

GSA Council Meeting AGENDA
Monday, May 13, 2013 at 6 pm
Telus 1-34

A light, vegetarian dinner will be served at 5:15 pm

OPEN SESSION

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of the 13 May 2013 Agenda
3. Approval of the Minutes from the 08 April 2013 GSA Council meeting and the Minutes from the 29 April 2013 Special GSA Council
Attachments:
 - Minutes from the 08 April 2013 GSA Council meeting
 - Minutes from the 29 April 2013 Special GSA Council
4. Changes in Council Membership
 - i. Introduction of new Councillors (*If you are new to Council, please let us know it is your first meeting*)
 - ii. Farewell to Departing Councillors (*If this is your last Council meeting, or if your last Council meeting is approaching, please let us know*)

Presentations and Councillor Announcements

5. Graduate Initiative and the Provincial Budget
Brent Epperson (President) will introduce the speaker and present the item.
Guest: Dr. Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic). The presentation will begin after roll call.
6. Councillor Announcements

Action Items, Elections, Appointments, Special Business

7. GSA Board Strategic Work Plan 2013 - 2014
Brent Epperson (President) will present the item.
Attachments:
 - Outline of Issue
 - Cover Letter on Strategic Work Plan from President Epperson
 - GSA Board Strategic Work Plan 2013 - 2014

**Attached Numbered
Pages**

3.0-3.14*

3.15-3.16*

**Distributed in first mailing*

7.0*

7.1*

7.2-7.8*

**Distributed in first mailing*

- 8. Elections
 - i. Nominees for GSA Standing Committees: LRC and BFC
Lacey Fleming (Vice-Chair NoC) will present the item.

8.0-8.1*
**Distributed on 07 May 2013*

- 9. Special Business **(none at this time)**

Reports

10. President

- i. President's Report
 - a) 2012-2013 President **(attached)** **10.0-10.1**
 - b) 2013-2014 President **(attached)** **10.2-10.3**
- ii. GSA Board **(attached)** **10.4-10.5**
- iii. Budget and Finance Committee **(no meetings this reporting period)**
- iv. Governance Committee **(no meetings this reporting period)**
- v. Nominating Committee **(attached)** **10.6-10.7**

11. Vice-President Academic

- i. Vice-President Academic's Report
 - a) 2012-2013 Vice-President Academic **(attached)** **11.0-11.1**
 - b) 2013-2014 Vice-President Academic **(attached)** **11.2**

12. Vice-President Student Services

- i. Vice-President Student Services' Report
 - a) 2012-2013 Vice-President Student Services **(attached)** **12.0-12.1**
 - b) 2013-2014 Vice-President Student Services **(attached)** **12.2-12.3**
- ii. Student Affairs Advisory Committee (joint chair: Vice-President Student Life) **(no meetings this reporting period)**

13. Vice-President Student Life

- i. Vice-President Student Life's Report
 - a) 2012-2013 Vice-President Student Life **(attached)** **13.0**
 - b) 2013-2014 Vice-President Student Life **(attached)** **13.1-13.2**
- ii. Awards Selection Committee **(no meetings this reporting period)**

14. Vice-President Labour

- i. Vice-President Labour's Report
 - a) 2012-2013 Vice-President Labour **(attached)** **14.0-14.1**
 - b) 2013-2014 Vice-President Labour **(attached)** **14.2**
- ii. Negotiating Committee **(no meetings this reporting period)**
- iii. Labour Relations Committee **(no meetings this reporting period)**

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|---|------------------|
| 15. Senator | |
| i. Senator's Report (none to date) | |
| 16. Speaker | |
| i. Speaker's Report (none to date) | |
| 17. Chief Returning Officer | |
| i. Chief Returning Officer's Report (attached) | 17.0 |
| ii. Elections and Referenda Committee (none to date) | |
| 18. GSA Management | |
| i. Executive Director's Report (attached) | 18.0-18.6 |

Question Period

- 19. Written Questions (**none to date**)
- 20. Oral Questions (**none to date**)

Adjournment

**Meeting Minutes
08 April 2013
GSA Council Meeting**

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

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

1. Roll Call

Approval of Agenda

2. Approval of the 08 April 2013 Agenda

Members had before them the 08 April 2013 Consolidated Agenda, which had been distributed on 05 April 2013.

The Agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

Approval of Minutes

3. Minutes

i. Minutes from the 11 March 2013 GSA Council meeting

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

- Nathan Andrews (VP Academic) MOVED to amend the minutes on page 3.5 to revise the word 'vision' to read 'supervision'. No objections.

The amended Minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

Changes in Council Membership

4. Changes in Council Membership

i. Introduction of new Councillors

This was the first meeting for two Councillors: Burkhard Ritter (Physics) and Ahmad Adl (Electrical and Computer Engineering).

Farewell to departing Councillors

It was the last meeting for Hillary Sparkes (Councillor-at-Large) and it was noted that Andres Torres-Scott (Councillor-at-Large) had graduated.

Presentations and Councillor Announcements

5. Councillor Announcements

Lacey Fleming (NoC Vice-Chair) announced on behalf of the Nominating Committee that nominations for the position of GSA Senator would be open until Wednesday and that there are also several open positions on the General Faculties Council, seats which it is important to fill. Those with questions were invited to contact her.

Ashlyn Bernier (President) addressed the changes to the agenda between the first and second mailings and noted the following:

- Council had initially invited frequent guests Dr. Mazi Shirvani (Dean of FGSR) and Dr. Catherine Swindlehurst (Special Advisor to the Provost) to the April meeting and had also invited Acting Provost Dr. Martin Ferguson-Pell in order to discuss the Graduate Education Initiative, as well as to answer Councillors' questions on the state of the University, the provincial budget, and the Letter of Expectation;
- The GSA was informed a week and a half ago that Dr. Ferguson-Pell was unable to make it to Council due to a scheduling conflict involving a decanal search meeting and an email from Ashlyn Bernier (President) was subsequently written to Dr. Ferguson-Pell informing him that the GSA feels it is a critical time for effective communication between central administration and bodies like GSA Council; *and*
- Fred Wu (GSA Speaker) had also hand-delivered a letter to the Provost's Office, which was attached to the second mailing for this month's Council meeting. This letter ended on the positive note that Council is a venue for controlled and productive dialogue and the letter included an open-ended invitation for Dr. Ferguson-Pell to attend a future Council meeting.

Hamid Ramezani (Chemistry) stated: "He doesn't have the courage to come here" and requested that his comment be recorded in the minutes.

Action Items, Elections, Appointments, and Special Business

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

Ashlyn Bernier (President) presented the item. Members had before then an outline of issue and a letter to Council from the Executive Director regarding Bylaw and Policy which had been previously distributed on 26 March 2013. In addition, Ashlyn Bernier (President) noted the following:

- This is the second reading of this motion and significant work is being put into bylaw and policy review to make structural changes after which point some more substantive changes will be brought to Council for debate.

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The floor was then opened for debate. No questions.

Ashlyn Bernier (President) **MOVED** that the GSA Council approve, on the recommendation of the GSA Governance Committee, the proposal to move certain sections of GSA Bylaw to the GSA Policy Manual, as outlined in the attached letter from the Executive Director (dated March 8, 2013), effective immediately. **SECONDED** by Cathleen Edwards (Physical Education and Recreation).

Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

For Discussion

7. GSA Strategic Work Plan 2012-2013: Update to Council

Ashlyn Bernier (President) presented the item. Members had before them the GSA Strategic Work Plan Update to GSA Council from President Bernier, which had been previously distributed on 26 March 2013. In addition, Ashlyn Bernier (President) noted the following:

- This document is a recap of the entire 2012-2013 term for the GSA Executive;
- The list is grouped into headings and outlines some of the progress made on these issues;
- Market Modifiers came up for discussion in 2012 and there was discussion centrally about the proposal of additional Market Modifiers (MMs). Lobbying efforts were successful in holding off that conversation for another year, but this is likely not the end of this conversation;
- Work is being done with the Office of Strategic Data Analysis to collect information on what tuition, funding, and cost of living at the U of A are compared to peer institutions (*ie* UBC, U of T, and McGill) so that when conversations about MMs arise, we are well-prepared with the data to defend our position;
- Graduate education initiatives took up substantial time and resources. The conversation has changed and is still evolving. There have been many opportunities for Council to discuss this not just with the Executive, but with Dr. Mazi Shirvani and Dr. Swindlehurst. The next Executive will continue to discuss this with Council;
- Close to finalizing the Collective Agreement, and have achieved not just a fair re-negotiation, but a very successful re-negotiation as a result of hard work from the Executives, the GSA Labour Relations Committee, but also from an effective relationship with the team they were negotiating with;
- An issue moving forward will be the issue of external advocacy. The GSA is a member of the Alberta Graduate Council (AGC) which has become quite active in recent months. Also considering membership in CASA which is a federal lobby group. Attended their AGM as an observer in Vancouver and brought back a lot

of information for next year's team. Next year's Executive will continue to brief Council on this matter;

- The GSA is continuing to involve itself in provincial budget issues, including the Letter of Expectation. The letters that came out for the 26 post-secondary institutions were almost identical;
- The GSA had a chance to provide feedback to Central Admin as they prepare for the meeting between the U of A President and the Minister of Enterprise and Advanced Education. A request was sent out to all graduate students to provide feedback to the GSA, and our letter was constructed purely from the comments, suggestions, and concerns coming from the student population at large;
- There were almost 20 student responses which were incredibly impressive and this feedback has been shared with the Provost, the Minister, and Advanced Education critics from other parties in the Legislature, a response from the Advanced Education Critics has been received noting that they will use these responses as they frame upcoming debates;
- GSA and SU Executives have a meeting with the Provost tomorrow to discuss the Letter of Expectation. The conversation will focus on what the process will be for incorporating feedback to the government, and at the next Council meeting the Executives will be able to provide an update on that meeting; *and*
- Brent Epperson (VP Labour) and Ashlyn Bernier (President) will be attending the Board of Governors retreat. The Minister is scheduled to attend and they will bring back information from that retreat.

The floor was then opened to questions.

Hamid Ramezani (Chemistry) began to ask a question regarding the percentages of the Advanced Education budget that went to each institution but withdrew the question.

For Information

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

Nathan Andrews (Vice-President Academic) presented the item. Members had before then the final report of the CLE Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies, which had been previously distributed on 26 March 2013. In addition, Nathan Andrews (Vice-President Academic) noted the following:

- Council has heard about this Subcommittee throughout his term of office and he is now bringing to Council its Final Report. The word draft is written on it but it is essentially the final report;

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3.4

- This final report for the Subcommittee was presented at the last joint CLE/TLAT meeting but he was not able to attend. Received feedback from Dustin Chelen (Students' Union VP Academic), the SU representative, and Colin More (Incoming GSA VP Academic) was able to attend part of the meeting but had to leave early for another meeting;
- The report has a list of attributes he had previously presented to Council but implementation remains unclear;
- Subcommittee surveyed what is happening outside of Alberta with regards to attributes and competencies. Ontario is required by the government to focus not on a grade point but the skills acquired through education. Some institutions in Australia are trying to move towards this model;
- It is unclear if this approach is ideal, but this will be a discussion for the future;
- The report included three main models: the first is the student responsible model where it is the students' responsibility to fill in an online portfolio if they want a list of attributes included on their transcript; the Faculty responsible model would require faculty to outline in their courses the specific ways students will be acquiring attributes (this might be difficult to do with the current budget situation); the Hybrid model would involve both students and faculty where both parties still have a role to play;
- The appendix of the report includes an example from engineering where they have an in-depth way of dealing with attributes and competencies;
- After working on this Subcommittee for the past year it remains unclear what this work will lead to. The first part of the report received a good response from GFC CLE but the second part outlining the models wasn't as well-accepted;
- In a few years this discussion might resurface so the Subcommittee report would be helpful for future conversations; *and*
- The models would be difficult to implement across the board but this is a worthwhile project since GFC policy says students should leave their programs with a set of skills and attributes.

The floor was then opened to questions.

Ashlyn Bernier (President) thanked Nathan for his commitment and persistence with the work of the Attributes and Competencies Subcommittee during his term and complimented him on the useful report that was produced.

9. Elections

No elections at this time.

10. Special Business

No special business at this time.

Reports

11. President

i. **President's Report:**

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 05 April 2013. Ashlyn Bernier (President) indicated her report stood as submitted and covered the same information that she presented in her earlier discussion of the 2012-2013 Strategic Work Plan.

ii. **GSA Board**

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 05 April 2013. The report stood as submitted.

iii. **Budget and Finance Committee**

No meetings this reporting period.

iv. **Governance Committee**

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 05 April 2013. The report stood as submitted.

v. **Nominating Committee**

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 05 April 2013. The report stood as submitted.

12. Vice-President Academic

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 05 April 2013. The report stood as submitted. In addition, Nathan Andrews (Vice-President Academic) noted the following:

- Report highlighted three main things and he had already spoke about the Attributes and Competencies Subcommittee;
- The second is the program requirements for doctoral students. The definition of candidacy is currently not clear and the FGSR Policy Review

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Committee does not want to define candidacy as it varies between departments;

- There will be a draft proposal that will be voted on at the next FGSR Council which outlines that a student has up to three years to finish all program requirements, ethics, courses, etc., before the thesis;
- At the last FGSR Council meeting they included flexibility and leeway for students who have reasons to not finish in three years. These students can apply for an extension;
- Currently two departments are in strong opposition to this draft proposal for the three year system (Department of Philosophy and Department of Linguistics) and have expressed their opposition to the FGSR Policy Review Committee, there will be room for exemption for those Departments not in favor of the three year rule and they will need to prove why they need to be exempted;
- Any students who feel their Departments should not be subject to the three year timeline are encouraged to talk to their Department Chair to object to the policy and encourage that their Department be exempted from the timeline in the policy;
- The third topic covered also came out of another FGSR Policy Review Committee proposal that will go to FGSR Council: a summary of one-on-one approvals and the division of labour between FGSR approvals, Faculty Deans approvals, and Departmental/Unit approvals. The one-on-one approvals will reduce duplication; *and*
- Discussed Alfresco, the new software that will be introduced to manage graduate students and their files. There was an Alfresco demonstration at FGSR Council. If students are applying for scholarships, they won't have to send in their transcripts personally since they will be accessible through the Alfresco software, which may be up by the end of the year. Graduate students won't have access to Alfresco but they will have a different graduate tracker system where they can look at where they are in their program

The floor was then opened to questions.

Isaac Odoom (Councillor-at-Large) asked: Do you know the timeline for the doctoral candidacy review?

Nathan Andrews (Vice-President Academic) responded: At the FGSR level the vote would take place at FGSR Council in May. It will take at least a year to then go through the governance

system since the Calendar would have to change. Could potentially start in 2014 and if it does start in 2014 it likely won't affect those students already enrolled, only those who are starting.

Emine Hande Tuna (Philosophy) asked: If departments have to make adjustments will there be enough time to make these changes when the requirements or implemented; it takes at least a year to implement changes.

Nathan Andrews (Vice-President Academic) responded: There will be room within that time limit where those changes in various departments can be made by the time the requirements are approved. It will start with a basic level of governance and then go up to GFC, so that, as it is going through governance, departments will be aware of it. There might be a problem with justifying why some departments can be exempted from this rule. The whole thing might be thrown away and they might start back at square one. There will be enough opportunity for departments to change their handbooks, websites, *etc.*, if these changes to candidacy are approved and implemented.

There were no further questions.

14. Vice-President Student Services

i. Vice-President Student Services' Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 05 April 2013. The report stood as submitted. In addition, Naseeb Adnan (Vice-President Student Services) noted the following:

- Congratulated graduate students for keeping the U-Pass service with 92% voting in favour in the recent referendum;
- The GSA U-Pass referendum had the highest support compared to peer institutions such as NAIT and Grant MacEwan;
- Thanked his Council colleagues for outstanding support and feedback from the past year; *and*
- Thanked fellow executives, staff, and management and wished the incoming executives the best for their term.

No questions were asked.

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

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

15. Vice-President Student Life

i. Vice-President Student Life's Report

Prepared by L Hareuther and C Thomas for GSA Council 08 April 2013

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 05 April 2013. The report stood as submitted. In addition, Huimin Zhong (Vice-President Student Life) noted the following:

- Main recommendation from her term is for graduate students applying for grants to emphasize their experiences that are in line with the guidelines of the grants for which they are applying as her experience with adjudicating the Individual Student Engagement grants was that graduate student applicants focused more on their academic experience rather than their extra-curricular activities that are considered during adjudication
and
- Thanked everyone for their support over the past year.

No questions were asked.

ii. Awards Selection Committee

It was noted on the Agenda that no meetings took place this reporting period.

16. Vice-President Labour

i. Vice-President Labour's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 05 April 2013. The report stood as submitted. In addition, Brent Epperson (Vice-President Labour) noted the following:

- Collective Agreement negotiations are finished; on our end the hold-up is on scheduling, as they weren't able to get a time for the two teams before this Council meeting to sign the agreement;
- He cannot report on actual outcomes until the agreement is signed;
- At the May Council meeting will be able to give a breakdown of the complete agreement and will likely have to have a special meeting of Council to approve the agreement in April. Apologized in advance for the short notice for that meeting but asked them all to keep their schedules open knowing there will need to be another meeting to go over the agreement itself;
- Would be happy to answer any questions though he can't give specifics at this point;
- In his first report to Council at the beginning of his term, he talked about the weakness of student engagement and its importance. He is pleased that, provincially, the GSA is the strongest in terms of voter turn-out (only one to reach almost double-digits) and engagement;

- Thinks we are doing well but not nearly well enough, voter turn-out this year doubled but next year the hope is to double it again and to fill empty Council seats so that every department has a representative;
- Direct connection is needed between the GSA Board and departments and Megha Bajaj (Vice-President Student Services-Elect) and Hasin Haroon (Vice-President Student Life-Elect) will be working on the Departmental Liaison program;
- If you represent a constituency but the numbers are low for students getting involved then this is not representative. It's a concern for government and anyone representing an organization like the GSA;
- Proud of what was achieved this year, but wants to try to get participation numbers such as those that are in Ontario and Quebec, this is a long-term goal;
- For external representation, AGC has potential but needs serious reforms. The GSA Board has received AGC's draft bylaws and hopes these will be in place by May so that AGC can register as a Society in Alberta, they are also making sure lobbying practices are more transparent in terms of money and time spent; *and*
- Top priorities for this year and next year are focusing on representation not just provincially but federally, CASA membership is being look at cautiously.

The floor was then opened to questions.

Shiv Shankar Vembadi (Civil and Environmental Engineering) asked: Have any details been hammered out about the Departmental Liaison program and what will the timeline be?

Brent Epperson (Vice-President Labour) responded: We will start working on this immediately after my term as GSA President starts on May 1; they'll need graduate student volunteers and trusts Megha Bajaj's (Vice-President Student Services-Elect) leadership in consultation with Executive Director Ellen Schoeck. As for the engagement process, in some cases we will be contacting departments with structures already in place, while other departments don't have structures in place. We will have to tell some departments why it is important to have some structures. For example, Campus St. Jean has an active student population but they think of themselves as working 'over there' so it may be a matter of going to talk to an organized student body and reminding them that they need someone over here at Council. We will work on it over the year and will start immediately.

There were no further questions.

- Brent Epperson (Vice-President Labour) gave the floor to Ashlyn Bernier (President) for the last few minutes of his report to say a few words about her last Council meeting. She noted the following:
- She wanted to thank Council for their support and ideas this year and noted that Council is a valuable venue for the GSA Executives and then thanked her team, saying she couldn't have had a more intelligent, attractive, hard working group;
- Thanked staff and management of the GSA. They work behind the scenes but are so excellent and valuable, not just for the functioning of the GSA but for keeping the Executives sane when dealing with academic responsibilities in addition to their roles at the GSA;
- In terms of the incoming team, staff, and management, the GSA couldn't be in a better position to deal with the issues coming through this year which speaks to the effectiveness of the organization;
- She never dreamed she would be involved in the GSA, and it was truly one of the most rewarding professional and personal experiences; *and*
- Emphasized Councillors are already involved by attending Council but there are lots of other opportunities to get more involved and students will get much more out of these experiences than they put in.

ii. Negotiating Committee

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

iii. Labour Relations Committee

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 05 April 2013. The report stood as submitted.

17. Senator

i. Senator's Report

No report was required at this time. In addition, Roy Coulthard (Senator) noted the following:

- The Senate Executive Committee met last week on Thursday and the substantive piece coming out of that was that the Executive recommended to the full Senate that they adopt a Task Force proposal that will combine engaging Edmonton and engaging with Alberta communities, the text of that motion will remain to be seen and will be discussed further at the April 25-26 Senate Plenary meeting.

18. Speaker**i. Speaker's Report**

No report was required at this time.

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

Members had before then a written report, which had been distributed on 05 April 2013. The report stood as submitted. Daniel Prins (CRO) had sent his regrets for the meeting.

ii. Elections and Referenda Committee

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

20. GSA Management**i. Executive Director's Report**

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 05 April 2013. The report stood as submitted. In addition, Ellen Schoeck (Executive Director) noted the following:

- Council has already heard about the level of support that they've had this year from staff and management and she wanted to emphasize, as she did in her report, that the GSA has great staff;
- She is very confident in how the GSA staff and management will be able to support the new team in what will be an incredibly challenging year;
- Asked how many Councillors had read the GSA's 28 corporate documents, apart from Colin More (Vice-President Academic-Elect);
- Predicting that next year about 70% of our energy will go towards the budget challenges and is confident the GSA is ready to meet those challenges;
- She is incredibly proud to have worked here and worked with this group, and thinks this is an incredible Council. She was proud of all of the great questions last Council when the Provost was here; *and*
- The responses we received about the Letter of Expectation were fantastic and we will be putting those on the GSA website.

Question Period**21. Written Questions**

Two written questions were received by email prior to the meeting:

i) Student Feedback Regarding the Semi-Monthly Pay Period Cycle. A memo to Council from Councillor Hamman Samuels had been previously distributed on 05 April 2013.

The floor was opened to questions and feedback. No issues were raised.

ii) “Is the GSA willing to subsidize and distribute business cards that have the university logo, student's name, supervisor, lab/department/faculty, major, and contact information, to each graduate student at the University of Alberta?” In response to this question the following points were made:

- Fred Wu (Speaker) noted that this is a brief yes or no question;
- Sascha Bachmann (Renewable Resources) stated: This question was submitted by a colleague of mine. The background for it is that she was at a conference, and at least in my department we deal a lot with industry partners, which is why she felt it would be very beneficial for networking and finding future employees to have business cards. How many think graduate students in their department could use such cards for networking, with a show of hands?

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

- Fred Wu (Speaker): Counted about 18 students in a straw vote who would find business cards useful for their field and their department; about 7 raised their hand that they would not find it useful or are unsure;
- Ashlyn Bernier (President): We did some research in the office and there are two main impediments in terms of the GSA being able to provide business cards. First, it would take significant time and cost to try to track the orders, plus costing the paper and printing costs. Second there are barriers with the GSA using the University name or logo without permission as the University controls its brand quite tightly;
- We realize that this could be beneficial for graduate students across programs and departments, so we came up with a few potential solutions. We will bring this to the Graduate Program Administrators Council (GPAC) to see if departments, individually, might be willing to handle this. There is anecdotal evidence that there is a precedent for departments to print business cards for graduate students (for example the MBA office offers this to graduate students);
and

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- It comes down to who is the appropriate body for graduate students to go through to print business cards. It is not within the roles or responsibilities of the GSA to do this but we will continue to look into this and maybe include it in the next management report.
- Zhendong Li (Councillor-at-Large) commented: Another solution would be to post a template on the website, so that students can print them out on heavy cardstock and cut them out themselves.
- Ashlyn Bernier (GSA President) responded: Don't think the University will allow the GSA to put up a template with its brand on it;
- Susan Cake (Sociology) commented: On the University's website they already have the guidelines and templates for powerpoints, business cards, etc., that have the U of A logo so that students can do this themselves;
- Anushka Ataullahjan (School of Public Health): My students' association is providing its students with business cards with its own logo and that this is an option if departments don't want to print business cards using the U of A logo;
- Ashlyn Bernier (GSA President): Can Susan Cake (Sociology) send to me the link to the U of A logo guidelines and templates so that this can in turn be sent out to GSA Council; *and*
- Roy Coulthard (Senator): It would be highly beneficial for graduate students to have access to business cards, since the university is trying to get the logo out to more places more often so that they can enhance our reputation.

There were no further questions or comments.

22. Oral Questions

Brent Epperson (Vice-President Labour) took some time to thank everyone for a great year and noted: It was a pleasure to work with all of you and I learned a lot from everyone. Thanks to the management and staff for everything you taught me over the year, and I know we will keep in touch and have made life-long friendships. My promise to Council is that I will work hard for you and I will listen to you and I look forward to working with you for another year. Thanks as well to the GSA Board.

Nathan Andrews (Vice-President Academic) also thanked everyone and noted: Working with the GSA has been fun and I've still been able to do my academic work and attend conferences,

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as graduate students are expected to do, and I didn't see it as an infringement on my time to serve with the GSA.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:07 pm.

Minutes
29 April 2013
Special Meeting of GSA Council

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

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Isaac Odoom, acting as Deputy Speaker in the absence of Fred Wu.

1. Roll Call

This was the first meeting for two new councillors: Michelle Borowitz (Anthropology) and Roshan Achal (alternate from Physics).

Isaac Odoom (Deputy Speaker) MOVED that the alternate Councillors and newly-elected officials that were present for this special meeting be allowed to stay during closed session, although they will not be able to vote on the item at hand.

This motion was approved by unanimous consent.

Approval of Agenda

2. Approval of the 29 April 2013 Agenda

Members had before them the 29 April 2013 Agenda, which had been distributed on 26 April 2013. Approval of the 29 April 2013 Agenda MOVED by Roy Coulthard (Senator), SECONDED by Asif Siddiqui (Councillor-at-Large).

The Agenda was approved by majority consent, with Brent Epperson (Vice-President Labour) abstaining.

CLOSED SESSION

Action Items and Special Business

3. AEGS Collective Agreement: Approval of the Memoranda of Settlement

Brent Epperson (Vice-President Labour) presented the item. Members had before then *Item 3i: Outline of Issue; Item 3ii: Memoranda of Settlement- AEGS Collective Agreement; Item 3iii: Proposed 2013-2014 AEGS Collective Agreement and Current Agreement comparison; and Item 3iv: Memoranda of Settlement- Appendices A, B, C, and D*, which had been previously distributed on 26 April 2013.

Brent Epperson (Vice-President Labour) MOVED that Council approve on the recommendation of the GSA Negotiating Committee, the attached Memoranda of Settlement related to the AEGS Collective Agreement, effective September 1, 2013 to

August 31, 2014. SECONDED by Naseeb Adnan (Vice-President Student Services).

Members discussed the AEGS Collective Agreement.

GSA Council then voted on the Motion, previously introduced, to approve on the recommendation of the GSA Negotiating Committee, the attached Memoranda of Settlement related to the AEGS Collective Agreement, effective September 1, 2013 to August 31, 2014.

The Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Isaac Odoom (Deputy Speaker) asked Council if this was anyone's last meeting. It was the last meeting for Cathleen Edwards (Physical Education and Recreation).

The meeting was adjourned at 6:33 pm.

Outline of Issue: 2013-2014 GSA Board Strategic Work Plan

Suggested Motion:

That the GSA Council, on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Board, **receive for information** the GSA Board's Strategic Work Plan 2013-2014.

Jurisdiction:

Post-Secondary Learning Act (PSLA) 94(3):

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

GSA Bylaws Part V, 3.1:

"The GSAB is the senior administrative authority of the GSA as delegated to it by Council."

Background:

A draft GSA Board Strategic Work Plan 2013-2014 was discussed by the GSA Board at the meeting of March 20, 2013. It was then further discussed and revised by the current and incoming team of GSA elected officials at the March 22-23, 2013 GSA Board Retreat and at the GSA Board meeting of April 10, 2013. On May 1, 2013, the GSA Board agreed to a number of changes (primarily to recognize the provincial budget and the opening of the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*) and received the 2013-2014 Strategic Work Plan information and forwarding to Council.

There are several key differences between the 2012-2013 GSA SWP and the current version before Council:

- The 2013-2014 SWP incorporates the platform of the new elected officials;
- The plan has been considerably tightened with contents being grouped into major categories (the 18 headings of the previous SWP have been reduced to 7 broad categories); *and*
- There have been no changes to the vision or mission.

Dear Council Members,

May 3, 2013

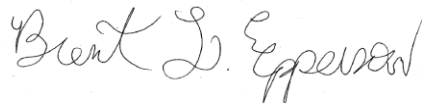
Please find the 2013-2014 Graduate Students' Association Board's Strategic Work Plan (SWP) attached for your review. This Plan was prepared by me along with my fellow Directly-Elected Officers and GSA Management to direct our efforts and identify areas where we can work with others in the University community. As former GSA President Ashlyn Bernier reported to you at the meeting of April 8, 2013, this SWP was also prepared in consultation with the 2012-2013 team of elected officials, a process which ensures continuity in terms of strategic goals, planning, and advocacy.

The 2013-2014 SWP provides us at the GSA with a planning document for this year as we enter a critical time in the University's history related to the provincial budget and its effects on the University and the graduate student community.

As was the case with the previous GSA SWP, in implementing this Plan, we will strive for transparency, accountability, and reputation-building through regular updates to GSA Council and other stakeholders. Through this process, we hope to gain valuable feedback on how we can best achieve what we have set out to accomplish. We look forward to working with our many partners on the implementation of this Plan.

We are interested in hearing your thoughts on the Strategic Plan. I look forward to our discussion on May 13.

Sincerely,



Brent Epperson
2013-2014 GSA President

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION (GSA) BOARD STRATEGIC WORK PLAN: 2013-14

Note: The GSA sees this as a living document, constantly shifting directions as the provincial budget, opening of the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*, and the U of A landscape all unfold and change.

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

MISSION:

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

Note: needs revisions when 2013-14 CIP is released (May 31 2013)

1. REPUTATION _____	3
2. INTERFACE AND ADVOCACY WITH UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE AND GOVERNMENT _____	3
3. FUNDING AND U OF A REORGANIZATIONS _____	4
4. SUPPORTS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS _____	5
5. STUDENT EXPERIENCE _____	6
6. SERVICES AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT _____	6
7. SOCIAL SPACES AND HOUSING _____	7

STRATEGIC GOALS/FOCUS (links to CIP to be inserted when approved)	STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES
<p>1. REPUTATION</p>	
<p>The GSA has a responsibility to ensure that the GSA maintains an excellent reputation over time.</p> <p>The GSA aims to reduce hours for directly elected officials.</p> <p>Aim for the U of A GSA to be the best managed in Canada.</p>	<p>To maintain a culture of respect and tolerance in the GSA office and in all dealings with the University community, all elected officials, management, and staff of the GSA will maintain a high level of professionalism. The GSA will commit to the process of strategic planning, regular follow through on goals and tasks, and regular reporting to Council.</p> <p>Proactive search for talent (eg elected officials, committee members) will be ongoing. Promote in the Early Call and training program the feasibility of taking on GSA elected positions. Develop strategies and supports in collaboration with outgoing and incoming elected officials. Continue to realign the most optimal division of labour between elected officials and management/staff so elected officials are well-supported in a student-led and professionally-managed environment where, over the past three years, all of the GSA directly-elected officers have been successful in their academic programs while holding office.</p> <p>Negotiate a no cost, special registration status for all GSA directly-elected officers.</p> <p>Continue to move forward on 2010 recommendations of the GSA consultant, <i>eg itemize areas that need review with respect to rebuilding the infrastructure, and set goals for bylaw and policy review</i>.</p>
<p>2. INTERFACE AND ADVOCACY WITH UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE AND GOVERNMENT</p>	
<p>Intensive, integrated advocacy for and representation of graduate student issues.</p> <p>Maintain relationships with various stakeholders.</p> <p>Engage with University Administration and the provincial government on issues surrounding the CIP, the provincial budget, the</p>	<p>Advocacy will require strong relationships with our partner associations – SU, AASUA, PDFA, and NASA. The GSA Board revived constituency meetings with these associations in 2012. It is key to reinforce these relationships and identify shared priorities in building a common vision of postsecondary education in light of the 2013 provincial budget and opening of the <i>Post-Secondary Learning Act</i>.</p> <p>Maintain relationship with President, Provost’s Office and other Vice-Presidents, members of the Board of Governors, Governance, Senate, Alumni Association, service providers, and other key partners. Continue to meet regularly with the Acting Provost, the Dean of Students, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President (Academic), Vice-President (University Relations), and the Dean of FGSR and establish regular meetings with the Vice-Provost (Academic Programs and Instruction) and other key partners.</p> <p>The GSA will advocate vigorously for graduate students on these issues, not just during the current budget cycle but long-term.</p>

Note: needs revisions when 2013-14 CIP is released (May 31 2013)

STRATEGIC GOALS/FOCUS (links to CIP to be inserted when approved)	STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES
<p>mandate/"expectation" letters or MOU between the University and government, and on all issues related to the opening of the <i>Post-Secondary Learning Act</i>.</p> <p>Continue discussion of the few remaining Parking Lot issues.</p> <p>Continue to work with the University on education, compliance, and dispute resolution re Collective Agreement (CA).</p> <p>Work with the Alberta Graduate Council (AGC) to strengthen its infrastructure and governance. Continue participation and support.</p> <p>Continue to assess membership in external lobbying organizations.</p>	<p>Education on the CA is one of main points of the Department Liaison Initiative.</p> <p>Advocate consistently and effectively for graduate student interests to the Government of Alberta through the Alberta Graduate Council (AGC) and meet with AGC representatives. Some further reforms are necessary at AGC, but it is the voice of graduate students in Alberta to the provincial government; therefore, the 2013-2014 GSA Board must participate actively.</p> <p>Aim to attend Western Deans conference in 2014, attend CAGS, and monitor and participate in GU15 and the Western Canadian GSA Summit. Assess membership in CASA following on President Bernier's attendance at the 2013 CASA AGM.</p>
<p>3. FUNDING AND U OF A REORGANIZATIONS</p>	
<p>Prepare for tuition and market modifiers debates and advocate and engage on issues of graduate student support.</p> <p>Maintain a strong graduate student voice in the proposed FGSR reform and continue to work with FGSR to develop fair quality measures and an ambitious vision of graduate education at the</p>	<p>The GSA believes that there should be sustainable public funding to support excellence at the University of Alberta. To that end, we do not think that an increase to tuition and fees is a solution to the challenges this institution faces following the release of the provincial budget. The GSA will lobby for affordable graduate student tuition and fees. To this end, we believe that any graduate market modifier or other graduate student tuition increases must result from extensive dialogue and proper consultation with the GSA and AGC. In developing its position on future graduate market modifiers or other graduate student tuition increases, the GSA Board will consult with GSA Council and the broader graduate student community. The GSA will continue to participate vigorously in the Graduate Student Tuition and Funding Data Committee and similar bodies.</p> <p>Strive to make certain that new quality measures and graduate student management plans (GSMPs) do not disproportionately favour some faculties or departments over others in future resource allocation and that graduate students are involved in reform discussions at the department, faculty, and university levels. Advocate for increased resources for FGSR and collaborate to establish the best professional development programs in Canada.</p>

STRATEGIC GOALS/FOCUS (links to CIP to be inserted when approved)	STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES
University of Alberta.	The GSA applauds the efforts of the FGSR Dean, Associate Deans, and staff to make sure that graduate students are treated fairly and have access to excellent services across campus. We see FGSR as a key partner in the delivery of quality graduate education and just treatment of graduate students. A robust FGSR – one with adequate resources to execute its mandate, where staff feel empowered and appreciated – links closely with our own organizational efficacy.
4. SUPPORTS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS	
<p>Quality graduate student supervision should be an institutional priority. Quality graduate student supervision is key to graduate student success, yet it is under-emphasized in relation to publications and teaching in FECs.</p> <p>The GSA wishes to ensure that as graduate numbers are increased, the right supports and infrastructure are in place.</p> <p>A campus free from discrimination and bullying.</p>	<p>The GSA will continue to support and participate vigorously in the Graduate Student Supervision Task Force, a joint initiative of the Provost, FGSR and the GSA. We will engage with other forums through which to discuss supervisory issues, and will explore ways to reward faculty members for exceptional performance as supervisors.</p> <p>Lobby for counselling services and support for international graduate students who are seeking Canadian Permanent Residence. Work to create a fairer playing field and more welcoming environment for international students (<i>eg advocate for a new relocation bursary for graduate students from developing countries to offset initial moving expenses and evaluate the possibility of waiving international differential fees</i> or offering new scholarships to cover the international differential fees for top-performing international students).</p> <p>Discuss with Administration and our partner constituencies (SU, NASA, AASUA, and PDFA) ways to make the U of A an even safer space. Consistent with a progressive social vision, we want to work towards a campus where students of all sexual orientations, gender identities, convictions, and lifestyle choices feel encouraged to learn and participate actively in campus life.</p> <p>Lobby for improved cultural and dietary understanding among graduate students on the part of the University and consistently accessible and suitable prayer space for religious groups.</p> <p>Work with our partner constituencies and Administration to develop definitions and policies surrounding academic bullying.</p>

STRATEGIC GOALS/FOCUS (links to CIP to be inserted when approved)	STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES
5. STUDENT EXPERIENCE	
<p>Pilot a Department Liaison Initiative (DLI).</p> <p>Continued focus on orientation as one of the first contacts with the University for admitted students.</p> <p>Ramp up work on student groups and departmental GSAs.</p>	<p>The DLI will focus on eight key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance with the PSLA (<i>eg</i> election of a Councillor) • Risk assessment and reduction related to graduate student groups affiliated with the GSA • Education about and compliance with the CA • Orientation needs of departments • Representation on Faculty Councils • Linking functional departmental GSAs with struggling ones and providing for a department liaison • The “proactive search” for graduate student talent as per the Nominating Committee’s terms of reference • Advising departments on the process for nominating an individual for an Honorary Degree (added at the request of the Chancellor) <p>Collaborate and proactively plan Orientations for all departments, not just those who ask (coordinate with the Department Liaison Initiative). Continue to connect/collaborate with respect to International Centre Orientations. Aim to have One Card and U-Pass registration right at the point of orientation.</p> <p>Continue distribution of \$20K from Provost to foster academically-related student group activities (this funding will be available in 2013-14 and possibly 2014-15).</p> <p>Continue to work with GPAC and individual departments. Collaborate with Office of the Dean of Students (with which the GSA has an MOU) and Student Group Services to develop goals and strategies for Graduate Student Group support and interaction.</p>
6. SERVICES AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	
<p>Mental Health: continue to work with Administration, Students’ Union, the Provost’s Fellow on Mental Health, and University Health and Wellness on issues and initiatives related to improving mental health on campus.</p> <p>Child Care: At the GSA, we continually see the child care needs of graduate students who apply for Child Care Grants.</p>	<p>Participate in the Administration’s ongoing mental health review. The GSA applauds this effort and will continue to work with the Dean of Students’ Office, collaborating in the implementation stage to improve mental health services at and tackle the mental health challenges that sometimes act as a barrier to graduate student success.</p> <p>Continue to lobby for increased funds for graduate students with children in the form of GSA Child Care Grants.</p>

STRATEGIC GOALS/FOCUS (links to CIP to be inserted when approved)	STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES
<p>Professional Development: Most graduate students [between 60-75%] will not pursue careers in academia and we believe that professional development opportunities must be increased and diversified.</p> <p>Support the academic and professional development of graduate students.</p> <p>Survey Regarding Services: understanding graduate student demographics is fundamental to directing efforts toward the most robust suite of services possible.</p>	<p>The GSA will advocate for improved professional development opportunities for graduate students (working closely with FGSR, CAPs, the Office of Advancement, and the Alumni Association to develop a new mentorship program).</p> <p>Continue to subsidize Writing Resources Centre courses and CAPS, which receive excellent reviews from graduate students. Lobby to augment services such as the courses and one-on-one support offered by the Writing Resources Centre for international students.</p> <p>Such a study would have a significant and informative effect on planning for such matters as orientation, student housing, and academic supports (eg writing and English-language supports) and non-academic supports (childcare, graduate student family supports, and accommodation regarding dietary issues). The GSA believes that a demographic study of graduate students should occur in 2013-2014 and subsequently every three years.</p>
<p>7. SOCIAL SPACES AND HOUSING</p>	
<p>Advocate for quality graduate student housing, including the renovation of Michener Park, and for more flexible and transparent residence rental contracts.</p> <p>Continue discussions/negotiations for social/engagement space in the Power Plant within the framework of current MOUs and other documents related to the former GSA offices in the Power Plant and Deweys.</p>	<p>Advocate for accessible and well-maintained graduate student housing (this is an ongoing challenge for graduate students and one of particular concern to Michener Park Residents) and to improve housing opportunities and maintenance. Continue to monitor the quality of the 89th Avenue project. Work with graduate students who reside in University residences to address their concerns and ensure that Administration hears their grievances and pursues resolutions promptly. The pre-design phase for any new housing is crucial to graduate students and the GSA will continue to ensure that it lobbies for accessible and quality graduate student housing during the University's planning processes.</p> <p>Continue collaboration with the SU, F and O and other potential partners (eg Alumni Association) for a renovated Dewey's.</p> <p>Discuss use of former GSA offices with F and O.</p> <p>Lobby for other space in the Power Plant as it becomes available (eg the space used for the Tory decant) to be used by graduate students and others for the purpose of collaborating, sharing ideas and meeting informally in a licensed area.</p>

LABOUR RELATIONS COMMITTEE AND BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE: NOMINEES

**PREPARED BY THE GSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE (NoC)
May 2013 COUNCIL**

GSA Policy requires that “The NoC will provide Council with nominations for [...] all GSA standing committees [...]. Additional nominations may be made by Councillors, **in writing**, in advance of the Council meeting where elections will take place.” If you wish to submit an additional nomination in writing, it **must be RECEIVED by 12 (noon) on Friday May 10, 2013 by emailing Lisa Hareuther, Coordinator of the NoC at gsa.nomcomm@ualberta.ca**. If there are no additional nominations the candidate(s) presented in this report will be declared elected at the close of additional nominations on Friday May 10, 2013 at 12 (noon). **Nominations are not accepted from the floor at the Council meeting.** “If a Councillor(s) makes an additional nomination, there will be a written ballot at the Council where the election will take place” (GSA Policy Manual, Nominating, 6.6)

Nominating Committee Mandate from GSA Policy Manual:

“Nominating, Expectations: Members of the NoC must have a demonstrated ability to be neutral and are expected to act impartially, including declaring conflicts of interest and rising above individual/departmental interests to ensure the **best fit between nominees and vacancies.**”

Budget and Finance Committee: Vacancy: ONE GSA COUNCILLOR

The composition for BFC is:

iii....“One Councillor, elected by Council; and
iv. Two members of the GSA, elected by Council” (GSA Policy Manual, Standing Committees, Budget and Finance Committee).

Continuing Members on this Committee (2): Karen Vera Lyn Turpin (School of Public Health, GSA Member), Tim Riordan (Sociology, GSA Member)

GSA Council Member Leaving this Committee (1): Evan Berry (Biochemistry)

Nominee:

1. Micaela Santiago (Nursing, GSA Councillor)

Labour Relations Committee: Vacancies: THREE TO SIX MEMBERS OF THE GSA

No set composition yet. In consultation with the LRC Chair (GSA VP Labour) LRC will have approximately 6-9 members-at-large with as broad representation of departments as possible (with no more than two students from any one department), and ideally at least one GSA Councillor.

Continuing Members on this Committee (3): Daniel Prins (Biochemistry), Alexa DeGagne (Political Science), Qiang Li (Chemical and Materials Engineering)

Members Leaving this Committee (7): Andrés Torres Scott (Political Science), Michele Borowitz (Anthropology), Amir Reshef (MBA), Billal Sultani (Chemical and Materials Engineering/Laboratory Medicine and Pathology), Simarjit S. Bal (Political Science – *as of May 1,*

is the GSA VP Labour, and now Chairs LRC), Colin More (Geophysics – as of May 1, is now the GSA VP Academic), Md Shirajum Munir (Electrical and Computer Engineering).

Nominees:

1. Susan Cake (Sociology, GSA Councillor)
2. Cherene Griffiths (MBA)
3. Hanna Madsen (Comparative Literature until Summer 2013; Fall 2013 Library and Information Studies)
4. Michal Juhas (MSc Psychiatry)

**GSA President 2012-2013
Report to Council**

To: GSA Council
From: Ashlyn Bernier, GSA President 2012-2013
Date: May 10, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

Most of the meetings I attended in my last three weeks in office are reported on by my colleagues, with the exception of the following:

On April 8, I attended a meeting of the Graduate Student Tuition and Funding Data Committee. This committee was a joint effort between the GSA and administration to develop common dataset(s) which can be used to support discussions regarding graduate student funding and tuition on the understanding that, while the raw data would be agreed upon by the committee, interpretations of it might differ. This was one of the final meetings and I am very pleased with the cooperative nature of the group and the level of data which was gathered.

On April 9, the GSA participated in a press conference with all the other associations, and Brent will be able to answer questions on this.

On my last day in office I presented to the Board of Governors' Budget, Finance, and Property Committee our GSA fee package as approved by Council.

It has been a tremendous year of learning and challenges. My team was superb and you now have another superb team in office with excellent and effective support from a skilled management and staff.

Sincerely,



GSA President, 2012-2013

The following is a list of meetings I attended between April 4 and April 30, 2013:

04-Apr	FGSR Working Group on Quality Measures
08-Apr	Graduate Student Tuition and Funding Data Committee
08-Apr	Pre-Meeting with SU re Brown Bag Lunch
08-Apr	GSA Council
09-Apr	Press Conference
09-Apr	Provost's Brown Bag Lunch

10-Apr	Collective Agreement Negotiations
10-Apr	Meeting with VP University Relations
10-Apr	GSA Board
15-Apr	Meeting with Dean FGSR
16-Apr	Meeting with SU
16-18 Apr	BoG Strategic Planning Retreat
19-Apr	GSA Board
20-Apr	Meeting with U of C GSA
22-Apr	BoG University Relations
23-Apr	Collective Agreement Negotiations
24-Apr	GSA Board
25-Apr	Meeting with Acting Provost and SU President
25-Apr	Meeting with AVP Academic
26-Apr	Meeting with Acting Provost
29-Apr	GSA Council special meeting
30-Apr	BoG Finance and Property

**GSA President 2013-2014
Report to Council**

To: GSA Council
From: Brent Epperson, President 2013-2014
Date: May 10, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

The following are meetings that I attended after assuming the role of GSA President on May 1, 2013:

FGSR Working Group on Quality Measures (WGQM):

- I attended the FGSR WGQM meeting with VPA Colin More and VPL Monty Bal. The working group made additional edits to the document. Dean Shirvani asked members to provide final feedback by May 8, before FGSR Council.

AGC-Progressive Conservative (PC) Party Leader's Dinner

- I attended the PC Leader's dinner, lobbying on behalf of AGC with Amanda Nielsen, AUGSA President, and Julia Radke, AUGSA VP External. Warren Singh, Chief of Staff for Minister Lukaszuk, and an MLA Matt Jeneroux both inquired about Tweets and other media regarding the cuts to Arts. My AGC colleagues and I cited the announcement of cuts to TA and RA funding in Arts as an example of how the provincial budget cuts have negatively impacted graduate students in the province. My AGC colleagues and I had the opportunity to speak briefly with Premier Redford, Minister Lukaszuk, and over a dozen PC MLAs, consistently citing the above example as a negative impact of budget cuts on students. The Minister and his Chief of Staff offered to make a possible statement about this and asked us for a follow-up by e-mail. The Premier's dinner is an excellent venue to speak with a large number of Ministers, MLAs, and key PC Party activists in a single evening; however, future GSA Elected Officials lobbying on behalf of AGC should plan to arrive early and stay late for the best opportunities for postsecondary education policy discussions. Assigned seating and speeches allow for little dialogue with Ministers or MLAs during most of the event. Fortunately, AGC planned accordingly and made the most of our time.

Closed Session Remarks:

I will speak briefly on Councillor roles and responsibilities and the need for Council to play a pivotal role this year. I will also speak to GSA strategic planning initiatives that stem from our election platform, and the unanticipated constraints of the provincial and university budgets. Lastly, I will express my full trust in my team and the GSA management and staff as we move forward to make progress on each of our

platform goals (now strategic initiatives), keeping in mind the economic and political limitations of the current climate and the need for consistent Council support.

I would be happy to report further at Council.

Sincerely,



Brent Epperson
GSA President

The following is a list of meetings that I attended between May 1 and May 8, 2013:

1- May	GSA Board
2- May	FGSR WGQM
2- May	PC Leaders' Dinner
8- May	GSA Board

**GSA Board
Report to Council**

To: GSA Council

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

Date: May 09, 2013

The Board reports regularly to Council by listing its agenda items, motions/agreements, and main items of discussion. Motions of Agenda approval and approval of the Minutes are not included unless there were amendments made. Closed session items are not minuted. The President, Vice-Presidents, Director of Operations, Associate Director, Financial Manager, and I will be happy to answer any questions or provide more information at the Council meeting.

03 April, 2013 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Provincial government Letter of Expectation; Awards Night debrief; Graduate Residence Council Annual Conference; unit reviews; U-Pass referendum; *and* labour compliance.

Motions and Agreements:

Board Members **AGREED** to sponsor the Graduate Residence Council Annual Conference on the President's recommendation.

10 April, 2013 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Press conference and Brown Bag next steps; graduate student access to services during approved leave; FGSR Working Group on Quality Measures; Meeting with VP University Relations; GU15 Survey; *and* Butterdome cladding.

Motions and Agreements: None at this time.

17 April, 2013 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

AGC policy stance on provincial funding of private religious post-secondary institutions; Lukaszuk constituency breakfast; corporate documents; transition; GU15; external travel budget; McGill supervision survey; FGSR Caucus; *and* PAW Steering progress.

Motions and Agreements:

Board Members **AGREED** that their suggestion for a request for a policy stance on funding of private religious post-secondary institutions would ask for more information on the rationale behind religious institutions not experiencing budget cuts, and more information on these institutions, with some consensus that if these questions are answered, Board Members would prefer an across the board cut that does not differentiate.

Board Members **AGREED** to purchase a GSA Membership for the Friends of the U of A and send a representative to meetings.

19 April, 2013 Special GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

BoG Strategic Planning debrief.

Motions and Agreements: None at this meeting.

24 April, 2013 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Collective Bargaining update; booking of GSA meeting rooms policy; U-Pass fees subsidy; GU15 and Augustana Spring Soiree debrief; GSA funding to CJSR; AGC lobby documents; student group grant concerns; FGSR Council; GFC Special Exec; *and* meeting with Doug Dawson.

Motions and Agreements:

Board Members **AGREED** to hold a special meeting of Council on Monday, April 29 to approve the Collective Agreement.

AB **MOVED** that the GSA Board **approve** the attached policy regarding the booking of GSA meeting rooms by groups or individuals external to the GSA, for immediate inclusion in the GSA Board Policy Manual. Seconded BE. **CARRIED** unanimously.

Board Members **AGREED** that a letter should be sent by NsA and the CRO regarding the importance of the U-Pass referendum in good faith, and requesting more information about subsidy decisions and parking usage over time.

01 May, 2013 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Fiduciary duty; office basics; GSA Strategic Work Plan; GSA Board Policy on designation of Executive Vice-President and Line of Succession for Acting President; GSA Board Policy on Line of Succession for Chair of the GSA Board; Special GFC Exec debrief; GSA social media; GSAB agenda development; meeting with Lethbridge GSA; Special GSA Council; *and* URPC.

Motions and Agreements:

BE **MOVED** that the GSA Board **receive for information and forward to Council** (for information) the GSA Board Strategic Work Plan 2013-2014. Seconded by HaH. The motion **CARRIED** unanimously with the suggested changes to the document.

BE **MOVED** that the GSA Board **approve** the proposed revisions to the GSA Board Policy Manual, as outlined in the attached triple column, regarding the designation of Executive Vice-President and line of succession for Acting President for immediate inclusion in the GSA Board Policy Manual. Seconded HaH. **CARRIED**.

BE **MOVED** that the GSA Board **approve** the proposed addition to the GSA Board Policy Manual, as outlined in the attached draft policy, regarding the line of succession for chair of the GSA Board for immediate inclusion in the GSA Board Policy Manual. Seconded CM. **CARRIED**.

Board Members **AGREED** that the line of succession for Acting President would be President, VP Academic, and VP Student Services.

Board Members **AGREED** that the line of succession for Chair of the GSA Board would be VP Labour, VP Student Life, and VP Student Services.

GSA Nominating Committee (NoC) Report to Council

To: GSA Council
From: Lacey Fleming, Vice-Chair of the NoC
Date: May 10, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

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

The Bylaw governing the NoC is located in Part V (Standing Committees). Policy governing NoC is found in the GSA Policy Manual, in the sections titled "Nominating" and "Standing Committees." As provided for in its terms of reference, the GSA Nominating Committee (NoC) has been conducting business via e-mail.

GSA Standing Committees

1) Labour Relations Committee

An advertisement for positions on the GSA Labour Relations Committee was sent through the newsletter April 17, 2013. The deadline for nominations was April 29 at noon and additional nominations were accepted until 12:00 PM (Noon) on Friday May 10, 2013. Four nominations were received prior to the April 29 deadline. **SEE NOMINEES UNDER ELECTION ITEM.**

2) Budget and Finance Committee (1 GSA Councillor Position):

An advertisement for the **one** GSA Councillor Position on the GSA Budget and Finance Committee was sent to GSA Council April 17, 2013. The deadline for nominations was April 29 at noon and additional nominations were accepted until 12:00 PM (Noon) on Friday May 10, 2013. Two nominations were received prior to the April 29 deadline and the NoC unanimously voted to put forward the nominee who was the "best fit" for this position as set out in the NoC's terms of reference. **SEE NOMINEE UNDER ELECTION ITEM.**

GSA Council-Elected Officers

2013 GSA Senator Council Election:

Polling for the GSA Senator Election began at 10:00 AM on Monday April 29, 2013 and closed on Wednesday April 1, 2013 at 10:00 AM. There was one candidate for the position, Roy Coulthard (PhD Earth and Atmospheric Sciences).

Roy Coulthard was elected to serve a second term as the GSA Senator.

Bodies External to the GSA

As noted above, Council has delegated to the NoC the responsibility of filling positions on all committees external to the GSA. Normally, all vacancies are advertised. According to the Policy

Manual, “advertising may be waived in instances where, in the NoC’s view, it is urgent to fill a vacancy” (GSA Policy Manual, Nominating, 5.2).

1) General Faculties Council (14 positions)

On April 2, 2013 the GSA Nominating Committee advertised for the 14 graduate student positions on the General Faculties Council, which is the University’s highest level of academic governance. The deadline for applications was April 15, 2013 and then extended until April 22, 2013. 15 applications were received for the 14 positions. The following students were elected to serve on GFC for May 1, 2013 - April 30, 2014:

1. Isaac Odoom (PhD Political Science)
2. Jennifer McGetrick (MSc Global Health)
3. Erika Goble (PhD Secondary Education)
4. Roy Coulthard (PhD Earth and Atmospheric Sciences)
5. Karen Vera Lyn Turpin (PhD Public Health Sciences)
6. Navjot Thind (MA Secondary Education)
7. Patrick Reid (PhD Physical Education and Recreation)
8. Richard Zhao (PhD Computing Science)
9. Qiang Li (PhD Chemical and Materials Engineering)
10. Sukhpreet Tamana (PhD Educational Psychology)
11. Gary Barron (PhD Sociology)
12. Peng Shao (PhD Electrical and Computer Engineering)
13. Kirsta Reich (MSc Experimental Medicine)
14. Karly Coleman (MA Human Ecology)

2) University Cup Selection Committee

This committee requires “An Executive member of the Graduate Students’ Association **or delegate** (one-year appointment and may be appointed for a second year)” (University Cup Selection Committee Terms of Reference). **Laura Mazzino (PhD Physics)** was elected to serve as the GSA’s delegate for a one-year appointment.

3) Vargo Teaching Chair Selection Committee

This committee requires “An Executive member of the Graduate Students’ Association **or delegate** (one-year appointment and may be appointed for a second year)” (Vargo Teaching Chair Selection Committee Terms of Reference). **Lisa Eisenbeis (MSc Experimental Medicine)** was elected to serve as the GSA’s delegate for a one-year appointment.

4) Campus Food Bank Society Board of Directors

This position was advertised in the GSA Newsletter on April 17, 2013. The deadline for nominations was April 29, 2013 at noon. Two applications were received. **Sukhpreet Tamana (PhD Educational Psychology)** was elected as the “best fit” (as set out in the NoC’s terms of reference) to serve as the GSA’s delegate on the Campus Food Bank Society Board of Directors.

**GSA Vice-President Academic 2012-2013
Report to Council**

To: GSA Council
From: Nathan Andrews, GSA VPA 2012-2013
Date: May 10, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

Although I'm done my term of office, I guess you have to bear with me one more time. I did attend a number of meetings between the April council meeting and the date on which my term officially ended, but I have one item to inform you about. This came out of the April 17 FGSR Council meeting.

Program Requirement Milestone for Doctoral Students

I know several councilors have been following this item with keen interest due to the impact it would have on our various doctoral programs. Well, the vote at FGSR passed with 89% in support and 11% against. Two departments who wanted to be exempt in the initial proposal, **Human Ecology & Laboratory Medicine and Pathology**, have reconsidered their decision. On the other hand, the **Centre for Neuroscience and Educational Policy** requested to be included in the exemption list as well as **English and Film Studies**. Please keep note if you represent any of these exempted departments. Some outstanding questions included what happens if someone misses the three-year deadline? The answer is that possibility of extension is provided in Section 203.15 of the Calendar. When will it come into effect? It will take a while to go through governance, and once this is approved it will be up to departments to change their calendars to reflect this and also ask for the needed extensions for continuing students who have passed the deadline. Do expect your VPA, Colin More, to further update you on this as the proposal goes through the various governance committees.

That's all I have to report on. I must say it's been a pleasure working with you all on Council and I wish you a fruitful and sunny spring and summer. I will return as Councilor-at-large after my fieldwork at the end of August. Until then, do keep well. The meetings I attended are below:

Regards,
Nathan Andrews
GSA VP Academic, 2012-2013

The following is a list of meetings that I attended between April 4 and April 30, 2013:

08-Apr	Graduate Student Tuition and Funding Data
08-Apr	GFC Nominating Committee
08-Apr	Pre-Meeting with SU re Brown Bag Lunch
08-Apr	GSA Council
09-Apr	Provost's Brown Bag Lunch
10-Apr	Collective Agreement Negotiations

10-Apr	GSA Board
15-Apr	FGSR Caucus
16-Apr	Meeting with SU VP Academic
17-Apr	GSA Board
17-Apr	FGSR Council
19-Apr	University Town Hall
19-Apr	Special GSA Board
23-Apr	Collective Agreement Negotiations
24-Apr	GSA Board
25-Apr	GFC CLRC
25-Apr	Meeting with SU
25-Apr	GFC Replenishment Committee
26-Apr	University Research Policy
26-Apr	GFC Executive Committee
29-Apr	GSA Council special meeting

**GSA Vice-President Academic 2013-2014
Report to Council**

To: GSA Council
From: Colin More, GSA VPA 2013-2014
Date: May 10, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

I shall begin with the big news which, sequestered as you are in your offices and labs and secret underground lairs, you may not have noticed: spring is here!

The last month and a half has been busy. The **transition process** for newly-elected officials began in late March with the GSA transition retreat in Red Deer. Since then, I have been shadowing my esteemed predecessor, Nathan Andrews, at the majority of his meetings as Vice-President Academic.

In addition to the official shadowing, I have been invited to a number of meetings dealing with the provincial budget cuts, including several coalition meetings with stakeholder associations (AASUA, NASA, SU, PDFA, and GSA) and a brown-bag lunch with the Acting Provost of the University, Martin Ferguson-Pell. Central administration has settled on a three-year plan to deal with the cuts; as your representative, I will continue to ensure that the graduate student voice is heard for both this year's budget and the next.

Since officially taking office on May 1st, I have attended meetings of the Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE), the FGSR Working Group on Quality Measures (WGQM), and the GFC Executive Committee. In addition, on March 26 I sat in on a special meeting of the GFC Executive chaired by the University President, Indira Samarasekera, where she discussed a plan to **overhaul the governance process of central administration**.

The upcoming year promises to be equal parts busy, frustrating, exciting, and rewarding. Personally, I hope to push forward on graduate student-specific **professional development initiatives**, and see what can be done to improve **mental health support**. Through it all, I shall continue to represent the interests of all graduate students on all matters, academic or otherwise. If along the way you wish to bring anything to my attention, please feel free to get in touch!

Cheers,

Colin More
GSA VP Academic, 2012-2013

The following is a list of meetings that I attended from May 1 to May 8, 2013:

1- May	GSA Board; GFC CLE
2- May	FGSR Working Group on Quality Measures
6- May	GFC Executive Committee
7- May	Undergraduate Research Initiative
8- May	GSA Board

**GSA Vice-President Student Services 2012-2013
Report to Council**

To: GSA Council
From: Naseeb Adnan, GSA VPSS 2012-2013
Date: May 10, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

Late last month the GSA learned that because of the current budget situation, the university is reconsidering all its current and future funding commitments. As a result, the ongoing **1/6th U-Pass subsidy** that administration provides will be reviewed. The time to notify the GSA about this decision was extremely inconvenient as it was change-over time for both student associations. Any reduction in the subsidy will burden students with non-instructional fees. It may also create other problems as the referendum included the subsidized fees, putting the service at risk. Student leaders went into contract negotiations with the 1/6th subsidy in mind with good faith and expected the commitment to last at least for the proposed contract length. I believe the 2013-14 Elected Officials will have close discussions with administration to resolve the issue soon.

In the GFC FDC meeting, the **SUB lower level renovation design development** was approved. The renovation will be a great addition to student experience on campus and the project is likely to be finished by fall 2014. The committee also approved appendix XIX of the South Campus LRDP. F&O went through a number of open houses and community consultations before bringing the amendment to FDC for approval. **St. Joseph's college women's student housing** was a discussion item and details of this design and building project will be discussed in coming meetings.

The **PAW centre project** is progressing well on the targeted timeline. In the next few months, there will be discussions with the SU regarding the business plan for the pro-shop and teaching kitchen.

Collective bargaining finished successfully and details will be covered by the VPL's report.

Sincerely,

Naseeb Adnan

GSA VP Student Services, 2012-2013

The following is a list of meetings that I attended between April 4 and April 30, 2013:

08-Apr	Pre-Meeting with SU re Brown Bag Lunch
08-Apr	GSA Council
09-Apr	Provost's Brown Bag Lunch
10-Apr	Collective Agreement Negotiations
10-Apr	Student Financial Aid Task Force

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10-Apr	GSA Board
16-Apr	PAW Steering Committee
17-Apr	GSA Board
23-Apr	Collective Agreement Negotiations
24-Apr	Meeting with Doug Dawson
24-Apr	Student Financial Aid Task Force
24-Apr	GSA Board
25-Apr	GFC FDC Committee
26-Apr	Meeting with SU VP Student Life
29-Apr	GSA Council

GSA Vice-President Student Services 2013-2014
Report to Council

To: GSA Council
From: Megha Bajaj, GSA VPSS 2013-2014
Date: May 10, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

The last few weeks of transition were an excellent opportunity for me to learn more about the operations of the GSA. I am now excited to take greater responsibilities starting this month. I am looking forward to work with all of you. I would like to **thank the outgoing elected officials and office staff and management** who provided me with great support to understand my role as the VP Student Services during transition.

This month I attended a meeting of the **Standing Advisory Committee on International Engagement (SACIE)**. This committee is involved in helping to prioritize and recommend the UofA's role in international engagement. The committee asked attendees for their feedback on the main concern/s of the university or an individual in contributing to international initiatives and the direction the university should take for international development. The attendees were asked to discuss their ideas in small groups and make recommendations as a group. A lot of interesting ideas came forward from the discussion. A **report will be prepared by SACIE** based on the feedback and ideas obtained from the attendees and will be used further for **making recommendations for international development initiatives**.

Another meeting I attended was the **Student Financial Aid Task Force**. The main role of this task force is to make recommendations for administration and organization of student financial support system. From previous meetings this task force has recognized inefficiencies in the current system, for *eg* the financial aid system is de-centralized, the online information available for emergency loans and bursaries is not organized, lack of co-ordination among units involved in student financial aid and so on. In this meeting members were asked to express their ideas and views on what a **"strategic approach for financial aid system"** means to them from a student's, the university's and a staff member's point of view. The task force will organize these ideas into **"emerging themes"** which will be used for **discussion/recommendation in subsequent meetings**.

Also, Hasin and I will be working closely with the GSA staff and management on the **Department Liaison Initiative** and we will be updating you throughout the year on our progress on this undertaking.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to remind all Councillors that if they are part of a **registered student group** this registration **expired** on April 30th. Student Group Services requires all student groups to re-register annually and groups have until June 1st to do this. If groups do not re-register they lose student group status and the benefits associated with that. The Students Group Services website at <http://www.su.ualberta.ca/services/studentgroups/> has all the information required for re-registration.

Sincerely,

Megha Bajaj

GSA VP Student Services, 2013-2014

The following is a list of meetings that I attended between May 1 and May 8, 2013:

May 1	GSA Board
May 7	SACIE Meeting
May 8	Student Financial Aid Task Force
May 8	GSA Board

**GSA Vice-President Student Life 2012-2013
Report to Council**

To: GSA Council
From: Huimin Zhong, GSA VPSL 2012-2013
Date: May 10, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

I attended an Alumni Legacy presentation on April 22 where the \$5 million-fundraised construction budget for the Alumni Legacy Walk was discussed. At the Board Retreat in Red Deer I asked that all the residence complaints that I dealt with over the year be catalogued and analyzed in preparation for a wrap-up meeting with Doug Dawson. I, along with Naseeb Adnan (VP SS 2012-2013) attended this meeting and Hasin (VP SL 2013-2014) has been fully briefed on the discussion which occurred.

Sincerely,
Huimin Zhong

GSA VP Student Life, 2012-2013

The following is a list of the meetings that I attended between April 4 and April 30, 2013:

05-Apr	Final Group Granting Wrap-up
08-Apr	Pre-Meeting with SU re Brown Bag Lunch
08-Apr	GSA Council
09-Apr	Provost's Brown Bag Lunch
10-Apr	Collective Agreement Negotiations
10-Apr	Meeting with VP University Relations
10-Apr	GSA Board
17-Apr	GSA Board
19-Apr	GSA Board
22-Apr	Alumni Legacy
23-Apr	Collective Agreement Negotiations
24-Apr	Meeting with Doug Dawson
24-Apr	GSA Board
29-Apr	GSA Council special meeting

**GSA Vice President Student Life 2013-2014
Report to Council**

To: GSA Council

From: Hasin Haroon, GSA VPSL 2013-2014

Date: May 8, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

As you all know, I just took up office at the GSA on 1st May 2013. Thanks to the very effective **transition programme** arranged by the GSA Management and the previous GSA Board, I feel very comfortable and am confident that I can carry out my responsibilities to (almost) the best of my abilities. Of course, these are still early days and I have more to learn –but it has been great so far. I look forward to getting acquainted and working with you all this year.

- **The CSRC (Community Standards Review Committee)** is a committee that reviews the policies in residencies and makes necessary changes to current rules based on Restorative Justice. The committee is currently reviewing their policies, which were established last year. They hold training sessions for Residence Assistants in the implementation of Restorative Justice as well, which is a very useful professional skill for graduate students to learn. The committee will be meeting bi-weekly over the summer and I will be updating you as we go.
- **The GSA Orientation for MA Communication and Technology students** who start this spring took place last week. The session went well, and we feel it fit in well with our soon to be implemented Department Liaison Initiative as a primer.
- **AGC and external advocacy.** I will be working on external representation with the GSA President this year as a board member of AGC, and these duties are already underway. A **meeting with the Lethbridge GSA and AGC representatives** took place a couple of weeks ago – the report is included in the President's report.
- I will be working with the GSA VP student services, Megha Bajaj, on the Department Liaison Initiative this year. We have been working with the GSA Management and Staff in recent weeks to get the programme up and running.

As part of our transition plan, we (the new elected officials) have been attending meetings with the previous board members for some time now. I will list the meetings that I have attended from May 1st to May 8th in this report – however I will also include the April 27th meeting with the Lethbridge GSA and AGC representatives that I attended with GSA President Brent Epperson.

Once again, I look forward to working with all of you this year. It promises to be a difficult and crucial year, but it gives me great hope for the year ahead to see all the excellent Council members, GSA Staff and Elected Officials working together to further the collective interests of graduate students. Lastly I would like to acknowledge the work of the GSA Staff and previous board, who are making/have made this transition so much easier for me!

Sincerely,

Hasin Haroon

GSA VP Student Life, 2013-2014

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The following is a list of meetings that I attended between May 1 and May 8, 2013:

1- May	GSA Board
7- May	Presentation at MACT program orientation
8- May	GSA Board

**GSA Vice-President Labour 2012-2013
Report to Council**

To: GSA Council
From: Brent Epperson, GSA VPL 2012-2013
Date: May 10, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

The following are summaries of the meetings I attended in April as Vice-President Labour:

April 9: Press Conference

- I attended and spoke at the press conference of the 5 university associations, demonstrating a united response to postsecondary budget cuts.

Provost's Brown-Bag lunch

- I attended the Provost's brown bag lunch with the incoming and outgoing SU and GSA elected officials.

April 10: Collective Agreement Negotiations

- I attended the Collective Agreement Negotiations meeting with the rest of the GSA team. We discussed the potential impact of Ministerial statements on our negotiations and continued to work through the wording of the agreement.

Meeting with VP University Relations, Debra Pozenga Osburn (DPO) and staff

- Former GSA President Ashlyn Bernier (AB) and former GSA VPSL Huimin Zhong (HZ), GSA ED Ellen Schoeck (ES) and I met with DPO and several Assistant VPs from University Relations. We discussed university advocacy, lobbying, and the possibility for collaboration with the GSA.

April 15: Bi-weekly meeting with Dean Mazi Shirvani (MS)

- Former AB and I met with MS. We discussed FGSR reform, the Working Group on Quality Measures, and special registration both for graduate students on approved FGSR leaves of absence and for GSA Elected Officials.

April 16: Breakfast with SU

- AB and I met with SU elected officials. We discussed challenges over the last year, goals for the coming year, the value of SU/GSA collaboration, and student representation on the BoG.

April 16-18: Board of Governors Retreat

- I attended the BoG retreat with AB.

April 19: Conference call with Minister Lukaszuk and provincial student government leaders

- I participated in a conference call with Minister Lukaszuk and provincial student government leaders. I inquired about the Minister's recent comments in the media

about student association fees and university wage freezes, as the GSA had released a media statement on April 18 in response to the announcement that tuition fees would be frozen for the upcoming year and the suggestion that student associations also freeze their fees. The Minister clarified that, like MNIFs, he does not have the authority to unilaterally freeze student association fees under the current law. Similarly, he stated that he does not have a seat at the negotiations table between the GSA and the U of A BoG. Universities have some flexibility with regards to wages for lower wage employees such as graduate student TAs and RAs. The Minister affirmed that his earlier comments primarily concerned wages of academic staff.

Meeting with Ministry of Enterprise and Advanced Education (MEAE) and provincial student lobbies

- We discussed policy advocacy during the previous and upcoming years for the three student lobbies and well as plans for consistent meetings with MEAE, deepening collaboration.

April 30:

- I attended Board Finance and Property (BFPC) as an observer for open session.

Sincerely,

Brent Epperson, VPL (2012-2013)

The following is a list of meetings that I attended between April 4 and April 30, 2013:

06 -Apr	AGC - Alberta NDP Event
08 -Apr	Graduate Student Tuition and Funding Data
08 -Apr	GSA LRC
08 -Apr	GSA Council
09 -Apr	Provost's Brown Bag Lunch
10 -Apr	Collective Agreement Negotiations
10 -Apr	Meeting with VP University Relations
10 -Apr	GSA Board
11 - 14 Apr	GU15
15 -Apr	Meeting with Dean FGSR
16 -Apr	Meeting with SU
16 -18 Apr	BoG Strategic Planning Retreat
19-Apr	GSA Board
19-Apr	Meeting with U of C GSA
20-Apr	Meeting with U of C GSA
23-Apr	Collective Agreement Negotiations
23-Apr	Augustana Spring Fling
24-Apr	GSA Board
26-28 Apr	Meeting with Lethbridge GSA
29-Apr	GSA Council special meeting
30- Apr	Labour Meeting

**GSA Vice-President Labour 2013-2014
Report to Council**

To: GSA Council
From: Monty Bal, GSA VPL 2013-2014
Date: May 10, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

Over the past month and a half, I have been involved in extensive GSA related activities as set out by the **GSA orientation and transition model** for incoming officers. This included shadowing my predecessor, Brent Epperson, and trying to best situate myself towards achieving the goals outlined in our slate's platform and the GSA Board's Strategic Work Plan. This included a Board retreat, during which we sought to align the slate's goals for this year and the wider long-term strategic goals for the GSA.

In addition to this, throughout April, I have participated in a number of committees, including the FGSR Working Group on Quality Measures (WGQM), two coalition meetings of stakeholder associations (AASUA, NASA, GSA, SU, PFA) in response to the provincial budget cuts, bi-weekly meetings with Dr. Mazi Shirvani, a Brown bag lunch with the Acting Provost Martin Ferguson-Pell to discuss the provincial letters of expectation, as well as participating in FGSR Council and the GSA Board.

Since taking office on May 1st, I have continued attending a number of these scheduled meetings, including the FGSR WGQM. In addition to this with the guidance of Heather Hogg, the GSA's Director of Operations and Labour Professional, I have begun to take on **case work** with respect to graduate student contract and collective bargaining issues, including those related to the budget cuts in RA/TA funding. Further, I have also attended a meeting with Heather Hogg and Brent Epperson with Jay Spark and Susan Buchsdruecker on the **rollout of the new collective bargaining agreement** (once approved by the BoG) and how we can go about educating departments around campus about the changes and strengthen the knowledge base about the AEGS Collective Agreement. We have developed a preliminary plan by which to proceed Faculty by Faculty, in order to educate Faculty deans, department chairs, and grad coordinators on the new AEGS CA.

I look forward to working on this initiative, as well as negotiating for a new collective bargaining agreement this year, using the Labour Relations Committee as an essential consultative unit. Finally, I will do my best to continue my predecessor's work in defending the rights of graduate students all around campus.

Thanks,
Simarjit S. Bal (Monty)
GSA VP Labour, 2013-2014

The following is a list of meetings that I attended between May 1 and May 8, 2013:

1- May	GSA Board
2- May	FGSR Working Group on Quality Measures
8- May	GSA Board, AEGS CA Education and Compliance Initiative Meeting

**GSA Chief Returning Officer
Report to Council**

To: GSA Council
From: Daniel Prins, CRO
Date: May 10, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

This year's Councillor-at-Large (CAL) by-elections have concluded, and I'm happy to report that the GSA has now filled all ten CAL positions. This should conclude all elections, by-elections, and referenda for this year (at least I dearly hope so). I will now turn my focus to an overhaul of the bylaws and policies governing elections and referenda.

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

Best,

Daniel Prins, Chief Returning Officer

**GSA Executive Director
Report to Council**

To: GSA Council
From: Ellen Schoeck, Executive Director
Date: May 8, 2013

Dear Council,

If you drill down to the management reports included in your Council packet, you will see the intensive efforts on infrastructure that are on-going. But for all my reports to Council, I pick out one item that I think may be of interest to Council.

For May, it is transition.

Transition to newly directly-elected Officers

Your five new Officers, duly elected, are now at the reins of a million dollar corporation. The transition from the previous team to the new team has been on-going during the Early Call (initiated before actual Election Call), and this has allowed for people who think they are interested in serving for elected office to step forward early and take part in training. This early training readies them for dealing with major financial and advocacy issues.

Thus, you have a new group who took the reins of the GSA with solid, basic training under their belt.

There will be in-services along the way as we deal with many on-going, big-ticket issues, *eg* PAW and North Power Plant Space, running a business with the SU in PAW, grants, and more. We are up to the challenge and now have the infrastructure to do so – but are still rebuilding. That means a % of our staff/management time is still devoted to rebuilding. Soon we will be able to convert that effort from rebuilding to new initiatives.

Office Transitions at the Managerial Level

Heather Hogg, our Labour Professional and Director of Operations, has now gone from four to three-day weeks and is more focused on labour matters than operational. Courtney Thomas is taking on portions of Heather's job as DO and also part of my job as ED. This is part of a planned transition.

Courtney Borstad will be leaving us on May 31 to pursue a PhD. Mikaela Ediger, who has been with us for three years, on and off, in various roles, will take up the Communications position on June 1.

Please tell me at Council if you have any questions at all.

**Executive Director, Director of Operations, and Associate Director
Report to the GSA Board, April 10, 2013**

Dear All,

Week in Review – Strategic:

The following have issues have dominated management’s work in the past week:

- **The Letter of Expectation, opening of the *PSLA*, and the provincial budget** (providing GSA feedback, discussions with Administration, and assessing implications). One staff member continues, daily, to monitor the news. This includes checking the local papers in Calgary, Lethbridge, and Edmonton, as well as monitoring the websites of those universities. **We are building a complete dossier on all budget and Letter of Expectation developments as they unfold.**
- Developing the **Department Liaison Initiative**.
- Finalizing the **Collective Agreement**.
- **Transition**.
- **Follow up on issues arising from the March 22-23 GSA Board Retreat** (eg the GSA SWP for May Council).

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- **Assisting with preparations for the upcoming GSA Council meeting** have been a top priority for members of the office team this past week.
- The **GSA Senator election** is underway (the nomination period closes this Wednesday at noon) and the **GFC replenishment process** is also underway – the office team will be assisting with this work as well as with **Council elections for GSA Speaker, Deputy Speaker, CRO, and Deputy CRO**. The **elections for vacant Councillor-at-Large positions** will also begin soon.
- Work on the **GSA filing system** is scheduled to occur over the summer – priorities of this project include **implementing the GSA’s Document Retention and Destruction (DRAD) policy and maximizing the organization of the GSA’s files**.

**Executive Director, Director of Operations, and Associate Director
Report to the GSA Board, April 17, 2013**

Dear All,

Week in Review – Strategic:

The following have issues have dominated management’s attention in the past week:

- **Strategic planning for 2013-2014 GSA events** (ie Awards Night, Orientation).
- **The Letter of Expectation, opening of the *PSLA*, and the provincial budget**.
- **Collective Agreement**.
- **Department Liaison Initiative**.
- **Transition and follow up on issues arising from the March 22-23 GSA Board Retreat** (eg the GSA SWP for May Council).

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- **Travel arrangements for GU15**.
- Preparing for **elections for vacant Councillor-at-Large positions**.
- Assisting with **Council elections for GSA Speaker, Deputy Speaker, CRO, and Deputy CRO**.

- Work on the **GSA hard copy and electronic filing system** is ongoing (the office team are putting thought into potential reforms that will enhance the GSA office's internal organization and efficiency).

**Executive Director, Director of Operations, and Associate Director
Report to the GSA Board, April 24, 2013**

Dear All,

Week in Review – Strategic:

The following have issues have dominated management's attention in the past week:

- **GU15 follow up** (*ie* fill-able survey form)
- GSA response to **Redford and Lukaszuk's suggestions regarding freezing fees.**
- **Information Sharing Agreements.**
- **Transition** issues related to incoming elected officials (updating signing authorities, etc.).
- Thinking on a **digital media presence for the GSA.**
- **Budget for travel for GSA elected officials.**
- **Strategic planning for 2013-2014 GSA events** (*ie* Awards Night, Orientation).
- **The Letter of Expectation, opening of the PSLA, and the provincial budget.**
- **Collective Agreement.**
- **Department Liaison Initiative.**

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- **Travel arrangements for GU15 and AGC-related travel to Lethbridge.**
- Preparing for **elections for vacant Councillor-at-Large positions** and shooting video for **Senator election.**
- Assisting with **Council elections for GSA Speaker, Deputy Speaker, CRO, and Deputy CRO.**
- Preparation of **2013-2014 GSA Agenda/Handbook.**
- Organizing stats regarding **front desk queries.**

**Executive Director, Director of Operations, and Associate Director
Report to the GSA Board, May 1, 2013**

Dear All,

Week in Review – Strategic:

The following have issues have dominated management's attention in the past week:

- **CA rewording and signing;** special Council meeting.
- **Changes to the GSA logo** (same logo, slightly reconfigured to be more readable, addresses the problems with the logo on the PAW signs).
- **Two new part-time, temporary staff hired:** Ann Gordon (Filing and Archival Organization Assistant) and Katie Waterhouse (Department Liaison Initiative Coordinator).
- **Online front desk log** developed to chart queries and other issues that come to the GSA office.
- **Information Sharing Agreements signed.**
- **Budget for travel for GSA elected officials** – template needed.
- **Forward planning for 2013-2014 GSA events** (*ie* Awards Night, Orientation).
- **The Letter of Expectation, opening of the PSLA, and the provincial budget.**
- **Department Liaison Initiative** (planning the first phase of the Initiative, organizing an "in-service" training module for elected officials, *etc.*).

- Thinking through **roll out for 2014 General Election** as well as roll out plans for the **2013-2014 Early Call** program.

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- Developed **online fill-able survey forms** (GU15 follow-up).
- Updating **slides used for GSA orientation** presentations.
- **Travel arrangements for GU15 and AGC-related travel to Lethbridge.**
- Preparing for **elections for vacant Councillor-at-Large positions** and assisting with **Council elections for GSA Speaker, Deputy Speaker, CRO, and Deputy CRO.**
- Preparation of **2013-2014 GSA Agenda/Handbook.**

**Executive Director, Director of Operations, and Associate Director
Report to the GSA Board, May 8, 2013**

Dear All,

Week in Review – Strategic:

The following have issues have dominated management’s attention in the past week:

- **Budget letters, opening of the PSLA, and the provincial budget.**
- **Bylaw and policy review** resumed after a 4-week suspension.
- **Regulations governing casinos:** fundraising for the outfitting of the graduate student lounge in PAW.
- **GSA Grants:** with problem-solving largely done, **the focus now is on gathering historical data and a major review of policy.**
- **Department Liaison Initiative** (moving forward after the recent “in-service” training module for elected officials, *etc.*).
- **Councillor remuneration.**
- **Staffing:** filling out the remaining portion of a parental leave.
- **Forward planning for 2013-2014 GSA events** (*ie* Awards Night, Orientation, 2014 General Election, 2013-2014 Early Call program).

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- Assisting with the **DLI initiative** and **grants problem-solving.**
- **Elections for vacant Councillor-at-Large positions** and assisting with **Council elections for GSA Speaker, Deputy Speaker, CRO, and Deputy CRO.**
- Preparation of **2013-2014 GSA Agenda/Handbook.**
- Assisting with the **development of template presentation slides for departmental orientations** and with the planning of Fall Orientation.
- **GSA Media Tracker.**
- Assisting **preparations for the upcoming GSA Council** meeting.

Documents that Define the GSA as a Corporate Entity

NAME	SUMMARY	STATUS
MOU with the Office of the Dean of Students	Governs student groups.	Signed in 2011, effective until April 30, 2012 – needs to be reviewed and resigned.
Collective Agreement (AEGS)	Sets out terms of employment for certain graduate students and terms for use of AEGS funds.	Negotiations opened in October 2012. Agreement reached in April 2013. Goes to BoG Apr 30, 2013.
Semi-Annual Pay Cycle	Governs AEGS pay cycle	Signed in April 2012.
Audit	As a separate corporation from the university, we hire our own auditor.	Audit occurs annually in May-June.
Banking and signing authorities	Operating account, GICs, investments.	Actively reviewed with BMO in April 2012.
Campus Food Bank	Regulates GSA involvement with Food Bank.	GSA gives \$9000/annum to Campus Food Bank.
CAPS and Writing Resources Centre Agreement	Provides for subsidy of certain CAPS and WRC courses for grad students.	Annual subsidy of \$7575.
Ceridian (Payroll)	GSA staff and elected officials are now paid by direct deposit.	We are very pleased with Ceridian. Outsourcing is cheaper than in-house production of cheques.
Council bylaws and policies	Regulated by the <i>Post-secondary Learning Act</i> .	Comprehensive review to occur 2013-2014.
Direct Deposit	Provides for direct deposit of AEGS cheques and T4A production by U of A.	Signed 2012. Major infrastructure change.
U of A Financial Services	Stipulates when GSA receives	Re-negotiated and signed in April 2012.

NAME	SUMMARY	STATUS
	GSA membership fees collected by the U of A on our behalf.	Re-negotiated again in 2013 for three more years. Deals with cash flow issue.
U of A Financial Services	Governs dedicated fees paid by graduate students, e.g. H and D	Negotiated in 2013 for three years. Deals with cash flow issue.
Graduate Student Assistance Program (GSAP)	Provides for a wide range of personal counseling.	Reviewed annually.
Health and Dental Agreement with Studentcare	Provides for Health and Dental Plan.	Re-signed to 2015. Provider changed in 2012.
Info Sharing with Studentcare and University	Allows Studentcare access to graduate students' personal information for strictly defined purposes regarding the GSA's Health and Dental Plan.	Reviewed with the U of A Privacy Officer and Studentcare in 2012 and signed in 2013.
Personal Information Sharing Agreement with the U of A	Allows the GSA access to graduate students' personal information for strictly defined purposes, e.g. emailing the newsletter.	Reviewed in 2012 and signed in 2013.
Liability Insurance	As a separate corporation from the university, we carry our own general liability insurance.	We doubled our liability insurance in 2012. We are not covered for alcohol use and yet have GSA students groups who have self-reported that they use alcohol.
Officers/Directors' Insurance	As a separate corporation from the university, we carry insurance that covers the elected officials, and management.	We doubled our coverage in 2013.
TDIMM	Provides for group auto and home insurance.	Re-signed to October 7, 2016.
Management contracts with ED/letters of appointment	Sets out terms of employment managers.	Standard appointment letter has been reviewed by our lawyers.

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