little larger than ours. The funding they provide to grad students is 80 million, where we provided 100 million. The extra 1000 in grad student tuition multiplied by 5000 grad students is only 5 million. So we give back more than that to students.
- **RC/PRES**: given that we have been suffering. Do you have any suggestions to how we can contribute to changing that situation?
- **CA/PRO**: Vote once, vote often. Vote for your self interest. If we want to remain the most intensive public university in North America, we will have to convince the government to do better. If we want 75% of funding from government. Seattle, for example, is going to 0%. Presidents lose their jobs over showdowns with the government. We are in a very privileged

position. Our government continues to fund at post WWII levels. Alberta only has maintained that commitment.

- In addition, the percentage remitted to students of tuition in terms of scholarships (does not include TA and RA funding) is on the high side.
- We have a culture where a lot of people want to put the government back in the black instantly. And no one will touch healthcare, taking 50% out of the discussion.
- **FW/SP:** Time is up. Is there another motion for extension? Seeing no motion, we'll move on to the next presenter.

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

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

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

- **FW/SP** – The AGC President, Paul Walz, sends his regrets.
- **RC/PRES:** Some recent incidents left the Board concerned with regards to communications sent out by AGC. Specifically, a letter was sent to CAUS on AGC letterhead without the UofA GSA's signature. Reading Paul's letter now: [reads letter]
- **RC/PRES:** I will be raising these matters with AGC.

(b) Remarks from the Speaker – none

4. Reports

(a) Elected Officials

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

- **RC/PRES:** As submitted, with some additions.
- PAW – at draft design and development stage.

- We're sitting down Monday with VP Don Hickey to hammer things out rather than sending things back and forth.
- Happy to entertain questions.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(b) Officers

i. Speaker

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

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

- **TK/SEN:** U School is starting next week. 16 different classes are coming to the University – grades 4-9. This is a week-long experience to explore university. The program is still looking for volunteers. Email is in my report – please spread the word.
- All students in the program are from underprivileged schools. They might not choose to come to university without this program.
- Also attended a plenary – Indira established an interdisciplinary water Council.

iii. Chief Returning Officer

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

(c) Standing Committees

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

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

ii. Governance Committee

iii. Budget and Finance Committee

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

iv. Student Affairs Advisory Committee – seeking members.

v. Awards Selection Committee – will meet soon

vi. Negotiation Committee – no work at present

vii. Labour Relations Committee – members to be elected today

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

(d) Nominating Committee (**written report was before Council**)

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

(e) GSA Management (**attached**)

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

5. Question Period

(a) Written Questions – none.

(b) Oral Questions

- **HS/VPSL:** Please volunteer for SAAC.
- **LN/CAL:** What's SAAC?

- **HS/VPSL:** Student Affairs Advisory Committee. Co-chaired by myself and Sagar. We are looking for feedback, and an opportunity to bounce off ideas.
- **IR/CAL:** Tuition increased for everyone, but not everyone gets the RA increase.
- **TK/VPL:** The increase we negotiated is mandatory. You are entitled to it.
- **RC/PRES:** The university wants to adhere to the collective agreement, otherwise they expose themselves to law suits.
- **IR/CAL:** It's necessary to have two years of work experience when applying for permanent residency.
- **TK/VPL:** What can the university do to change classification of international students who are working? The work on campus used to qualify for permanent residency. Last year the government changed that. Waiting to hear back from University staff on particulars.
- At the end of the day, govt of Canada makes their own regulations, and if they decide it's not sufficient, there's very little we can do about that.
- I will follow up – as far as I know, it's a problem with working hours. The government classifies work as something in exchange for pay. But we will try our best.
- **SA/CEE:** President's report: "1.45% maximum increase. We will do our best to accommodate". UG vs grad?
- **RC/PRES:** 1.45 % applies to all tuition, graduate or undergraduate. That's \$53. The university is still a deficit. Tuition will be going the normal governance route – APC, BFPC, Board of Governors. It usually passes but students vote against. Remarkable that there are still some good programs coming out like green and gold.
- **TK/VPL:** I can do the passive thing – grad students coming to me. We have a legal agreement, and it is enforceable. I'm also on a task force to look at how depts pay their grad students.
- **CS/COMP:** Can you confirm if the University of Calgary has already done a screening of the PhD Comics movie?
- **HS/VPSL:** Screenings have been available since August, but I don't know.

At the subsequent meeting, Councillor Aria (SA/CEE) asked for the following to be included in the Minutes and his addition is quoted verbatim:

"I asked about:

- the basis of GSA standing point on tuition increase % and why 1.45%?
- what items this increase is going to cover (just tuition or tuition increase and inflation too?)
- What is understanding of VPL on proper deployment of Collective Agreement,
- If VPL has proper and enough tools to act on the matter of Collective Agreement deployment or not?"

6. Elections

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

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

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

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

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

8. New Business

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

9. Adjournment

- Meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.

**GSA Council Minutes
24 October 2011 Meeting**

The Speaker called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm, and conducted a roll call.

Agenda

1. Approval of the Agenda (**unanimous**)
2. Approval of the Minutes – **approval was delayed to the next meeting pending a requested amendment from the floor.**
3. Presentations and Announcements
 - (a) Presentations by Guests
 - i. PAW Design Development (**Ben Louie, University Architect – BL/UARC; Doug Ramsey, Architect – DR/ARC and**) Also in attendance K Braithwaite, Project Manager – KB/PM; R Labonte, Office of the University Architect; K Berry, Group2 Architecture (30 minutes)
 - **RC/PRES:** This is the final version of the PAW Centre design – after this it goes to Facilities & Development Committee. Throughout, there has been a long consultation process with students, and most student concerns have been addressed design-wise, so project is on the right track. PAW will come back to Council at the November or December meeting.
 - A presentation followed based on a slideshow. At the end of the presentation, the following questions were asked:
 - **SA/CEE:** How does the construction affect the use of the butterdome, or other nearby facilities?
 - **KB/PM:** It's always a challenge to maintain usability during construction, with any building like that. The project will be on a 30 month construction schedule, which is conducted in phases, breaking ground in spring of 2012.
 - **NY/VPA:** I remember that there were plans to put a fireplace in the student lounge on the 2nd floor – are we getting it?
 - **BL/UARC:** Unfortunately, we found out that there is no natural gas line nearby. It might cost us a lot to get it, but we will see what we can do.
 - **SA/CEE:** What efforts have been made to make this project cost-wise and efficient?
 - **KB/PM:** This is a big budget project with lots of stakeholders. There will be a competitive tender; we're looking at different materials, construction methods. Budget reviews are being done and there will be a shortlist of contractors.
 - **NY/VPA:** The open space at the south entrance - is it part of PAW or will it just be considered part of outside?
 - **BL/UARC:** It's part of the PAW Centre, and part of usable program space.
 - **EM/EAS:** Are there plans to include power outlets to make it an outdoor workspace?
 - **BL/UARC:** We've had lots of requests for that and we're working on that. Maybe also a water feature, but we are on a budget.
 - **RC/PRES:** Could you please elaborate on the sustainability features?

- **BL/UARC:** We are using the PAW Centre as a demonstration site for various sustainable technologies: wind turbine, solar, a building computer that will track the energy use of the building. The use of water will be more important than even fossil fuels in the future. The PAW Centre will capture rain water off roofs, and flush toilets and urinals with it, as well as irrigate. We are always trying to push the envelope,
- **BL/UARC:** In response to a question from a Councilor about why an expensive tunnel is being built rather than a much cheaper walkway, it was noted that the Jubilee Auditorium will not support anything that is not set back because it will block the view of their building.
- **EK/LIS:** Will there be a library in the building?
- **BL/UARC:** Not in the traditional sense – we are looking to get a bike library.
- **SL/VPSS:** Why are we aiming for LEED Silver, not Gold or Platinum?
- **KB/PM:** It's expensive. To ensure certification, it's advisable to build to 5 points above the desired certification level, in case something falls through. So we would have to add a lot to get to the next level.
- **DR/ARC:** Van Vliet east has an academic floor called "4th floor". The grad lounge is in this academic part.
- **BL/UARC:** In response to a question about using roof space, it was noted the roof is designed for snow load only. We would have to work with safety issues, moisture issues, etc.
- **FW/SP:** The allotted time is up.
- **TK/VPL MOVES** to extend presentation for three more questions. **SL/VPSS** seconded **(unanimous)**.
- **IR/ECE:** How will this affect the fees students will be paying in the future?
- **RC/PRES:** The referendum was approved in 2010. Students will be paying a maximum of \$29.50 for 35 years or until loan is paid off, once the building is operational.
- **BN/PHA:** How much will it cost to build that tunnel?
- **BL/UARC:** The tunnel is in the capital plan. It is not included in the original construction, but the building is designed such that the tunnel is possible.
- **PM/CME:** While I like the idea of transparency, isn't it inefficient to have glass walls with Edmonton's long winters, because of heat loss?
- **DR/ARC:** We have to work hard to get the LEED credits – some walls are triple glazed. The glass walls also help with day light, and we gain a little heat from sunlight as well.
- **PM/CME:** How do the glass walls compare with regular walls?
- **DR/ARC:** Yes, regular walls have higher r-values. If we wanted to make the building out of solid concrete, it would be more energy-efficient, but we would lose some of the positive effects of the glass. It's a balance.

(b) Remarks from the Speaker

- **FW/SP:** I'd like to remind everyone to bring in updated councilor forms.

4. Reports

(a) Elected Officials

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

- We reached some good agreements on outstanding issues and differences regarding the PAW Centre.
- We are currently distributing our strategic plan on campus, and it will be distributed to Council soon.
- Jonathan Schaeffer (UVPIT) is interested in grad students to advise him on a 5 year plan for technology on campus – check our NoC Bulletin for the posting.
- Provost Amrhein is seeking a third term, and his review begins next May. We will have an acting Provost next year starting in May, Dr. Martin Ferguson-Pell. We'll try getting to know him early.

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

- Some grad students attended the President's town hall meeting, and there were some questions regarding funding – coverage appeared in The Gateway. I asked the President how the University is going to improve the quality of the graduate experience, considering the increased number of grad students using the same amount of resources. Answer not clear to him. He hopes there is more grad presence at these face to face opportunities. Ask for better distribution of funding and opportunities – have to respond to need.
- Chris Hackett from the Judicial Affairs office will hopefully attend the next Council meeting to present the survey on integrity – national and international, review trends in the field of academic integrity, recommendations coming out of this report. Council will receive the report and recommendations.

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

- **TK/VPL:** Will be acting as representative on the Chancellor search committee later this year.
- Regarding last meeting's question about what services she provides to AEGS regarding difficulties with supervisors - currently finishing this document and should be circulated soon.
- LRC met, and the new members are enthusiastic. Meeting on Thursday, moving forward with the labour liaison program.

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

- **TK/VPL for HS/VPSL:** The PHD movie date is now Nov 17. The location will probably be in CCIS – will be confirmed by email.
- **RC/PRES for HS/VPSL:** Take Back the Term is taking place this Saturday. There are three sessions for grad students. You are encouraged to attend, and please let your constituents know so they can attend. Getting the special grad student sessions was a lot of effort – it would be a shame if no one showed up.

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

- **SL/VPSS:** Green and Gold Student Leadership Grant – encourage students to apply. There is no funding limit. If you think a conference is useful but you are not presenting, can still get funding if you write a good letter. The website for the grant is at www.greenandgoldgrant.ualberta.ca.
- UPass sticker – if sticker is wearing off, go to InfoLink in SUB.

(b) Officers

i. Speaker – **no remarks.**

ii. Senator

- **TK/SEN:** Senator duties were covered in the VP Labour report section.

iii. Chief Returning Officer – **not present.**

(c) Standing Committees

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

- **RC/PRES for ES/ED:** Ellen Schoeck is on vacation – Heather Hogg and Dorte Sheikh are dealing with administrative issues during her absence.

ii. Governance Committee (**written report was before Council**) – **as submitted**

iii. Budget and Finance Committee 2011

- **RC/PRES:** The call for members is still open, please send in nominations.

iv. Student Affairs Advisory Committee – **NoC seeking members.**

v. Awards Selection Committee

- **TK/VPL:** We are currently adjudicating the Graduate Citizenship Award, and TK is functioning as chair. We received 112 applications for 20 awards, so we need lots of help adjudicating. Please get back to the office if you are member of the committee, since we have a November 15 deadline to submit the names of recipients to the Government.

vi. Negotiation Committee – **no work at present**

vii. Labour Relations Committee – **members just elected**

viii. Elections and Referenda Committee – **members just elected: will meet soon**

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

- **LN/CME:** We are still looking for BFC members. There is also another item later on the agenda.

(d) GSA Management (**written report was before Council**) – as submitted

5. Question Period

(a) Written Questions - **none**

(b) Oral Questions

- **SA/CEE:** If there is a Gateway referendum – how will it affect the GSA?
- **RC/PRES:** The Gateway came to us, because they are considering putting forward a fee. I informed them that Council would have to approve the referendum question, and offered information on how to go forward. A councilor would have to sponsor it. They see it as “grad students pay, grad students get more coverage and a member on its board”. No one on the GSAB will move forward because we don’t feel there should be a top-down approach on this, and advised The Gateway of this. But if there is a councilor who is interested, go ahead.
- **NA/CAL:** Is there a follow-up for last Council’s question about verifying labour information for the purpose of immigration status?
- **TK/VPL:** Yes, there is a late addition about that with the Council materials. If anyone has more questions after that, please contact me.
- **SA/CEE:** How is the Provost’s task force on graduate supervision performing? Any results?
- **NY/VPA:** The task force is proposed and supported by the Provost. Administration is still searching for a chair, but is moving forward on the process.

6. Elections

(a) Election of Representative for the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry Dean Search and Selection Committee (**candidate biographies previously distributed by email; hard copies were available to Councillors at the meeting**)

- A preferential election was conducted as per instructions from Speaker Fred Wu.
- **FW/SP:** Proposed a 10 minute recess to allow Councilors time to view biographies. No objections.
- **SA/CEE:** How long will committee work?
- **FW/SP:** This is up to the Provost’s office, not up to GSA.
- **SA/CEE:** What if the committee continues beyond the timeline of graduation of the selected student?
- **FW/SP:** Terms of reference for the committee were sent out to departments, so each of these nominees should be prepared for this.
- Ballots were then distributed and counted.

7. New Business

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

- **Moved by SL/VPSS, seconded by LN/CAL.**
- **LN/CAL:** We aim to advertise every position, and are committed to fairness and transparency. But for this review committee, our representative has to have a working relationship with the Provost on behalf of the GSA. Only a couple of people could do it, so advertising may be misleading. It's better to select candidates who have that experience.
- **RC/PRES:** VP reviews used to come with request for the President or a VP of the GSA, but they recently changed their language to allow for leeway. This is why it's now before Council. It is important for the representative to have experience.
- **TM/ECE :** Do you have anyone in mind?
- **LN/CAL:** Either Tamara (TK/VPL) or Roy (RC/PRES).
- **VOTE: Approved, opposed 2; abstentions 6.**

There was a recess for eight minutes to allow finishing of counting under item 6.

- **FW/SP:** Vote result announcement for the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry Dean Search and Selection Committee
- First Round – Total Ballots Cast: 43, 5 abstentions.
- Amy Delorme was declared winner after round 1.

8. Adjournment at 7:53pm

**GSA President
Report to Council**

To: Council Colleagues
From: Roy Coulthard
Date: November 9, 2011

By the time you read this, the semester will be nearly 2/3 complete and snow may be on the ground. I hope that you have all had a productive several months, and that you are starting to plan for the holiday season. For my part, I have managed to submit a paper for publication, and I am pleased to report that the GSA is functioning smoothly and efficiently. Highlights of the past month include:

U of A Professional Development Opportunities Annual Meeting. I joined the annual meeting of all offices on campus that provide professional development training. Discussion focused on improving PD opportunities for students, particularly in times of fiscal restraint.

Canadian Association of Graduate Studies (CAGS) Meeting, Vancouver, BC. The CAGS meeting is an annual gathering of deans and administrators of graduate schools/faculties and of students. The annual conference hosted discussions on professional development, commercialization of research and the improving the supervisor-student relationship. The GSA teamed up with other AGC members in order to take in concurrent sessions simultaneously. The Board will be discussing information from CAGS re: professional development as well as supervisor-student relationships in the context of our strategic plan. At the CAGS AGM, changes in the CAGS structure will now allow the AGC and/or the GSA to be associate members, including regional and national roundtable meetings several times per year.

Board of Governors. The Board approved a new vice-presidential position for the University, to be filled by a search committee. The new Vice-President (Advancement) will have responsibility for coordinating all of the University's fundraising efforts. In addition, I presented the outgoing Board chair, Brian Heidecker, with an honorary GSA membership, following the approval at GSA Council in September.

Market Modifier Implementation. There has been some confusion about the implementation of the Market Modifiers that were approved by the Board of Governors in early 2010. These were implemented in Sept. 2011 only for new students. To be clear, the GSA vigorously opposed the introduction of Market Modifiers throughout the process. Once they were approved, we participated in the process to ensure that the implementation would be as painless as possible under the circumstances. We are pushing FGSR and the Administration for better clarity in communication of the new structure, and to ensure that the use of these new revenues live up to the promises made in 2010

AGC. The AGC is moving forward with bylaw and constitutional changes in the near future. I will be heading up this project with my University of Calgary counterpart, Franco Rizzuti. Principles we are working on will align with the May 2011 Council resolution.

National representation. At the CAGS meeting, the AGC discussed the best way to have an Alberta presence on the national stage. The AGC is agreed that national and regional meetings such as CAGS (Nov. 2011), the Western GSAs Summit (Calgary, Dec. 2011) and GU15 (Edmonton, April 2012) are the best way forward at this time.

Meeting Report: President Roy Coulthard
October 14-November 9, 2011

Date	Meeting
Oct. 17	Budget Advisory
Oct. 17	PAW
Oct. 17	Alberta Graduate Council
Oct. 19	GSA Board
Oct. 19	Meeting with Student
Oct. 20	Meeting with Students
Oct. 20	Meeting with Students
Oct. 21	Board of Governors
Oct. 21	PAW
Oct. 24	Dean of Science
Oct. 24	Council
Oct. 26	Parking Lot Issues
Oct. 26	Meeting with staff
Oct. 26	GSA Board
Oct. 26	GFC Academic Planning Committee
Oct. 27	Meeting with Dr. Shirvani, FGSR
Oct. 27	Meeting with student
Oct. 27	GFC Facilities Development Committee
Oct. 27	Meeting with B. Becker, AVP Facilities and Operations
Oct. 28	SU/GSA Monthly Coffee Meeting
Oct. 31	Meeting with Dr. Connor
Oct. 31	General Faculties Council
Nov. 1	Meeting with Dr. Robinson, Dean of Students
Nov. 1	Alberta Graduate Council
Nov. 2-5	Canadian Association for Graduate Studies Conference, Vancouver
Nov. 7	Budget Advisory
Nov. 7	Meeting with Dr. D Pozega Osburn, University Relations
Nov. 9	Fundraising Meeting
Nov. 9	GSA Nominating Committee
Nov. 9	GSA Board
Nov. 9	Dinner Meeting with Dr. Amrhein

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GSA Council Meeting

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**GSA Vice President Academic
Report to Council**

To: Council Colleagues
From: Nima Yousefi Moghaddam
Date: November 9, 2011

We crossed the half time point since I assumed office and I can report that we have kept up a good momentum in achieving our goals. We have sent your message out– packaged in our strategic work plan (SWP) - loud and clear, to the highest levels of administration, from the President and Vice-Presidents to the Provost's office. We are presenting the SWP to General Faculties Council at the end of this month, and potentially to FGSR in a few weeks. It is very important to make every stakeholder aware of our long-term goals, and to keep working collaboratively.

As for my part, I consistently raise our issues at meetings we have with the administration. We hosted Dr. Bill Connor at Triffo Hall for a tour and a very friendly conversation – this occurred after I briefed him on our SWP a few weeks ago. Dr. Connor has been a long-serving member of the campus community. He is a former Dean of Students, and now serves as Interim Vice-Provost (Academic).

We also hosted the two members of the Ombudservice at our Board meeting, where they briefed us on their mandate and procedures. While we discussed the shortage of resources for graduate students, I think it's worth investigating best practices across nations to pinpoint the right ratio of graduate students to ombudspersons, and try to fill in the gap we are facing as much as possible. The VPL and DO/ED will be meeting with the Ombudservice to follow up.

In a few days, I will be sitting on the Advisory Review Committee for Vice-President Facilities and Operations, Don Hickey, as I've worked closely with that department last year when I was serving as Vice-President Student Services.

FGSR Council will also be meeting shortly, and we will have a pre-meeting with the GSA caucus members. On a different note, we are working closely with FGSR to fill our seats on the FGSR Council Policy Review Committee.

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GSA Council Meeting

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And finally, November is the convocation month for many of our hardworking graduate students! We will be on stage at the convocation ceremony to congratulate them in person. Don't miss the chance to tap them on the shoulder and give them a high-five for their good job!

Meeting Report: Vice President Academic Nima Yousefi

Date	Meeting
Oct. 18	Gateway Interview
Oct. 19	GSA Board
Oct. 24	GSA Council
Oct. 26	GSA Board
Oct. 28	SU/GSA Monthly Coffee Meeting
Oct. 31	GSA GFC Caucus
Oct. 31	Meeting with Dr. Connor
Oct. 31	General Faculties Council
Nov. 2	University Writing Committee
Nov. 2	GSA Board
Nov. 2	GFC CLE Subcommittee on the Learning Environment
Nov. 3	GFC CLE Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies
Nov. 4	PAW Steering Committee
Nov. 7	GFC Executive
Nov. 7	Scholarship meeting
Nov. 8	Meeting with Dr. Skidmore, Vice Provost Academic
Nov. 9	Meeting with Dr. Skidmore, Vice Provost Academic
Nov. 9	GSA Board

GSA Vice President Labour
Report to Council

To: Council Colleagues
From: Tamara Korassa
Date: November 9, 2011

It is hard to believe that we are already in November. Time seems to be flying. The following illustrates the main issues that were dealt with this month:

- **Market Modifiers**

I have been keeping a careful eye on this situation. There is now a notice on bear tracks that will alert new students that they will be assessed fees in the spring and summer terms. However, we are not satisfied with this and Roy and I will be meeting with the Registrar's office in the coming weeks to determine solutions that will be more effective for graduate students.

I am also keeping a close eye on specific issues. We have not experienced to many issues in our office at this time but are being proactive about making sure that the message between the different University groups involved is consistent and adequate.

Roy and I have requested that the Market Modifier Implementation Committee be reformed to address the specific issues with implementation and start to look at improvements for the coming years. We have also asked this group to be expanded to include some of the graduate program administrators to get their perspectives on the success/failure of the implementation.

- **Health Centre Advisory Group**

At the last HCAG meeting the committee went over the budget for the health centre and student counselling. A number of new positions have been created this year for this unit including a psychiatric nurse for student counselling and a social worker who focuses on community and wellness located in Hub. There has been indication that Student Counselling service has already met capacity for this term and is having difficulty accommodating an increase in numbers of students who are using the service.

At the next HCAG meeting a proposal for a combining of the student services fee and the health fee in conjunction with a fee increase will be coming before the committee for discussion. I will be sure to update council on what that fee structure will look like and solicit feedback on whether it is appropriate or not.

- **Parking Lots Issues from last year's Negotiations**

Roy and I met with Mazi Shivani (Dean FGSR), Rene Poliquin (Vice Dean FGSR), Donna Herman (Faculty Relations), Jay Spark (Faculty Relations) to discuss lingering issues from last year's negotiation round. (Colleen Skidmore – did not attend due to illness).

These include issues of graduate student funding related to average completion times, decentralized department policies on allocation of TA's and RA's, education and training on the collective agreement, and compliance and dispute resolution procedures under the collective agreement.

This was a great meeting in which a number of different goals for the year were met. The university representatives have committed to gathering some information for the group to be able to analysis and determine next steps. The GSA has also been asked to investigate from the student perspective which departments have proven themselves to be "good stewards" under the collective agreement and put together some examples of "best practices". I have a couple of ideas for this project but if councillors are aware of good practices that benefit students in their departments I would appreciate your comments and thoughts. In particular we are looking for "best practices" for the following topics:

- Departmental Policies on allocating TA's, RA's – is there a policy on the process? Is the policy transparent?
- Education about the collective Agreement – does your department have procedures that educate students, staff, or faculty about the CA?
- Compliance – Does your department implement policies or practices to ensure compliance with the collective agreement?
- Is your department's funding policy clear and stated somewhere where students can see?
- Any other area related to academically employed graduate students where you think your department does a good job?

Please send you thoughts to gsa.vplabour@ualberta.ca

The GSA is to be given a complete list of students who are AEGS under the Collective Agreement and will be getting that list this year. The GSA would use that list to send out a communication to all AEGS about important information to know as an AEGS. This will be important in the GSA's initiative to inform students about their rights and obligations as an academically employed graduate student.

I would be happy to answer any questions about my report or my portfolio by written questions submitted before council or any new questions orally at council.

Meeting Report: Vice President Labour Tamara Korassa

Date	Meeting
Oct. 17	Sustainability Awareness Week Launch
Oct. 17	Budget Advisory Committee
Oct. 19	Chancellor Search
Oct. 19	GSA Board
Oct. 20	Meeting with Students
Oct. 24	GSA Council
Oct. 25	Health Centre Advisory Group
Oct. 25	Meeting with Student
Oct. 26	Parking Lot Meeting
Oct. 26	GSA Board
Oct. 26	Meeting with SU
Oct. 27	Meeting with Dr. Shirvani, FGSR
Oct. 27	GSA Labour Relations Committee
Oct. 28	SU/GSA Monthly Coffee Meeting
Oct. 29	Take Back the Term
Oct. 31	Chancellor Search
Oct. 31	Meeting with Dr. Connor
Oct. 31	General Faculties Council
Nov. 2	GSA Board
Nov. 4	Meeting with Dr. Robinson, Dean of Students
Nov. 8	Faculty of Education Unit Review
Nov. 9	GSA Board
Nov. 9	Chancellor Search
Nov. 9	Office Meeting

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

To: Council Colleagues
From: Hillary Sparkes
Date: November 9, 2011

This semester keeps on flying by, and the meetings I have attended have been productive and positive for the most part.

Take Back the Term occurred on Saturday Oct 29. This was a one-day refresher for graduate students to learn new tips and skills if necessary. It was a great success, with approximately 60 graduate students attending. We are hoping that this event will continue in the future because the feedback from students who attended was that this program was very valuable. A huge thank you to Katie Biittner, one of our office staff, who worked hard to bring this event together.

The PhD movie has been secured and booked to be shown at the U of A on Nov 17th. It will be first-come, first-served, and there is limited seating. **Please spread the word about this event so that all graduate students know about this special movie showing.** We are really pleased to be showing this to our members.

I also sit on the **Festival of Ideas** planning committee and this coming Festival will be bringing in Michael Ondaatje to campus in November. There is a special student ticket price and it should be an excellent event.

Winter orientation planning is underway and we are working toward welcoming our new graduate students in January. If you are interested in helping out with this as a volunteer the day of please email me and let me know.

We are also working on the planning of Awards Night. It is looking like another great event. Make sure you apply for our great awards, or nominate a fellow graduate student if you feel they have excelled in teaching or research. Watch for the awards package to be posted on the GSA website in January.

Meeting Report: Vice President Student Life Hillary Sparkes

Date	Meeting
Oct. 14	Office Meeting
Oct. 14	Meeting with Interested Student
Oct. 17	Welcome Centre Advisory Committee
Oct. 17	New Student Experience Working Group

Oct. 18	Restorative Justice Implementation Committee
Oct. 18	Festival of Ideas Planning Committee
Oct. 19	Residence Budget Advisory Committee
Oct. 19	GSA Board
Oct. 20	Office Meeting
Oct. 21	Meeting with D. Weir from University of Alberta International
Oct. 21	Meeting with Student
Oct. 21	Festival of Teaching Steering Committee
Oct. 21	GSA Council
Oct. 26	Graduate Program Administrators' Council
Oct. 26	GSA Board
Oct. 27	Office Meeting
Oct. 27	Meeting with Student
Oct. 28	SU/GSA Monthly Coffee Meeting
Oct. 31	GSA GFC Caucus
Oct. 31	Meeting with Dr. Connor
Oct. 31	General Faculties Council
Nov. 2	Festival of Ideas Planning Committee
Nov. 2	GSA Board
Nov. 4	Meeting with Dr. Robinson, Dean of Students
Nov. 7	Office Meeting
Nov. 8	Faculty of Education Unit Review
Nov. 9	GSA Board
Nov. 9	Festival of Ideas Meeting
Nov. 9	Festival of Ideas Planning Committee

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

To: Council Colleagues
From: Sagar N. Lunawat
Date: November 9, 2011

I hope you all are doing good and enjoying the fall semester. I am really happy to write my sixth report to the council. This month has been very excited as various new committees and groups been formed on campus. I have few points that I would like you to update upon and they are as follows

1. PAW centre

As we all are excited about the PAW centre project and the detailed design was presented to Council at the last meeting. The detailed design came for approval at GFC – FDC this month and all the members were happy with this new and effective building for physical activity and wellness.

Along with the ED, I attended the PAW Centre Steering Committee; where all the small aspects about the design and budget were discussed in detail. The University is really making all possible efforts to give value for the money that the students are investing in this project. The project is really developing fast and I am excited to see this new PAW centre at University in the near future.

2. ONEcard Advisory Group

This is a completely new advisory group re-established on campus after 5 years to know more about how one card can be used more efficiently and effectively among the students and other users. The University is trying to additional to make the ONEcard more useful and user-friendly. I was pleased to hear about the various initiatives they are taking – from meal plans to printing services which can be paid by ONEcard. If you have any suggestion that you think can be an integral part of the ONEcard services, please let me know.

3. SAC – Welcome centre project

One of the exciting projects of the University is the Welcome Centre project. In short, this is a “one stop shop” for the entire services student may need. This Student Advisory Committee is meant to provide feedback to the University (Office of the Registrar) about various services students need and how they can be implemented in the Welcome Centre. Money, services and student life are three important parts of the student experience that are concentrated in this project. I am looking forward to the success of this project.

With President Roy, I attended the launch the 4th annual Sustainability Awareness Week (SAW) on October 17, 2011. I was really impressed with the initiatives that the Office of Sustainability is taking to make students aware about sustainability issues. Students were really interested to know more about their programs.

I already mentioned, in the last Council meeting, the Green and Gold grant for student leadership and professional development. I would like to encourage all graduate students to apply for this grant. For more info about the application procedure you can visit at <http://www.greenandgoldgrant.ualberta.ca/>.

So this is all about the exciting work in my portfolio at the GSA. I wish you guys best of luck with the final term exams and especially winter in Edmonton.

If you have any questions or suggestions please contact me at gsavpsse@ualberta.ca.

Meeting Report: Vice President Student Services Sagar Lunawat

Date	Meeting
Oct. 17	Sustainability Awareness Week Launch
Oct. 19	Residence Budget Advisory Committee
Oct. 19	GSA Board
Oct. 20	UPASS Administration Meeting
Oct. 24	GSA Council
Oct. 26	GSA Board
Oct. 27	GFC Facilities Development Committee
Oct. 28	SU/GSA Monthly Coffee Meeting
Oct. 31	GSA GFC Caucus
Oct. 31	Meeting with Dr. Connor
Oct. 31	General Faculties Council
Oct. 31	OneCard Student Advisory Group
Nov. 2	GSA Board
Nov. 3	Welcome Centre Student Advisory Committee
Nov. 4	PAW Steering Committee
Nov. 8	Faculty of Education Unit Review
Nov. 9	GSA Board

**Senator
Report to Council**

From: Tamara Korassa
To: Council colleagues
Date: November 9, 2011

There is not much to report on Senate as there has not been a plenary meeting and will not be one until December. However, I have attended the Senate Executive Committee which has set the Agenda for senate.

One of the items on the December Plenary will be a discussion with Carl Amrhein about different community issues. This will be a great time to hear a different form of discussion from the Provost as Senate primarily focuses on the University in relation to the Community. I look forward to updating council on this discussion at the December Council meeting.

The Agenda for December also highlights a discussion of University Community Engagement.

If councillors have questions regarding an issue that is related to the Senate's mission to inquire, promote, and connect the University with the Community, please forward your questions to gsa.vplabour@ualberta.ca. I will seek to ask those questions at the Senate Plenary or through other senate committees.

Meeting Report: Senator Tamara Korassa

Date	Meeting
Nov. 7	Senate Executive Committee

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GSA Council Meeting

Item 4(c)i

**GSA Board
Report to Council**

To: Council Colleagues

From: Ellen Schoeck, Executive Director and Coordinator of the GSA Board

Date: November 9, 2011

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

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

October 19 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Callan Davey and Amanda Smytaniuk from Studentcare.net/works presented the Change-of-Coverage Report for October 2011. Discussion of GSA Twitter and Facebook use. Two outlines of issues pertaining to the Citizenship Award Adjudication Process were examined.

Motions and/or Agreements:

RC asked Board for approval to attend CAGS (Canadian Association for Graduate Studies) from November 2-5. Recent political changes mean that the organization has considered offering observer status to each graduate student organization and a roundtable discussion, which RC indicated represented an excellent way to get national level issues to the table. Board members **AGREED** that RC attend the CAGS conference.

At RBAC, Vice-President Hickey asked if GSAB or Council would like to hear a presentation about Residence Services. Board members **AGREED** to ask VP Hickey or a representative to present in November at Council.

It was **MOVED** by TK and **SECONDED** by SL that the GSA Board approve the attached guidelines as the process for adjudication of the Government of Alberta Graduate Citizenship Awards. Motion passed. Guidelines were attached for the Board.

The Board **AGREED** that cover letters be removed from applications prior to adjudication.

The Board further **AGREED** that applicants who submitted more than the required two reference letters should be emailed to inform them that they have until October 21 at 3:30 pm to advise the GSA office which extra letters should be removed. After this deadline, the Grants Specialist will remove extra material from the applications.

One applicant expected a directly emailed reference, which has not arrived by the deadline. The Board **AGREED** that the GSA would accept the late reference until October 21.

The Board **AGREED** to invite Director Natalie Sharpe and Jayson MacLean to visit the Board.

October 26 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Board discussed the use of the AEGS 2011-2012 balance and of the AEGS contingency funds, transferrable soft skills, advertising for the PHD movie, communications, and website changes.

Motions and/or Agreements:

Board members **AGREED** to use remaining balance before moving into contingency funds.

It was **MOVED** by TK and **SECONDED** by SL to adopt the AEGS contingency usage, with minor changes to the proposal before the Board, into the grants selection policy in policy manual. Motion passed.

HH asked for Board determination on admission to the PHD movie. Board members **AGREED** that admission was to be free, with a request for optional donation to the Campus Food Bank. Admission is to be first come first serve, although advertising will be directed at graduate students.

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GSA Council Meeting

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Board members **AGREED** that Casey Germain should move ahead with the website process.

Board members **AGREED** that the newsletter should be sent out as distributed. Board members **AGREED** to advertise Take Back the Term once more prior to event.

HH notified Board that Awards Night had to be moved due to venue booking issues. Board members **AGREED** to move Awards Night to March 14th.

November 2 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Nathalie Sharpe and Jayson Maclean from the Student OmbudService discussed a number of issues with the Board. Other topics of discussion included PAW, GFC, Take Back the Term, Onecard, and FDC.

Motions and/or Agreements:

Board members **AGREED** that GSA will not check ID at PhD movie screening.

**GSA Labour Relations Committee
Report to Council**

To: Council Colleagues
From: Tamara Korassa
Date: November 9, 2011

The Labour Relations Committee has been bringing the new members up to speed and conducting a review of the labour liaison program to this point in time. This process has been effective as new sets of eyes have noticed important points and brought some new perspective.

The Labour Liaison manual is being further refined and compiled at this point in time while the committee is focusing on designing a meaningful training program for the liaisons. Two individuals from two separate departments have come forward as volunteers for the pilot of the Liaison program. LRC would still like to identify an individual from a traditional lab department to be part of the pilot program. The committee will continue to design a training program over the next couple of months. A training session will likely be held in early January to allow the pilot program to begin to function.

LRC has also been thinking about the structure of the Labour liaison program and that role that LRC should play in that. This has been done in conjunction with an examination of the role of LRC as a committee.

**Award Selection Committee
Report to Council**

To: Council colleagues
From: Catrin Berghoff, Grants Specialist, on behalf of Tamara Korassa, VP (Labour)
and Vice Chair of the Awards Selection Committee
Date: November 9, 2011

Members of the Award Selection Committee have been hard at work adjudicating the 2011 Graduate Citizenship Awards on behalf of the Government of Alberta. The Graduate Citizenship Awards recognize graduate students who make positive impacts on the communities around them; there are 20 awards valued at \$2000 each. Five volunteers total put an average of five hours each into the adjudication of 112 awards. On November 15, the committee will forward the names of the 20 successful applicants to the Government of Alberta. At that time, all applicants will be notified by email whether or not their name has been forwarded; final notification of the award will come by mail from the Government of Alberta.

**GSA Nominating Committee
Report to Council November 2011**

Dear Council Members,

As provided for in its terms of reference, the GSA Nominating Committee (NoC) has been conducting business via e-mail, and I have met regularly with Ellen Schoeck and Dyan Semple since my last report to Council.

GSA Committees

The GSA Nominating Committee is currently considering nominations from six individuals to sit on the GSA Budget and Finance Committee to fill three positions. The Nominating Committee will DECIDE ON A SLATE OF NOMINEES TO PRESENT TO COUNCIL AT THE NoC MEETING on Wednesday, November 9. AN ELECTION WILL BE HELD AT THE NOVEMBER COUNCIL MEETING.

The remainder of the report is for your information.

BODIES EXTERNAL TO THE GSA

Council has delegated to the NoC the responsibility of filling positions on all committees external to the GSA. Normally, all vacancies are advertised. The NoC may waive advertising under certain conditions specified in its term of reference.

In addition, GSA elected officials are being increasingly asked to serve on new committees. The elected officials may delegate to others. Those delegations are reported below.

FGSR Policy Review Committee: the GSA was asked to elect two members of the FGSR Council to sit on this committee at very short notice. Nominations from FGSR Council members were solicited, and the vote will be finalized on Wednesday, November 9.

University of Alberta Art Acquisition Committee: an ad went to all graduate students through the GSA bulletin. Eight applications were submitted by Friday, November 4, and the Nominating Committee will vote Wednesday, November 9.

Medical Sciences Library Committee: an ad was sent to all graduate students Wednesday, November 2. Nominations are due Thursday, November 10.

GFC Academic Appeals Committee: an ad was sent to all students Monday, October 31. Nominations are due Monday, November 14.

Advertising was waived for the **Provost/VP Academic Review Committee** and the **VP Advancement Search Committee** because of conditions surrounding the requests.

Dean of Science Selection Committee: constitutes a separate agenda item for this Council meeting.

SEARCH FOR 2012-2013 ELECTED OFFICIALS:

I will report orally on this matter.

Respectfully submitted,
Vijay Kandalam, Vice-Chair, GSA NoC

**GSA Nominating Committee
Report to Council**

To: Council Colleagues
From: Vijay Kandam, Vice Chair
Date: November 9, 2011

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SEARCH FOR 2012-2013 ELECTED OFFICIALS:

I will report orally on this matter.

**Executive Director
Report to Council**

To: Council Colleagues
From: Ellen Schoeck
Date: November 9, 2011

As we wind up a year since I began as ED, I can report that the office – as well as financial and governance systems – are working well.

Office

The office performed in top-notch fashion while I was gone for three weeks, and is functioning without a blip while Executive Assistant Joanna Chan is on a three-week leave to visit family abroad. Communications Assistant Katie Biittner will be away for a five-month leave (beginning in December) for a teaching assignment, and we have been preparing for her leave for several months. All this speaks to a flexible, forward-planning, collegial, cross-trained office.

Our focus this month has been on support for the elected officials as they engage in many meetings – as you will see in the reports from your President and VPs. The office has also assumed the administrative responsibilities for Council preparation, including drafting the agenda and materials for the Speaker to review.

In addition, we are working through a first-ever insurance review, will meet soon with TDMM regarding the best possible ways to provide information on their group insurance, have feedback on the information sharing agreements, and await the insurance review before we finalize the Triffo lease. We will enter negotiations soon regarding the Power Plant and re-purposing Dent/Pharm.

Governance

With respect to governance, we are closing in on having GSA committees “populated” and BFC has been one particular focus. Details are in the NoC report.

Financial

We have a strong financial team, headed by Chartered Accountant Shirley Ball. As part of the financial policies Council passed a few months ago, we will soon have a much tighter financial reporting system. The Board will see the first quarterly report at a meeting later in November.

Training

We have had several training modules at Board meetings. To cite three examples: Callan Davey from the central health and dental office reviewed H and D from square one;

representatives from the Ombudservice spent over an hour with the Board; and Associate VP Britta Baron attended a Board meeting to hear about the GSA Strategic Work Plan. All graduate students who have expressed an interest in running for elected office have a standing invitation to attend Board and Council meetings.

Detailed Reports (attached)

As always, the detailed management reports Heather Hogg and I submit to the weekly Board meetings are attached. We are ably supported on the management side by Dorte Sheikh, who backs us up two days a week.

As always, Heather and I are happy to answer any questions.

**Executive Director Ellen Schoeck (ES), Director of Operations Heather Hogg (HH)
Report to GSAB September 28, 2011**

Financial

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

Operational, Advocacy and Office

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

Ellen Schoeck, GSA ED

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

Vacation

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

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

Financial

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

CA Shirley Ball has joined us 2-4 days a month as **the GSA Chartered Accountant**.

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

Operational, Advocacy and Office

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

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

Website renovation: Over the next two months, Casey will renovate our website with input from all the staff, so **please send Heather or me any initial thoughts you have** so we can incorporate your suggestions into this project. Our website will be hosted by the

U of A, which will mean we do not have to maintain infrastructure and will have the highest quality, intuitive content management system. We will be able to edit templates, change the look and feel of the site whenever we wish, add sections to the menu, add more than three stories at the bottom, and will be able to track usage of various sections.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Ellen Schoeck, GSA ED

Executive Director Ellen Schoeck (ES), Director of Operations Heather Hogg (HH)

Report to GSAB October 19, 2011 (ES away-vac)

Office/Operational: The last week was spent on a number of different activities and projects including the following: agenda material prepared, reviewed, and sent out for the October 24 Council; a proposal for adjudicating Graduate Citizenship Award applications drafted and now before the Board; GSA Awards and Adjudication Criteria proposed changes drafted (to come to the Board for review); preliminary discussions and work on planning Winter Orientation and Awards Night activities; some further work on Take Back the Term graduate student sessions; PDGs and EBs processed; newsletter supplements prepared/sent out; GSA committee work follow-up; continued Wiki testing/development; SWP final prep for distribution/ mailing list developed; Dyan Semple training/transitioning during Jo Chan's upcoming absence; preliminary processing of over 100 Graduate Citizenship Award applications.

On the **Financial** side, in the last week Dorte Sheikh (our p/t financial & operations person) and Shirley Ball (our p/t CA) worked with Bernadette Elliott to transition and train (including visit to BMO) and will continue to do so during the next to ensure comprehensive management of GSA financial activities.

Executive Director Ellen Schoeck (ES), Director of Operations Heather Hogg (HH)

Report to GSAB October 26, 2011 (ES away vac)

Office/Operational: I am pleased to report that a rather productive week has gone by with no major crises. We appear to be holding it together despite ES's absence! I have been sending ES weekly reports so that she has been kept in the loop about GSA activities. Dyan started job shadowing Jo full-time last week, including Board and Nominating Committee business, and we are very appreciative of Dyan's willingness to cover for Jo during her month-long absence; the SWP was distributed to a long list of University officials and as a result have at least one response to meet with the Board (UAI) and are currently arranging to schedule this. In the office work continues on a number of fronts, carrying out the initiatives of the Board: arranging for a venue and preparing advertising for the PHD movie; circulating the GSA newsletter supplements/bulletins including NoC bulletin and one on Take Back the Term; Awards night planning continues, including a review of awards adjudication criteria and procedures with possible recommendations to present to a future Board meeting; revamp of the grad student email distribution list now that registration is more or less finalized for Fall 2011; drafting procedures for adjudicating the Graduate Citizenship Award for Board review/approval, processing applications and Awards committee preparation; a fair bit of activity surrounding Oct Council prep; providing assistance in running the meeting and follow-up/action items; some grants processing, review of meeting materials for elected officials; further wiki work and progress on new website development.

Financial: Routine activities including processing invoices and writing cheques; fall term disbursement of GSA-related fees arrived; exact breakdown of fees requires follow up confirmation with Financial Services; (disbursement of fees not affected by market modifier as only the instructional fees are spread out over four term payments. Students are assessed all of their non-instructional fees in the fall and winter terms); knowledge transfer continues on the budget and related financial activities with Shirley, our chartered accountant, phasing in; working to produce a quarterly report for review in early November with proposed goal of bringing it to the Board on Nov 9 and to Council on Nov 21; routine Oct payroll activities.

Executive Director Ellen Schoeck (ES), Director of Operations Heather Hogg (HH)

Report to GSAB November 2, 2011

Office/Operational: The Graduate Citizenship Award adjudication is underway. Staff spent quite a bit of time in the last week setting up the adjudication scheduling and implementing the Board's procedures. Some further progress had been made on wiki, including consolidating all the GSA Council/Councillor information. Staff followed up on the PHD movie arrangements including scheduling, payment, and advertising. Casey is working on the new website and is meeting with UofA contacts to forge ahead. Implementing this will allow more flexibility to introduce other social media, ie, twitter. Progress continues on updating our information sharing agreements, working collaboratively with the UofA Information and Privacy Officer. At his suggestion, we are looking at the possibility of obtaining access to specific information, such as being able to verify student data as part of best practices, eg, confirming that graduate students are currently registered for GSA grants and bursary eligibility. Dyan continues to capably fill in for Jo as executive assistant. I would like to acknowledge Katie's excellent work as panel moderator for the three graduate student Take Back the Term sessions this past Saturday. In addition to coordinating the sessions, her professional introduction of the panelists and her personal anecdotes as a PhD student were just a really excellent combination that the grad student audience could relate to. A lot of really useful information from panelists – attendance ranging from 30 – 50 for the sessions. Katie has prepared a report.

Financial: Our financial team, Bernadette, Dorte and Shirley, who all work on a part-time basis, met again last Wednesday and again on Monday to continue knowledge transfer. Bernadette's last regular day with us was Monday, and we are grateful for her work over the last months for her critical role in helping to put in place some excellent GSA financial systems. She has agreed to be available for consultation as required by the ED. The trio has been working on preparation of the quarterly report for Board and Council review, targeting the November 9 Board meeting. Sept and October are all reconciled as well as the big October GSA fees cheque received from Financial Services except for a few minor details to be resolved. Dorte has taken the Simply Accounting course and is getting up to speed on all things financial. October payroll went smoothly and bills are paid.