

GSA Council Meeting AGENDA
Monday, June 17, 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 17 June 2013 Agenda
3. Approval of the Minutes from the 13 May 2013 GSA Council Meeting and the 21 May 2013 GSA Special Council Meeting
Attachments:
 - Minutes from the 13 May 2013 GSA Council Meeting
 - Minutes from the 21 May 2013 GSA Special Council Meeting
4. Changes in Council Membership
 - i. Introduction of New Councillors (*If you are new to Council, please let us know it is your first meeting*)
 - ii. Farewell to Departing Councillors (*If this is your last Council meeting, or if your last Council meeting is approaching, please let us know*)

**Attached
Numbered Pages**

3.0-3.19*
3.20-3.30*
**Distributed in first
mailing*

Presentations and Councillor Announcements

5. FGSR Delegations to Faculties Recently Approved by the FGSR Council
President Brent Epperson will introduce the guest speaker and present the item
Guest: Mazi Shirvani (Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research)

Presentation will begin after roll call at 6:00 pm
6. Councillor Announcements

Action Items, Elections, Appointments, Special Business

7. Action Items (**none at this time**)
8. Elections (**none at this time**)
9. Appointments (**none at this time**)
10. Special Business (**none at this time**)

Prepared by M. Ediger, A. Gordon, C. Thomas, and E. Schoeck for Council Meeting June 17, 2013

Reports

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| 11. President | |
| i. President's Report | 11.0-11.4 |
| ii. GSA Board | 11.5-11.6 |
| iii. Budget and Finance Committee (no meetings this reporting period) | |
| iv. Governance Committee (no meetings this reporting period) | |
| v. Nominating Committee | 11.7-11.9 |
| 12. Vice-President Academic | |
| i. Vice-President Academic's Report | 12.0-12.1 |
| 13. Vice-President Student Services | |
| i. Vice-President Student Services' Report | 13.0-13.1 |
| ii. Student Affairs Advisory Committee (joint chair: Vice-President Student Life) (no meetings this reporting period) | |
| 14. Vice-President Student Life | |
| i. Vice-President Student Life's Report | 14.0-14.1 |
| ii. Awards Selection Committee (no meetings this reporting period) | |
| 15. Vice-President Labour | |
| i. Vice-President Labour's Report | 15.0-15.2 |
| ii. Negotiating Committee (no meetings this reporting period) | |
| iii. Labour Relations Committee (no meetings this reporting period) | |
| 16. Senator | |
| i. Senator's Report (no report this period) | |
| 17. Speaker | |
| i. Speaker's Report (no report this period) | |
| 18. Chief Returning Officer | |
| i. Chief Returning Officer's Report (no report this period) | |
| ii. Elections and Referenda Committee (no meetings this reporting period) | |
| 19. GSA Management | |
| i. Executive Director's Report | 19.0-19.3 |

Question Period

20. Written Questions

21. Oral Questions

Adjournment

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**Meeting Minutes
13 May 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 13 May 2013 Agenda

Members had before them the 13 May 2013 Consolidated Agenda, which had been distributed on 10 May 2013.

Brent Epperson (President) moved to amend the Agenda to add Item 18.5 – Decision to hold a special GSA Council meeting on May 21, 2013 for consultation on the draft budget principles of the University.

The amended Agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

Approval of Minutes

3. Minutes

i. Minutes from the 08 April 2013 GSA Council meeting

Members had before them the 08 April 2013 GSA Council Minutes and the minutes from the 29 April 2013 Special GSA Council, which had been distributed on 03 May 2013.

The 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 a number of Councillors: Cory Telfer (alternate from Linguistics), Shawna Manchakowsky (new CAL); Rob Found (new CAL); Sarah Vela (alternate from Library and Information Studies); Luciana Da Silveiro Cavalcante (Laboratory Medicine and Pathology); and Jennifer Wang (Biochemistry).

ii. Farewell to departing Councillors

None.

Presentations and Councillor Announcements

5. Graduate Initiative and the Provincial Budget

Brent Epperson (President) introduced the guest, Dr. Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) and presented the item.

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) spoke about the Graduate Initiative and the Provincial Budget, stating:

- He wants to reassure Council that the Administration is committed to continuing the Graduate Initiative;
- The provincial budget has delayed the newest draft of the document about graduate student opportunities. This is now about 3-4 weeks behind schedule, but will be finished by June, hopefully;
- The size of the university-wide budget cuts will be about \$67 million, or approximately a 10% cut to funding;
- The University's budget is divided into categories: a base budget; a flex funds budget, which provides a surplus over the normal operating budget within individual faculties; and a deficit budget, for which the Administration needs the approval of both the Board and the Ministry to run;
- He is looking at how to mix the necessary budget cuts across these three categories;
- The Administration has set some principles to follow, which are available to view at the Change@ualberta.ca website;
- There will be a consultation process about these principles and not about the budget for the current financial year; that budget that will go to APC next week and then onwards through governance;
- When the Provost has determined how to distribute the cuts, letters will be sent to the Deans indicating what areas they should be working with at the faculty level;
- This will allow different interpretations and flexibility within the faculty. The Deans will be asked to communicate the cuts to the rest of the faculty;
- In previous years, there were across-the-board cuts to funding and every faculty's budget was cut equally;
- Even prior to the release of the provincial budget, the Deans had felt that the University had absorbed as much as possible in across-the-board cuts and they wanted to look at vertical cuts instead of equitable cuts across the faculties;
- During those discussions, they were anticipating that there would be no increase to provincial funding. After the budget announcement, it was decided to apply some differential cuts using the budget principles to essentially slow the process down and not allow radical changes to happen;

- One way to slow down the process is to increase the deficit and roll it forward by a year. Another is to use the flex funding budget area to minimize the cuts needed on the base funding and put things off. Overall approach now are cuts of approximately 1/3 to each budget category;
- There will be even more problems next year if the University is not able to negotiate with the government about increasing funding;
- The time delay enables more careful consideration, as they have not had to deal with this kind of situation since the 1990s and it is very different now;
- The Administration is figuring out how to make the consultation process work while on a tight timeline;
- Regarding the Teaching Assistantship and Graduate Assistantship funding cuts, there will be \$5 million taken out of that budget area; this is based upon the principle that the University needs to generate revenue and recover the situation;
- The focus of Advancement will be on generating cash to create bursaries and scholarships for graduate student funding, rather than losing staff, since raising advancement dollars are more likely this way;
- There may be additional funds within faculties that will allow them to reduce the impact of those cuts to Assistantships;
- The University examined what was going into the central budget and what was going into the student's payroll and there was a \$2.5 million that was not going directly to students as part of their pay cheques;
- Some faculties were also supporting students through tuition funding, but this money was also being used for other purposes instead of going to graduate students;
- The slack in the system may allow faculties to redistribute resources within them;
- The Administration would like to distribute the responsibility of resource allocation to the faculty level;
and
- This will allow maximum flexibility, allow faculties to be as effective as possible, and allow students to advocate within their faculties for funding.

Following the presentation, there were a number of questions:

Zhen Li (Chemistry) asked: Some of the departments may not be able to recover some of the cuts. Can you guarantee that Teaching Assistants and Research Assistants will not be affected?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: We cannot guarantee that when looking at cuts like these.

Zhen Li (Chemistry), supplementary: What's the reasoning behind cutting the graduate students' pay first?

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Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: It would not be my choice to cut student funding first; it was the last thing we had to resort to. Graduate assistantships and TAs are funded through the base budget, but there are opportunities for these areas to be funded by soft dollars as compared to other areas.

Brent Epperson (President) asked: I have a multi-part question: In the context of the Board of Governors directive to the President to deliver the change agenda, how does this square with the draft budget principles? Do you anticipate changes to the governance process?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: The timing is unfortunate as we were very close to having a model for funding graduate students that would also drive excellence. We distribute around \$30 million in graduate assistantships and we do not differentiate between TA- and RA-ships. We want to take the TA part out, protect it as a category of funding and focus it on creating teaching experiences, and put it under a category such as teaching support, specifically for that purpose. The remaining money will allow students to finish their research or thesis work. There will also be an expectation of the supervisor matching the funds. The level of matching funds is currently much lower that it should be in some faculties. This would eventually drive up the quality of funding and be driven by the commitment of supervisors. We need to get through this immediate period and deal with the graduate assistantship issue now instead of next year in order to concentrate on other changes. That model that I described will need to come through GSA Council and governance before we come to finalize it. How does our overall budget work through the governance process? We essentially have to cycle back. It goes to APC, GFC for discussion in the fall, and goes to Board for approval on June 3 (BFC then the board). The detailed faculties budget that goes through governance is a high level budget, while the faculties don't need that kind of approval. This will be posted on the website for APC in 3 weeks time.

Roy Coulthard (Senator) asked: For the Faculty and departmental budget scenario, you won't find a more departmental-identifying group than graduate students. We see what happens on the ground level with budget cuts as they come down and then are downloaded to individual departments. Grad program coordinators leave and the departments combine staff positions. Faculties are more opaque. How do we make sure the faculties take the centre of the budget and not just kick it down to the department level?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: The TA part would be handled quite differently from the RA part. It's difficult to put in place the matching mechanisms that I was describing for RA-ships with TA-ships. Some faculties rely heavily on TAs for training and for providing an overall

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undergraduate experience. How do we acknowledge the variance between faculties? If we create the mechanisms where centrally-available dollar funding must be matched, either by the supervisor or department, then there is absolute transparency in the source of money and what the student is getting. We can benchmark that to the U15 standards. In order for a student to be enrolled, the supervisor would need to match that funding for four years. Then central would also match that for the same length of time. That's the problem, the dilution between money going through faculties to the departments.

Roy Coulthard (Senator), supplementary: Beyond TA and RA's, with other staff, can we make sure that faculties are not directing the cuts at other staff within the faculties?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: We have good evidence to show that we run a lean administration system at the U of A. Most of the resources in the past few years have been taken out of the administrative areas. What we hear from the Deans are that we are down to the bare bones. The administrative burden is driven by regulatory processes, either by Tri-Council's or the province's. We are never given additional resources. We are trying to consolidate programs and use IT in areas to get better efficiencies. It's heavily burdened.

Susan Cake (Sociology) asked: In different departments in Arts, student who have Tri-Council awards are being forced to give up RA-ships or to start their Tri-Council in May versus September. This is basically punishing students for winning major awards.

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: I was disappointed to hear that had happened. It is a decision made at the department level and the Dean is reviewing it. Our expectation is that the opposite would happen and students would be given every encouragement and not dis-encouraged. This is not something that the Central Administration would get involved with. We can set expectations about what we mean by excellence, but it's not appropriate for me to meddle in the affairs of supervisors or Deans. It isn't meeting the Board of Governors' expectations, but it involves the freedom of the Chair or supervisor to make those decisions.

Hasin Haroon (Vice-President Student Life) asked: Will enrollment be affected and will the government allow the University to reduce enrollment?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: Graduate student enrollment is not as tightly-controlled with a target number as undergraduate enrollment is. The base budget is based upon a total target and may have graduate student numbers embedded within that. With the grad students that we

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have base funding for, we are hugely overenrolled. Or to put it another way, we are substantially underfunded for graduate students; we need more money to support the students we have. There should be clarity when prospective graduate students ask about funding when attending the U of A. We are not as successful as we should be with recruitment.

Hasin Haroon (Vice-President Student Life), supplementary: Could the flex budget be moved into the base budget?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: We want to bring some of that positive flex within a faculty to the greater good. Rather than lose people or hit TA-ships harder, we can allow that money to be pulled in and to offset the cuts.

Hasin Haroon (Vice-President Student Life), supplementary: You mentioned that there would be Faculty leeway, but if you are taking away their ability to deal with the flex budgeting, aren't they losing freedom?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: It's for the faculty to decide how to best implement the cuts to minimize the damage. Rather than create a prescriptive direction, this allows more general terms.

Simarjit (Monty) Bal (Vice-President Labour) asked: As a follow-up to Susan Cake's question about the SSHRC funding changes, you said you could only criticize what departments do. I understand that a SSHRC, as well as a graduate assistantship, is a contractual obligation and breaking it would be breaking the Collective Agreement.

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: If that does represent a contractual issue, we would look closely at it and determine contractual responsibility. The resolution would have to be initiated by the department first. We could ask them to review it.

Simarjit (Monty) Bal (Vice-President Labour), supplementary: In the budget tracker, there is a reference to excellence and there already is the FGSR Working Group on Quality Measures. How would that group affect the quality measures in the budget? Will it be program-driven quality measures or come from the top down?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: We are looking at achieving continuous quality improvement in our programs and the ways programs can implement a review process via what is suggested through FGSR. There are other areas of excellence, such as in teaching, etc. We used to use a unit review; now, there will probably be a new process that is more frequent and where more information

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can be transferred between each review. It is embedded in the principles for commitment for the University to engage in those principles. The FGSR working group sets the stage for that point.

Andy Rathbone (Educational Policy Studies) asked: Are you looking into the further possibility of co-ops and internships for funding and education experiences?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: There was a 2010 exercise for the Deans, where we were asked where we would make cuts in a worst-case scenario. Many faculties came forward with that suggestion. There are strong co-ops in engineering and science and we do need to look at those opportunities more widely. Also to support graduate student stipends and experience. Co-ops can be fulfilling experiences and students make connections to industry. This was raised by a number of Deans.

Isaac Odoom (Councillor-at-Large) asked: Central Administration is looking into funds, but in my department, graduate students don't choose their supervisors until their 2nd year. How would the student get funding? Faculty members don't have to bring in money for their students in my department, much less match it. How do you react to that?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: Those are difficult questions. The one year, two year issue is not something that has been addressed. A faculty or department could find some way to provide a guarantee or a generic form of funding. Some departments have that, some do not. It does present a practical problem when supervisors don't have the funding to match. Many of us would argue that if you don't have the funding, you shouldn't be supervising a student. You need an external source to have the privilege of working with graduate students. For those who say they don't need a lot of money, they still need to pursue external funding to support their students. Base funding shouldn't be used to cover the complete cost of some supervisor's students, while others are funded externally.

Isaac Odoom (Councillor-at-Large), supplementary: The departments will then recruit students who only have the same research interests as those who have project funding.

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: The only other strategies that I know we could use, other than setting aside money for orphan areas that don't attract traditional funding, would be to create funding through philanthropic sources. The challenge is that you still have to engage the external environment through donors or through Tri-Council funding bodies. It presents a lot of practical issues to fund the first way.

Sarah Vela (Library and Information Studies) asked: You implied there won't be a drop in enrollment? Coming from a small program that's a major concern.

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: There is a risk of reduction in enrollment due to reputation issues and perceptions of risk by applicants, the risk of having non-competitive packages, or program aggregation and issues of eliminating programs. We haven't started to work on that yet. The focus has been on 2013-14 budget, not about program closure. We did suspend a diploma program at the Faculté St-Jean in a business program that didn't have high enough enrollment. That, and an acupuncture program in Medicine. We don't know if we can save enough by closing programs yet, but we have always protected students already enrolled in a program.

Sarah Vela (Library and Information Studies), supplementary: For TAs and internships, we don't have TAs but we do have a lot of students who work in the library. Would there be any consideration for that, even though they aren't TAs?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: Those opportunities are managed by the chief librarian. Employment is probably less, which is not good news. I don't know how they create opportunities for undergraduates versus graduate students, although there is probably a difference in cost and responsibilities.

Megha Bajaj (Vice-President Student Services) asked: In the draft budget principles, it was mentioned the University will minimize job losses. How?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: Those jobs mentioned include RA- and TA- ships; they are in the same category. The belief is that we can backfill that particular cut with soft dollars. For other areas where jobs are at risk, they are harder to fill with soft money. Administrative support are the most vulnerable positions. We can try and protect all those jobs, but we are also placing jobs at risk where there is an opportunity to have soft money funding.

Colin More (Vice-President Academic) asked: For enrollment, the draft budget principles state that raising enrollment and quality are a priority. How do you square those topics with keeping enrollment steady?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: The time period is important. We can try to create a more substantial structured program in terms of finance and enrollment and by attracting students to the U of A. There was money put in this year for an online enrollment system. A million

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dollars was put in and another million will go into it during the next year to achieve our goal of enrollment. A paper-based system is frustrating for students and is a key problem. Soft money was put in to deal with this issue. There is the possibility of converting 3 to 1 FLE to graduate FLE, where we can move resources around in terms of undergrad and grad resources. We can also consider tort courses and grow 12 month taught Masters student courses. These bring in mature students, recent undergraduates, and those who can self-fund. The Deans are interested in looking at this area and the Australian and UK institutions are really expanding these areas. There may be a consultative process where faculties may want to close down a research Masters and move to a course/taught degree or an entry- to-PhD program.

Qiang Li (Chemical and Materials Engineering) asked: Are there any other funds going to develop resources?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: The taught Masters is one, also commercially-funded research. Much of this is already done at the U of A and is of high quality, but we don't make good deals. On one project I worked on in the UK, we charged 150% overhead. At the U of A, less than 3% of the direct cost is collected, even though the rules say this should be 20%. With increased dollars, there can be an increased number of graduate students. We need to finance existing projects better. There are issues with companies reluctant to pay overheads, but this is an area where we could tighten up. Corporate Alberta can be made to understand.

Qiang Li (Chemical and Materials Engineering), supplementary: Do they want to increase the co-op opportunities for graduate students to work in industry and gain industry experience and earn money? Any plans for that?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: I answered that a while ago. Yes, we are looking at that, and not only for science and engineering areas but also for the humanities. Co-op students are a phenomenal resource and a tremendous asset to the employer. They benefit everyone and the economy. But the attitude needs to change and we need to get away from feeling defensive about asking.

Lena Saleh (Political Science) asked: You discussed changing strategies when negotiating with corporations. How is the University changing its strategy in negotiating with the provincial government?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: We are working hard behind the scenes. The University President is spending time working with people in government to communicate these issues. There is no promise that situation will improve next year. Every argument has the full support of the Board, and there is communication to the Premier about the importance of the University. The province

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also has contracted with the University to do work about informing policy and collecting money. They don't pay the costs of overheads either and they should be. We need to get them into a business like frame of mind; it's too destructive right now.

Brent Epperson (President) asked: To clarify, the budget recommendation goes to AFC but the principles go through GFC?

Martin Ferguson-Pell referred the question to Von Whiting (Senior Administrative Officer for the Provost and Vice-President Academic), who responded: The GFC is not responsible for the budget, the Board is. APC recommends on certain aspects on the academic side to the Board, but the Board has full jurisdiction.

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) added: The budget principles would go through GFC, but not the budget itself.

Brent Epperson (President) asked: There has been the recent closing of the Alberta Institute of American Studies. Are there any other closures coming?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: That closure occurred as a result of a review of the institutes at the U of A. There are 135 centres and institutes and some are moribund. There is a reputational risk as good institutes get lost in the noise of less effective institutes. What Murray and his group did was a systematic review of the institutes. The difficulty for the Institute of American Studies was that they were about to run out of money. The vast majority of institutes are funded initially through soft money, with the goal to become self-sufficient eventually. The American Institute was reviewed and the decision was made to close as it was no longer viable. It had nothing to do with budget cuts; it was an accident of timing. The review had been going on for 3-6 months prior to that.

Roy Coulthard (Senator) asked: We are hearing from the government that they love students, but we know that the Administration wants to work with students, as well. When students look at the Board and the power that the President has, they ask 'why should we work with them?'

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: You must remember that the university is a complex ecosystem constructed of relationships, collegiality, and also finances. The most recent challenge is with tuition, which had been approved by the Board and by the government, and then retracted at the last minute. There is less income for us but we can't have a reduction of income and then just have the Administration deal with it. Everyone needs to. There are significant effects with budget and tuition cuts. Bear

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in mind that this impact is not only on your own pocketbook, but also on the university that is trying to provide students with a good experience. We should be striving for transparency and be careful of people of trying to disrupt the ecosystem.

Roy Coulthard (Senator), supplementary: No one in the province at the student level advocated for a tuition freeze. Some senators were angry thinking that was the case, and that's not what happened.

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: Thanks to the associations and the GSA, we weren't caught off guard with that. We have a good relationship and knew that the tuition freeze was coming. Otherwise, it would have created a divide.

Andy Rathbone (Educational Policy Studies) asked: Could you explain what a taught Masters is?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: An MBA would be the most obvious example of one. It's a series of courses that would give you a particular competency. Another example would be a taught Masters in aboriginal culture, which would enable someone to understand aboriginal culture as part of their job.

Andy Rathbone (Educational Policy Studies), supplementary: In Educational Policy Studies, we are expected to take Teaching Assistantship-type experiences on our own dime. We have to teach courses as part of our program. For a co-op, could this teaching experience be used as a learning experience for them? This would lower the number of classes that people would have to teach and improve perceptions on education.

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: Rehab Medicine and other programs have similar clinical curriculum placements. It would be appealing to seek compensation for that. I don't see any major issues with it, except it's a money issue. The benefit would be to reduce classes, improve the K-12 experience, and so on.

Andy Rathbone (Educational Policy Studies), supplementary: I was thinking more on a university level, in terms of teaching university classes.

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: That is part of what the TA-ship program is intended to do. It's not just marking, but actual teaching. I would be cautious about comparisons to other students, since the vast majority don't get any compensation for clinical courses.

Sarah Vela (Library and Information Studies) asked: There are examples of course-based studies in Library and Information Studies. Is there any chance you would be more flexible and treat TA-ships as work experience?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: You should hold on to that idea. It's an excellent idea with using meaningful learning experiences that add to learning. It would make TA experiences more substantial. When we start to bring these ideas around, you can advocate for it.

There were no further questions.

Council was adjourned for a four minute recess. The meeting was called back to order at 7:40 pm.

6. Councillor Announcements

Yasmeen Krameddine (Psychiatry) announced that the Annual Psychiatry Research Day is on June 5, 2013 from 9 to 4 pm. There will be student presentation, a guest speaker from Toronto, and lunch will be provided.

Fred Wu (Speaker) announced that he had defended his thesis on April 24, 2013.

Roy Coulthard (Senator) MOVED to limit Item 7 – President's Report to 15 seconds in length. SECONDED by Asif Siddiqui (CAL). Motion FAILED.

Action Items, Elections, Appointments, Special Business

7. GSA Board 2013 - 2014 Strategic Work Plan

Brent Epperson (President) presented the item. Members had before them an Outline of Issue, a cover letter on Strategic Work Plan from President Epperson, and the GSA Board Strategic Work Plan 2013 – 2014, which had been previously distributed on 03 May 2013. In addition, Brent Epperson (President) noted the following:

- To provide Council with some background on the SWP, the work on it was done earlier this year than last year;
- He learned from the process last year, which speaks to the transition process for the newly-elected officials;
- The SWP results from a collaborative effort of the past and current Boards;
- The SWP is now more concise and contributes to a long-term vision beyond the rebuilding stage that the GSA has been in for the past few years; *and*
- There are no changes to the GSA Board's fundamental vision or mission.

There were no questions.

Brent Epperson (President) MOVED that the GSA Council, on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Board, receive for information the GSA Board Strategic Work Plan 2013 - 2014 as outlined in Item 7iii. SECONDED by Asif Siddiqui (CAL). No debate.

Motion PASSED, with one vote against.

8. Elections

i. Nominees for GSA Standing Committees: LRC and BFC

Members had before them a list of the nominees for the GSA Standing Committees LRC and BFC, which had been previously distributed on 07 May 2013. Michele Duval (Biological Sciences) presented the item:

- There were vacancies on two standing committees, one on BFC and one on the Nominating Committee;
- On the LRC, seven members are leaving and there were 4 nominations received by the deadline on May 10, 2013; *and*
- As per GSA policy, the candidates listed in the report are considered elected.

Qiang Li MOVED to ratify the nominees as listed in Item 8i. Asif Siddiqui SECONDED. No debate.

Motion PASSED unanimously.

9. Special Business

None.

10. President

i. President's Report:

Members had before them two written reports, one from 2012-2013 GSA President Ashlyn Bernier and one from 2013-2014 GSA President Brent Epperson, which had been distributed on 10 May 2013. In addition, Brent Epperson (President) showed Powerpoint slides (found electronically and in hard-copy with the minutes) and made the following comments:

- He has full confidence in this year's team;
- He also has confidence in the staff and in GSA management as the GSA is going forward and is about 80% through the rebuilding process;
- His goal is to make the GSA a consistently robust organization;
- The SWP is solid, even though the economic and political situations are currently unpredictable;
- He would like Council to mobilize, engage, and commit to helping the GSA and graduate students;

- His own priorities for the next year include moving the GSA forward through internal and external initiatives;
- Adequate and consistent prayer space is an issue that is being worked on;
- Academic bullying between students and faculty members is also being addressed;
- Permanent residence assistance for international students is an issue as there are limited services offered here. A lot more could be done and the GSA is with working with the SU and Administration;
- There may be benefits to having a provincial program instead of students going through the federal program, and the GSA will lobby the government to change the current practices;
- Other priorities include creating opportunities for graduate students, professional development, and funding matters;
- The GSA has already improved the Professional Development Grant process and child care grants, and negotiated for pay increases for AEGS through collective bargaining;
- Regarding professional development, he has spoken with Mazi Shirvani (Dean of FGSR) and will work with Advancement and Alumni Affairs to help graduate students once they leave university. He will work with Administration to help make this happen;
- Mobilization capacity is a big weakness for graduate students at the moment as they are not able to respond to government announcements very quickly;
- While the University of Alberta has more engaged graduate students than anywhere else in the province, the Department Liaison Initiative is underway to fill empty Council seats and ensure that Councillors communicate with the students in their departments about GSA initiatives;
- There had been a coalition of constituencies in the past, where groups met regularly, but this stopped. The GSA revived it last year and will be meeting regularly with the SU president to work together on issues;
- In terms of external representation, he would like to strengthen AGC and stop the ups and downs of that organization; Hasin Haroon (VPSL) is also on that committee and Monty Bal (VPL) is the policy researcher for AGC;
- He would like to make AGC as effective as possible in representing graduate students to the government and to the public;
- He was at GU15 last month in Vancouver with Ellen Schoeck (Executive Director) and was able to talk about best practices happening elsewhere and share knowledge, not just for lobbying but for broader initiatives; *and*
- The GSA is looking at joining CASA as it doesn't currently have a federal voice. There is no ministry of higher education in Canada, but that may change and it will be important to have a voice in Ottawa.

Jean-David Jutras (Oncology) asked: What is the definition of academic bullying?

Prepared by C Thomas and C Borstad for GSA Council 17 June 2013

Brent Epperson (President) responded: An example would be one graduate student misrepresenting facts for an exam so that the other person would fail. Or if an international graduate student is unaware of immigration rules and labour laws and has a disagreement with their supervisor about work hours. If the supervisor threatens them with deportation, that's an example of academic bullying.

- ii. **GSA Board**
Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 10 May 2013. The report stood as submitted.
- iii. **Budget and Finance Committee**
No meetings this reporting period.
- iv. **Governance Committee**
No meetings this reporting period.
- v. **Nominating Committee**
Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 10 May 2013. The report stood as submitted.

11. Vice-President Academic

i. Vice-President Academic's Report

Members had before them two written reports, one from 2012-2013 VPA Nathan Andrews and one from 2013-2014 VPA Colin More, which had been distributed on 10 May 2013. In addition, Colin More (Vice-President Academic) showed Powerpoint slides (found electronically and in hard copy with the minutes) and made the following comments:

- His personal goals and priorities for the next year include professional development, as few graduate students stay in academia, and the development of soft skills for working with industry and non-profits;
- Mental health is another priority, as there are stresses associated with being a graduate student. He would like to improve the specificity of services to graduate students;
- Another priority is student-supervisor relationships, including the issue of academic bullying. There can be many reasons for problems, such as unclear expectations, and there is a task force looking at this right now; *and*
- The provincial budget is in his portfolio, as well.

Qiang Li (Chemical and Materials Engineering) asked: Where would you like to increase opportunities in professional development, like co-ops?

Colin More (Vice-President Academic) responded: Everything is on the table and we are working with Advancement and FGSR.

Qiang Li (Chemical and Materials Engineering), supplementary: Do you have any ideas on how to make these things happen?

Colin More (Vice-President Academic) responded: And embedded certificate might be one option. There are a lot of ideas out there.

12. Vice-President Student Services

i. Vice-President Student Services' Report

Members had before them two written reports, one from 2012-2013 VPSS Naseeb Adnan and one from 2013-2014 VPSS Megha Bajaj, which had been distributed on 10 May 2013. In addition, Megha Bajaj (Vice-President Student Services) showed Powerpoint slides (found electronically and in hard copy with the minutes) and made the following comments:

- Her priorities this year include the Department Liaison Initiative and she is working with Hasin Haroon (Vice-President Student Services) on this;
- It will take a lot of time and staff and management support;
- She wants to go to different departments and talk to graduate students about GSA services and to fill vacant councillor positions;
- Another goal is to educate students about the Collective Agreement and to help them understand that it is a legally-binding document;
- She will also be involved with departmental orientations and visit departments throughout the year;
- She will work on the professional development program with Colin More (Vice-President Academic), the Office of Advancement, CaPS, and Alumni Affairs;
- There is a need for a diversified program to cater to all faculties;
- Another priority is to improve services for students living in residence, the renovation in Michener Park, seek better maintenance for all residences, and work more closely with residence students' associations, in addition to her portfolio and assigned committee work; *and*
- Councillors were reminded about the deadline for re-registration as a student group. An email had been sent out on Friday to Council about this and Katie Waterhouse is present at Council to answer questions about this.

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

Prepared by C Thomas and C Borstad for GSA Council 17 June 2013

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

13. Vice-President Student Life

i. Vice-President Student Life's Report

Members had before them two written reports, one from 2012-2013 VPSL Huimin Zhong and one from 2013-2014 VPSL Hasin Haroon, which had been distributed on 10 May 2013. In addition, Hasin Haroon (Vice-President Student Life) showed Powerpoint slides (found electronically and in hard copy with the minutes) and made the following comments:

- One of his priorities involves external representation, and he is on the AGC with Brent Epperson (President);
- He will also be involved with the Department Liaison Initiative with Megha Bajaj (Vice-President Student Services);
- His portfolio covers residences and the renovations;
- He would like to negotiate flexible leases for graduate students in their final year of study;
- He will be involved with orientations and awards, and recently presented at the MACT spring orientation; *and*
- He is also concerned with international residency issues and the availability of prayer space on campus.

Jean-David Jutras (Oncology) asked: Was it your supervisor who did research for Syncrude about the ducks in the tailings pond and they got away without have to pay their fine?

Hasin Haroon (Vice-President Student Life): No. There are duck deterrents, though, but they sometimes don't work.

ii. Awards Selection Committee

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

14. Vice-President Labour

i. Vice-President Labour's Report

Members had before them two written reports, one from 2012-2013 VPL Brent Epperson and one from 2013-2014 VPL Simarjit (Monty) Bal, which had been distributed on 10 May 2013. In addition, Simarjit (Monty) Bal (Vice-President Labour) showed Powerpoint slides (found electronically and in hard copy with the minutes) and made the following comments:

- He is the former AGC policy researcher;

- His priorities include the new Collective Agreement roll out and education of key stakeholders about the CA, including the department Chairs, graduate coordinators, and possibly the Provost's office;
- He would like to make sure that everyone knows this is a legally binding Agreement;
- He has been working with Jay Spark and Susan Bushdrueker;
- Joint presentations to various faculties are planned for later on;
- He is also monitoring issues that may arise out of cuts to RA and TA funding and requested that Councillors inform the GSA of any issues right away;
- Also has LRC work planned, using the data collected on tuition and funding to prepare for next year's Agreement and to monitor the effects of this year's Agreement; *and*
- He is responsible for representing students with labour issues and would like to track patterns that may develop as a result of the budget cuts.

Roy Coulthard (Senator) asked: Would you say that your brief and to-the-point report is genuinely shorter than President Epperson's report?

Simarjit (Monty) Bal responded: I think my presentation was a lot shorter. Yes, Brent's was longer.

ii. Negotiating Committee

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

iii. Labour Relations Committee

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

15. Senator

i. Senator's Report

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

- Senate plenary was two weeks ago and the public members of Senate have written a letter to the Premier and the Minister of Enterprise and Advance Education expressing their concerns about the budget cuts. This letter was signed by the public members only. There was also a fiery presentation from President Samarasekara on her perspective about the budget. She had stated that there were untruths spread by the government about the budget, and this response also showed up on her blog at Change@ualberta.ca. If you are interested in Alberta and education, you might want to encourage the students in your department to share it around
and

- There is a Senate task force about interacting with Alberta communities. He will keep Council updated about this.

16. Speaker

i. Speaker's Report

No report was required at this time.

17. Chief Returning Officer

i. Chief Returning Officer's Report

Members had before then a written report, which had been distributed on 10 May 2013. The report stood as submitted.

ii. Elections and Referenda Committee

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

18. GSA Management

i. Executive Director's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 10 May 2013. The report stood as submitted.

In addition, Ellen Schoeck (Executive Director) noted the following:

- There are many transitions occurring at the GSA right now, including with the newly-elected officials;
- Heather Hogg (Director of Operations) has reduced work time to 3 days a week and Courtney Thomas (Associate Director) is learning new parts of the job;
- Katie Waterhouse (Department Liaison Initiative) was introduced to Council;
- The GSA would be hiring another position this summer;
- Mikaela Ediger (Researcher) will be taking over Courtney Borstad's Communication Assistant and Council Support position at the end of May; *and*
- There are Budget 101 and Grants 101 presentations available for information. Councillors are encouraged to contact Ellen to see these.

Item 18.5 – Agenda Amendment

Brent Epperson (President) **MOVED** that a special meeting of GSA Council be held on May 21, 2013 in order to discuss the draft budget principles that were released on May 10, 2013. **SECONDED** by Asif Siddiqui (CAL).

Zhen Li (Chemistry) asked: Is this the only time we would be able to give input into the draft budget principles?

Brent Epperson (President) responded: Yes.

Motion PASSED unanimously.

Question Period

19. Written Questions

No written questions were received prior to the meeting.

20. Oral Questions

Lena Saleh (Political Science) asked: What time will the special Council meeting be?

Brent Epperson (President) responded: Same time as usual, 6:00 pm.

Megha Bajaj (Vice-President Student Services) announced that the deadline for student group re-registration is actually June 1, 2013 and not June 30, 2013, as she had previously announced.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 pm.

Meeting Minutes
21 May 2013
GSA Special 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.

OPEN SESSION

1. Roll Call

2. Approval of the 21 May 2013 Agenda

Members had before them the 21 May 2013 Consolidated Agenda, which had been distributed on 16 May 2013.

The Agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

CLOSED SESSION

3. University of Alberta's Draft Budget Principles: Discussion

Brent Epperson (President) presented the item. Members had before them the University's Draft Budget Principles and the amended 2013 CIP with budget, the online links for which had been previously distributed on 13 May 2013 and 16 May 2013, respectively.

Asif Siddiqui (Councillor-at-Large) MOVED to go into closed session. SECONDED by Brent Epperson (President). Motion PASSED unanimously.

Hasin Haroon (Vice-President Student Life) MOVED to go into open session. SECONDED by Colin More (Vice-President Academic). Motion PASSED unanimously.

OPEN SESSION

4. Graduate Student Consultation on the Draft Budget Principles

Brent Epperson (President) introduced the guest, Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic), and presented the item. During the presentation, Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) made the following points:

- He would like to talk about where the Administration is going with the budget and about the Budget Principles put on the Colloquy website by Indira Samarasekara (University President). These came out of the Board retreat in April 2013;

Prepared by C Borstad, M Ediger, and C Thomas, 21 May 2013

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- These are a set of Principles for going forward for this year and in the subsequent three years as we work through the budget process;
- In the Draft Budget Principles posting, Indira Samarasekara (University President) indicated that we want to take it through a bi-cameral government process; for this, we need to get feedback from the student associations and other parties;
- Ultimately, Brent Epperson (President) will represent the GSA at a Board meeting about the decision to adopt these principles;
- To give Council a sense of our thinking, this is a messy situation. This Board meeting is on June 3, 2013 in the morning and the BFPC meets in the afternoon the same day;
- In order to finish before the summer, we are doing two things: we are putting the CIP up on the website. This is the Comprehensive Institutional Plan with the budget portion along with the Draft Budget Principles, but the problem is that the Draft Budget Principles will have been voted by the Board before BFPC;
- We will remove the Draft Budget Principles and separate them from the CIP;
- GSA Council's feedback will go to the June 21, 2013 Board meeting where your President (Brent Epperson) will vote;
- He would like to hear your feedback and your comments about the Budget Principles, but ultimately, Brent Epperson (President) will represent graduate student view formally at the Board meeting; *and*
- Council is invited to say what it thinks about the Principles and about any suggested revisions.

The floor was then opened to questions.

Brent Epperson (President) asked: You cut \$2.5 million from the scholarship budget and you say that you hope to make that up with endowments. In another part you say there will be only a modest growth in endowments. That seems to conflict. Could you provide some clarification, please?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: There is quite a substantial amount of money leading to fewer outcomes. Given the immediate pressure we are under, we want to encourage the Office of Advancement to try and obtain cash to directly use for studentships in the next 4 years. This is a band-aid solution with a view to them correcting the issue and making a longer term solution. The best way the community can help the U of A now is to provide funding to support our students.

Prepared by C Borstad, M Ediger, and C Thomas, 21 May 2013

Brent Epperson (President) supplementary: I agree we need to encourage the Office of Advancement to get endowment money and encourage the community to support student, but I worry about the message this sends to government Endowments can't make up for the cuts in the budget; that's not going to make up for the loss we have here. I hear from MLAs that endowment money should be sought. How would you feel about making the impact of the provincial funding cuts clearer in the document?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: There was a similar comment in the Chairs Council today that if the government may get the picture that the cuts are not that bad. We are removing things near and dear to us and we need to communicate to the government that their budget is a damaging one without giving the idea across the country that the U of A is a damaged institution. It's a tricky balance. These principles make it clear we want to be seen as a leading institution but that we are also trying to cope with a massive cut in our budget.

Colin More (Vice-President Academic) asked: How are you dealing with this 3 year time period? In the CIP, it says that from 2014-2016 there will be academic program cuts, but you don't know what those will be. When will you know?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: This involves the time frame for vertical or program cuts. When you look at the Collective Agreement that defines the process for closing a program and when you put a time frame on that, it looks like it takes from 1 year to 18 months to get approval to close and another 1 year to 18 months to generate savings that would actually affect the budget. This is a long time to do what we need to do. This rule, or Article 32, came into effect in the 1990s during the provincial budget cuts in order to create a barrier to program closures. Now, we are facing the consequences and are suffering from the lack of agility in these aspects. This is one of our biggest barriers, this Article 32. If the barriers are almost insurmountable, we are left with across-the-board cuts of 3.5 - 4.5% per year. That means removing what we took out this year again the next year and the year after that. As soon as we close a program, we initiate Article 32. It's not easy for me to give you a straightforward answer. We are going to initiate a planning process to work with the faculties to identify areas that we may be able to cut. What we need is a way of doing that kind of evaluation. We are bringing in independent, objective visiting committees in the fall to

identify where our strengths and weaknesses are. Whatever we do, it will involve a large amount of engagement.

Colin More (Vice-President Academic) supplementary: It takes three years just to get permission to cut a program. In the past, you have still had to wait for students to exit the program, which takes 3 to 6 more years after that. How would that result in cost savings?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: That's the problem. Some students will not take that long to complete, while some will be able to transfer to other programs. Some students may be participating in the program for only 2 years. We are getting legal advice on this, and even to suspend admission to a program may require you to go through that 18 month process similar to closing a program. We can thank our forebears for Article 32.

Andy Rathbone (Educational Policy Studies) asked: Regarding institutional identity, the Campus Alberta idea seems to be a tactic by the government to threaten individual institutional identity. How are other institutions working together?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: There is already cooperation with back-of-house operations and on a collaborative basis like with capital projects. With CCIS and the Edmonton Clinic Health Academy, we have a good track record for capital projects. Other less experienced institutions have limitations to delivering their capital projects on time and on budget and we are offering our expertise on these projects and with less risk. This is an example of one of the many ways where we are actively involved in the back-of-house operations like Campus Alberta. We already work extensively collaboratively already. There is also the situation where two years of learning are done at one institution and then the last two years are finished at the U of A. The government is not familiar with all the things we are already doing. The quote was something like twenty-six individual silos working in their own world, but that's not true. This is not a new concept. The identity branding concept you mentioned, what about getting to the point where we call ourselves Campus Alberta at the U of A. A student that goes to Yale is not someone who is likely to consider going to a smaller institution. Internationally, the U of A is important to the international students who come here. Some of the 26 post-secondary institutions don't feel that strongly about international reputation. Olds College and Red Deer College created Campus Alberta Central and there's a

website where they are pitching themselves. From the U of A standpoint, we are very clear that it would be very damaging to get lost in that Campus Alberta model.

Andy Rathbone (Educational Policy Studies) supplementary: To what extent is the U of A working with other institutions to create a unified case to the government about the budget?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: The university presidents met recently and the meeting went extremely well. They have created a President's Council to work together regularly. The next meeting is on May 28 next week and the plan is to take that to the next step. There will be a number of meetings the minister will call along with the presidents and students groups. I think the executive team needs to be present, as well, in the form of the provosts. The missing piece is the executive leadership of those institutions.

Simarjit (Monty) Bal (Vice-President Labour) asked: You spoke about international reputation and the CIP cost recovery program in terms of taught masters courses. What I'm worried about is that we are too optimistic about the cost recovery possible with those courses. If you are doing research, you come here for the excellent researchers to work with. With a taught masters you come for the academic reputation of the institution. How will we deal if the University's ranking is going down and tuition is going up?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: When we discuss tuition with the taught masters, it's a market-driven tuition. For the MBA program at the U of A, the tuition level is substantially lower than with comparable institutions in Canada. The government has not allowed us to increase it substantially. There were constraints we faced around that. With a business school at the graduate level, it's an extremely strong school yet we have this very, very inexpensive MBA. The reputation of some business schools is based on the MBA program size and the salary increase the student expects to get when they graduate. One of the challenges in Alberta is that MBA students are already entering the program with a high salary and the resulting differential is small. Under-ranking results from this. Secondly, our tuition looks like we are cheap and nasty and we are not allowed to change that. Our program is, by a factor of 3 or 4, lower than other institutions. One of the things we need to negotiate with the government is to set taught masters tuition at a market level. In this case, this is not newly graduated students entering the MBA program. We are talking about professionals coming to the U of A to improve their skills. The way you market yourself internationally is critical. We can market by faculty or by department, rather than just going

Prepared by C Borstad, M Ediger, and C Thomas, 21 May 2013

with the global U of A ranking. This ranking is based upon calling people up and asking them what they think about the U of A. There is the impact of the budget cuts on perceptions of the U of A and unanticipated damage from cuts. We had worked hard to pull up through the rankings and then we dropped back down. That work has been undone and that is not understood.

Simarjit (Monty) Bal (Vice-President Labour) supplementary: What implications would marketing by faculty have on funding? If we feed our strengths and cut the weak programs?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: Different faculties will have different ways and opportunities. For example, with the health sciences faculties there may be benefits to workshop-type programs. There has been the impact of an aging and sick population increase, but the workforce needed to care for those people has varied widely from year to year. Other faculties do have the potential for focused programs. Business, engineering, and other science departments can make the case for taught masters programs. Even faculties like Native Studies have the opportunity to offer a taught masters. I think we can improve our economic situation. Will there be winners and losers? Probably, but if one faculty that wins in the taught masters game, another wins in another area. We need to protect diversity at the end of the day.

Megha Bajaj (Vice-President Student Services) asked: About the graduate tuition increase, the CIP mentions that there will be market modifiers and a tuition increase. What should we expect from that?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: Market modifiers are applied where we believe there is evidence to increase the tuition to the market level. Whereas, a tuition increase would be applied across the board. When we propose a market modifier, we take into account that we would have to take tuition and tuition increases into account. If you do the market modifier one year and then a tuition increase the next year, you are more likely to get the double whammy. We are speculating about the concept of doing that because our graduate tuition is lower than undergraduate tuition and also on the lower end of the U15 spectrum. This is an area of revenue. If we went to the government today to increase tuition, they would say no. Tuition is only one part of the bundle of costs for students and institutions. There is also accommodation, food, and other living costs. What is the U of A's bundle of costs, including commuter costs, relative to other institutions? Ashlyn Bernier, Phyllis

Prepared by C Borstad, M Ediger, and C Thomas, 21 May 2013

Clark, and others have been working up an assessment of what that bundle costs. We will bring an assessment of that bundle and make a case to the government for increasing tuition.

Megha Bajaj (Vice-President Student Services) supplementary: We are really concerned about tuition and we want the institution to realize that and work together with us.

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: We are working to revamp our programs, we are still committed to doing that. By the end of June, we hope to have a draft proposal of what changes to graduate programs should look like. We want a much more graduate student intensive U of A, even by taking FLEs from undergraduates to graduate students.

Hasin Haroon (Vice-President Student Life) asked: The CIP mentions an increased in the price and volume of unregulated tuition. We've been hearing about increases to graduate tuition. Any ideas on how much that would be and how they would be implemented?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: We haven't done that yet. We are waiting for the bundle discussion to be complete and the other way is to work with the University of Calgary and the University of Lethbridge. They are discussing tuition increases for graduate students, as well. The factor is the tolerance of the government to tuition increases and they aren't tolerant right now.

Hasin Haroon (Vice-President Student Life) supplementary: Would they be grandfathered in?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: I can't give a definitive answer. We would like to grandfather them in and historically we have done that. I can't give you a direct answer for those reasons. We are sympathetic to the increased costs for students as well as for supervisors. What we hear from the Chairs and faculty members are concerns about costs when there is no new funding available.

Lena Saleh (Political Science) asked: With a potential increase to graduate tuition, in terms of increases, is the Administration taking into account undergraduate tuition, as well, and distributing the impact more fairly?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: Undergraduate tuition is well-regulated and usually tied to a cost of living index. In December or January, the government gave us a 2.15% index and then tuitions was frozen. What they've done is given us one-time money to offset the impact of not implementing this tuition increase; we won't get this next year. Next year, if there's any coupling between graduate and undergraduate tuition, its only through the cost of living increase. We would have to make a special case to the government to do that.

Lena Saleh (Political Science) supplementary: Is the University lobbying the government for more freedom with determining undergraduate tuition, as well?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: Yes, we are looking at the PSLA and opening it up. With the full load equivalent or FLE, each undergraduate student has a FLE count ranging from nominal to a higher FLE count. We get reimbursed a certain number of dollars per FLE. We are looking at alternative funding models to allow more flexibility. With opening up the PSLA, it was last opened in 2008, and we need more flexibility for the economic reality now.

Susan Cake (Sociology) asked: In the CIP, it appears that Collective Agreements are in jeopardy. Will the GSA have a more difficult year with negotiations? There are a lot of cuts that would be tied to different salaries and things like dental benefits that we would negotiate on. What keeps the Administration from saying, 'we don't have any money; what do you expect?'

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: Negotiations with NASA are based upon an agreement for sometime in 2014. We are anticipating that it will take 6 months to go through that discussion and the decision will be implemented in 2015. There is no doubt that negotiations with AASUA will reflect on the GSA's negotiations, but they are not linked. The GSA should not need to negotiate differently. Benefits are one of the cost inflators, and pensions are another. Another is merit, which doesn't enter into the GSA discussion and neither do pensions, as far as I'm aware. Benefits and salaries are GSA items, but they are linked by the pressure of the moment rather than the formal agreement between any set of associations. For the GSA to negotiate beyond zero if AASUA doesn't, you will have to make a compelling case against the pressure of the moment.

Susan Cake (Sociology) supplementary: Would we not be one of the first associations to go into negotiations next year? Wouldn't the Administration make us a case and claw back?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: It's not something we would do. We wouldn't start with the graduate students to make a case with the other associations.

Michele Duval (Biological Sciences) asked: In regards to the programs you deem are in market demand and qualify for a market modifier, can you speak to how you will assess which programs are in demand? Are you going to go through every program?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: We have a pretty good idea which programs across the U15 have a market modifier on them and we would do a comparison. It's pretty accurate to say a significant majority of graduate courses and programs are not close enough to tweak them up a bit. We already know which ones we feel we are below market on. We have submitted a number of these market-modifier proposals to government that were rejected in the past. We would probably go back with these same programs and try again. It's not a long process; it's something we can come up with in a month or so.

Amanda Lim (English and Film Studies) asked: With tuition, one of the budget principles involves the ratio of graduate to undergraduate students and the GSA is opposed to an across-the-board tuition increase. How willing is the Administration to work with the various associations?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: If you believe that you should have a completely open and unconstrained studentship package that is offered to students where the minimum amount of money is unspecified and you allow that amount to float, then what we end up with a difficult to manage situation. That also makes understanding tuition equally difficult. If we do what the other leading programs in Canada do, like Waterloo, Toronto, and UBC, they offer \$21,000 per year for four years. If you have that figure in your mind, you can move other things around. That's why we are talking about this as a bundle instead of as discrete parts. We need to get that piece of the understanding squared away. Talking to the Chairs today, they are cautious about Central Administration getting in the way of the minimum amount of funding that they think grad students should get. They are advocating

Prepared by C Borstad, M Ediger, and C Thomas, 21 May 2013

for us to just leave them alone. If we can have something more orderly, we can manage tuition in a more transparent way. Complicating the picture is TA-ships. The decoupling of that funding from the needs of undergraduate students is almost impossible. In this document, we propose creating teaching support funding. Then there's another level where teaching assistantships provide graduate students with strategic learning experiences. This is actually important skill development. RA-ships would be for those students are active in labs to support their work in that environment. When you have those categories in place and the dollar amounts around them, then we can have a better discussion about funding.

Zhen Lei (CAL) asked: One concern in the Civil Engineering department, with international students, is that they are already suffering from tuition costs. Masters students are paid \$1500 per month and tuition is \$1000. They only have \$500 left over and rely on part-time jobs and sacrifice their study time. If tuition increases, there will be more trouble. Some have already switched from full-time to part-time studies and have families. How will we deal with a tuition increase?

Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) responded: It's a situation where we have underfunded graduate students who spend an inordinate amount of time earning money in unrelated areas, and take longer to finish. Some don't finish and get distracted, as you say. Underfunded students are not good for a high level institution. The level of external funding we bring in is very low and is variable by faculty. Some rely almost completely on external funding, and some rely on internal base funding. What I'm trying to do is look at a model that creates an acceptable level of funding and a challenge to supervisors to match that funding. It should be able to judge costs that so that it would be a sustainable experience. One of the things we will be looking at with this model is evidence of acceptable completion times. We have huge variations between faculties. Long completions are not good for students.

There were no further questions.

Brent Epperson (President) expressed thanks to Martin Ferguson-Pell (Acting Provost and Vice-President Academic) for coming to Council and answering questions. In addition, Brent Epperson (President) stated:

- The issue of tuition had come up in a lot of questions this meeting and is an important issue for graduate students;

- The coming months are important. In June, the AGC will be coming up with a lobbying position;
- It is in the best interests of the Administration and the GSA to coordinate and come to a common position to take to government. They will try to do that in the coming months;
- He will be meeting Phyllis Clark, along with Colin More (Vice-President Academic) and Monty Bal (Vice-President Labour);
- He would like to get as much input as possible from graduate students, have Martin Ferguson-Pell come to GSA Boards, and get input from other departments to ensure representativeness; *and*
- There are differences of opinion between the ministry, the administration, and the GSA, but these are not irreconcilable.

For Information

5. GSA Governance Committee Report: GSA GC Approved Editorial Changes to Bylaw and Policy

Brent Epperson (President) presented the item for information only. Members had before them a letter from Ellen Schoeck (Executive Director) to GSA Governance Committee, date May 14, 2013, which had been previously distributed on 16 May 2013. The report stood as submitted.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:39 pm.

**GSA President
Report to Council**

To: GSA Council
From: Brent Epperson, GSA President
Date: June 13, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

The following is a summary of the meetings I attended during the previous reporting period:

May 13:

Meeting with Dean Schaeffer:

I attended a lunch meeting with Dean Schaeffer, as well as the GSA VPA Colin More and VPL Monty Bal. **We discussed the recent cut to the TA/RA budget in the Faculty of Science.** We were reassured by Dean Schaeffer's affirmation that there would be no direct consequences for current and already admitted graduate students; however, we remain concerned about indirect consequences (staff cuts, travel funds, etc.) and the fact that the size of the graduate programs in Science will likely shrink as a result of this reduction to TA/RA funding.

Meeting with Dean Shirvani:

I met with Dean Shirvani and GSA VPA Colin More to **discuss GSA concerns about TA/RA finding cuts in Arts and Science, FGSR delegations of authority to faculties, a new registration status to assure access to services for graduate students on FGSR approved leaves of absence,** and to invite Dean Shirvani to June Council to discuss FGSR delegations to faculties.

May 14:

Meeting with Dean Cormack:

I attended the meeting with Dean Cormack, as well as the GSA VPA Colin More and VPL Monty Bal. **We discussed the recent cut to the TA/RA budget in the Faculty of Arts,** especially the complaints the GSA received from SSHRC award winners in several departments who had been asked by their departments to take an earlier award date in order to save RA money. From the GSA perspective, this practice seems to punish excellence. We had a candid conversation and the Dean agreed to contact us after consulting with department chairs, at which point she may send a faculty-wide letter indicating that the Faculty of Arts would keep its existing commitments.

May 15:

Meeting with Provost Carl Amrhein:

I met with Provost Carl Amrhein, who is currently on leave, to discuss his work at the Conference Board of Canada as well the **GSA's objectives for the year.**

FGSR Council:

I attended FGSR Council with GSA VPA Colin More and VPL Monty Bal. After having participated in the Working Group on Quality Measures (WGQM) and extensive consultation with Dean Shirvani as well as with the current and previous GSA Boards, the **GSA voted in support of the FGSR delegations to faculties and the WGQM document.**

May 21:Meeting with Bill Connor

GSA VPA Colin More and I met with Bill Connor to discuss **the possibility of a Fall Reading Week**, which the SU has proposed. The GSA agreed to discuss the matter in the next GSA Board and explained that we were anticipating a presentation on the issue from the SU.

May 22:GFC APC:

I attended GFC APC, **where I voted in favour of an SU amendment to the CIP, re-adding the term “non-permanent” to the CoSSS fee.** The amendment failed. I abstained on the CIP vote because of the uncertainty surrounding graduate student tuition, market modifiers, and mandatory non-instructional fees. The GSA does not yet have enough information on these matters to support or oppose the CIP.

UTAC Reception:

I attended the UTAC reception on behalf of the GSA. **The awards recognized professors and lecturers for excellence in teaching.**

May 23:Associations Coalition

I attended the Associations Coalition meeting with GSA VPA Colin More, GSA VPL Monty Bal, GSA ED Ellen Schoeck, and the leaders of the SU, and NASA. The AAS:UA and PDFA missed the meeting because of a schedule mix up, but we shared the meeting minutes with them and had follow-up discussions. At the meeting, we primarily **discussed the possibility of a public advocacy campaign and the associations’ concerns related to the budget cuts.**

May 27:Meeting with Provost Carl Amrhein:

I met with Provost Carl Amrhein, who is currently on leave, to continue our discussion on his work at the Conference Board of Canada as well the **GSA’s objectives for the year.**

May 28:Meeting with Karen Wichuk, University Relations:

GSA VPA Colin More, GSA DO Heather Hogg, and I met with Karen Wichuk to discuss **areas of possible cooperation for the year.**

Board Learning and Development Committee (BLDC):

At BLDC, I expressed concern that the glowing review of the Faculty of Engineering does not measure compliance with the GSA’s Collective Agreement with the university. I affirmed that this should be part of future faculty reviews. **I explained that I planned to abstain on the CIP vote because of the uncertainty surrounding graduate student tuition, market modifiers, and mandatory non-instructional fees. The GSA does not yet have information on these matters to support or oppose the CIP.** As a Board Member, I explained that, in my view, instead of considering across-the-board tuition increases for graduate students that essentially individualize responsibility for education, university administrations, boards of governors, and student associations should

unite to demand that public funds be recommitted to the PSE sector, working together on a province-wide advocacy campaign to support our post-secondary institutions.

Board Finance and Property Committee (BFPC)

At BFPC, I abstained on the CIP vote for the reasons cited directly above. I explained that I planned to abstain on the CIP vote at Board the following week for these same reasons.

May 29:

Meeting with Dean Shirvani:

GSA VPA Colin More and I met with Dean Shirvani. We discussed GSA concerns about TA/RA finding cuts in Arts and Science, FGSR delegations to faculties, and the near completion of a new registration status to assure access to services for graduate students on FGSR approved leaves of absence. We also **confirmed that Dean Shirvani would attend June GSA Council to discuss FGSR delegations to faculties.**

Athabasca University GSA dinner:

I attended an AGC dinner with GSA VPSL Hasin Haroon, AUGSA President Amanda Nielsen, and AUGSA VPE. **We discussed PSE cuts, university responses (including possible tuition and fee increases) and our views on the appropriate AGC response.** We also discussed our differences on lobbying policy and came to a tentative compromise agreement that would require subsequent discussion in GSA Boards and at AGC transition.

May 30:

Meeting with Doug Goss, Board of Governors Chair:

I met with Doug Goss to discuss GSA objectives for the year, as well as **GSA concerns over tuition increases, mandatory non-instructional fees, and market modifiers.** He seemed understanding of the points I raised and expressed support but the dialogue continues.

Meeting with VP Finance Phyllis Clark:

I met with VP Phyllis Clark, AVP Philip Stack, members of their team, GSA VPA Colin More, VPL Monty Bal, and GSA AD Courtney Thomas. We **discussed the University's dire budget situation and the commitment of VP Phyllis Clark to pursue all avenues of revenue generation, including across-the-board tuition increases for graduate students, market modifiers, and mandatory non-instructional fees.** The GSA expressed concerns about these plans and explained that we would have to consult with our members and colleagues in AGC as the GSA develops our policy position on these matters.

Tuition Budget Advisory Committee (TBAC) and Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees Advisory Committee (MBAC):

I attended TBAC/MBAC with GSA VPA Colin More and GSA AD Courtney Thomas. The first half of the meeting largely repeated the earlier discussion with VP Academic Phyllis Clark, except the SU also attended. **On behalf of the 5 constituencies, the SU and GSA collectively raised concerns about access to information in budgetary decisions.** The administration agreed to take our comments under consideration and reply in the coming weeks.

May 31:

Board University Relations Committee (BURC):

I attended BURC, where I explained that I planned to abstain on the CIP vote at Board the following week because of uncertainty about graduate student tuition, market modifiers, and mandatory non-instructional fees.

June 3:

Board of Governors:

While attending an academic conference out of town, I participated in the Board of Governors meeting via conference call after Skype failed. There were some technological problems and I was not able to hear all of the dialogue. I abstained on the CIP vote because of uncertainty about graduate student tuition, market modifiers, and mandatory non-instructional fees. I am not inclined to support across-the-board tuition increases for reasons I will address in GSA Council; however, the position that the GSA takes on tuition, market modifiers, and mandatory non-instructional fees will depend on our consultations with graduate students across campus and within AGC.

Closed Session Remarks:

The GSA's relationships with our partner constituencies, the university administration, the AGC, and the Government of Alberta:

- We can neither be all things to all people nor fight battles on too many fronts;
- Informed and principled policy development based on consultation.

Respectfully submitted,
Brent Epperson

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between May 8, 2013 and June 12, 2013:

May 9	Meeting with Dean Shirvani
May 9	Tuition and Funding Data Committee Meeting
May 9	Board of Governors Recognition Dinner
May 10	Board of Governors
May 10	Attributes and Competencies Co-chairs
May 13	M-BAC/T-BAC
May 13	Lunch with Dean Schaeffer
May 13	Meeting with Dean Shirvani
May 13	GSA Council
May 14	Meeting with Dean Cormack
May 15	Meeting with Provost Carl Amrhein
May 15	GSA Board
May 21	Meeting with Vice-Provost Bill Connor re Fall Reading Week
May 21	GSA Council
May 22	GSA Board
May 22	GFC APC
May 22	UTAC Reception
May 23	Associations Coalition
May 28	Meeting with Associate Vice-President Karen Wichuk
May 28	BLDC/BFPC
May 29	Meeting with Dean Shirvani
May 29	GSA Board
May 30	Meeting with Board Chair Doug Goss

May 30	Meeting with Vice-President Finance and Administration Phyllis Clark
May 30	T-BAC/M-BAC
May 31	BURC
June 3	Board of Governors

**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: June 11, 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.

08 May, 2013 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Allocation of GSSF Fund Rolling Opening Balance; GSA Policy on Academically-Related Student Group Awards; Delegation of Decision-Making to Departments and Faculties; PC Leaders Dinner; GFC Exec; URI Advisory; *and* a labour issue.

Motions and Agreements:

BE **MOVED** that the GSA Board **approve** an allocation of \$60K **from** the \$89K rolling opening balance **to** the PDA and \$29K to the Childcare Grant. Seconded by HaH. **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

BE **MOVED** that the GSA Board **approve** the use of \$11,166.60 from the PDA Contingency Fund to pay out PDA applications in the current granting period. Seconded MeB. **CARRIED** unanimously.

BE **MOVED** that the GSA Board **refer** the current policy on Academically-Related Student Group Awards to management for review and analysis, data collection, and next steps. Seconded MoB. **MOTION CARRIED** unanimously.

Board Members **AGREED** that BE would email Dean Shirvani today and meet with him tomorrow regarding adding an appeal amendment and reports back to FGSR to the FGSR delegation motion, and that the Board would consider further steps if overruled.

Board Members **AGREED** not to email the Minister prior to meetings with Deans.

15 May, 2013 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

FGSR Delegations; GSA policy on media and social media; audit; GSA Facebook page and Twitter account; percentage of educational costs paid by students in Alberta and Ontario; *and* meetings with Deans.

Motions and Agreements:

Board Members **AGREED** that they were in support of the FGSR delegation motions, and that BE would speak in favour and ask student representatives to support the motion.

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 GSA's media and social media presence for immediate inclusion in the GSA Board Policy Manual. Seconded MeB. **CARRIED**.

Board Members **AGREED** that the GSA social media presence should be business-like in nature, similar to the University and SU presences.

Board Members **AGREED** that the GSA twitter name would be UAlberta GSA.

Board Members **AGREED** that Casey create the GSA social media accounts/pages.

22 May, 2013 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Letter to President. Labour compliance and education; Fall Reading Week proposal; institutional budget and debrief of special Council meeting; *and* Graduate Student Tuition and Funding Data Committee.

Motions and Agreements:

BE **MOVED** that the GSA endorse the concept of a Fall Reading Week as an important step to improve mental health on campus. Seconded by MeB. **CARRIED** unanimously.

Board Members **AGREED** that town hall meetings to discuss the budget were a good idea in principle.

29 May, 2013 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Reports on meetings (APC, Dr. Amrhein, Dr. Shirvani, BLDC/BFPC); meeting with Karen Wichuk; E-USRI; presentation to Chinese delegation; Pharmacy issue meeting; *and* Friends of the U of A AGM.

Motions and Agreements:

No motions or agreements

**GSA Nominating Committee (NoC)
Report to Council for June 17, 2013 Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Lacey Fleming, Vice-Chair of the NoC
Date: June 12, 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) Budget and Finance Committee and LRC

With no additional nominations submitted from GSA Council, as of Friday May 10, 2013 at 12:00 PM (Noon), the following individuals were declared elected to the GSA Labour Relations Committee and the GSA Budget and Finance Committee:

BFC: Micaela Santiago (Nursing, GSA Councillor)

LRC: Susan Cake (Sociology, GSA Councillor), Cherene Griffiths (MBA), Hannah Madsen (Comparative Literature until Summer 2013; Fall 2013 Library and Information Studies), Michal Juhas (Psychiatry)

2) Judicial Committee

According to GSA Bylaw and Policy, Part VI, Judicial Committee, Composition: "The Judicial Committee shall be composed of eight (8) Councillors who are selected at random as members of the Committee at the outset of each semester."

The GSA NoC selected at random, the following Councillors to serve on the GSA Judicial Committee (**note that there is currently no pending business or cases for this committee**, but the Nominating Committee is fulfilling the bylaw requirement that Judicial Committee membership be selected each term at random):

Ravi Singh
Pengfei Wang
Amanda Lim
Reza Sabbagh
Daniel Stadnicki
Burkhard Ritter
Allison Hahn
Jennifer Braun

3) Governance Committee

An advertisement was sent to GSA Council on May 24, 2013 advertising the vacancy for two GSA members of Council on the GSA Governance Committee. **No nominations were received.** The GSA Nominating Committee continues to proactively search for representatives from Council to serve on this committee. With its current composition, there are **three** members from the Faculty of Arts, so the NoC is looking for representatives from other faculties.

GSA Council-Elected Officers

2013 GSA CRO, Speaker, and Deputies Election

An Early Call for these positions went out in mid-April. Nominations formally opened on May 1, 2013 and were open until May 30 at 12:00 (PM) (Noon). As per GSA Bylaw and Policy, the nominees were distributed to GSA Council, and Councillors were invited to make additional nominations. Additional nominations were accepted until June 6, 2013 at 12:00 PM (noon). One additional nomination was received for the position of Deputy Returning Officer.

Polling opened at 10:00 AM on Monday June 10, 2013 and closed at 10:00 AM on Wednesday June 12, 2013. The following are the official election results:

- **Speaker: Daniel Prins**
- **Deputy Speaker: Roy Coulthard**
- **Chief Returning Officer: Isaac Odoom**
- **Deputy Returning Officer: Esther Ekpe Adequyi**

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) Green and Gold Student Leadership and Professional Development Committee

According to the terms of reference of this committee, membership includes “two graduate students, one designated by the GSA, the second a graduate student at large appointed by the Dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (or designate). **Terms are one year (renewable once).**” In 2012, **Lisa Eisenbeis (MSc Experimental Medicine)** was elected to serve on this committee. The NoC elected her to serve a second term which will end May 30, 2014.

2) Faculty of Arts Academic and Grade Appeals Committee

The position for one graduate student from the Faculty of Arts on this committee was advertised in April (deadline for nominations was April 24, 2013). No nominations were received, so the GSA NoC carried out a proactive search. **Aly Koskela (MA English)** was elected to serve on this committee. Her term extends from May 1, 2013 – April 30, 2014.

3) Faculty of Arts Council

There are five positions on the Faculty of Arts Council for graduate students from the Faculty of Arts. These positions were advertised on May 21, 2013. Four individuals have expressed interest in the Council, and the NoC continues to proactively search for the fifth representative.

4) Faculty of Arts Library Committee

There is a position for one graduate student from the Faculty of Arts on this committee. The NoC elected **Michelle Borowitz (PhD Anthropology)** to serve a second term on this committee while will extend until May 31, 2014.

5) Faculty of Arts Research Committee/McCalla Professorship Committee

This position for one graduate student from the Faculty of Arts was advertised in the GSA Newsletter and website, and the GSA NoC received three very strong applications. **Angelia Wagner (PhD Political Science)** was elected to serve on this committee. Her term will extend from May 1, 2013 – April 30, 2014.

6) Health Centre Advisory Group

A position for one graduate student on this group was advertised in the GSA Newsletter and website on June 10, 2013. A total of 8 applications were received. The Nominating Committee continues to review the applications received.

6) University of Alberta Museums Policy and Planning Committee

There is a position for one graduate student on this committee. According to the committee's Terms of Reference, "members elected by the Graduate Students' Association...will serve a term of one year, beginning 1 July and ending the following 30 June...graduate students may serve to a maximum of three consecutive terms." The NoC elected **Maryna Chernyavska (Library and Information Studies)** to serve a second term on this committee, which will extend from July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014.

7) Residence Halls Association Council (one non-voting position)

Qiang Li (PhD Chemical and Materials Engineering) was elected to serve as the one non-voting GSA Representative on the Residence Halls Association Council. Qiang has served on this committee previously, and his term will extend until April 30, 2014.

**Vice-President Academic
Report to Council**

To: GSA Council
From: Colin More, VPA
Date: June 13, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

This has certainly been an exciting month for me! First, the items directly attached to my portfolio. **FGSR has decided to delegate certain powers to departments and faculties.** Most of these changes are innocuous, but you should be advised that the final approval for a doctoral examination committee now rests at the faculty level. Since these are the employers of the professors, this could present a conflict of interest. **The GSA feels the advantages of this move outweigh the risks, but the dean of FGSR, Dr. Mazi Shirvani, will be attending the June council meeting should you have any questions.**

FGSR has also completed a final report from its Working Group on Quality Measures. This document provides a strong framework on which departments can base their attempts at measuring progress in their strategic plans. In my opinion, it's really quite good.

However, the largest issue being dealt with at the GSA is the **university budget situation.** I don't think it's a secret that tuition increases in various forms, including a general increase for all grad students and/or market modifiers for specific programs, are desired by central administration. **We are holding forums for graduate students from all faculties in the coming weeks to get your perspective on the proposed changes. I encourage you to attend your faculty's session -- we genuinely want to hear your opinion!**

Finally, on a personal note, I just spent a week in New England after a conference. If your, er, "professional development" requirements include a spell of relaxation, I can recommend the beaches of northern Cape Cod. Otherwise, have a great month, and as always, don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions!

Cheers,

Colin More
GSA VP Academic 2013-2014

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between May 8, 2013 and June 12, 2013:

May 9	Tuition and Funding Data Committee Meeting
May 13	M-BAC/T-BAC
May 13	FGSR Caucus
May 13	Meeting with Dean Schaeffer
May 13	Meeting with Dean Shirvani
May 13	GSA Council

May 14	Associations Coalition
May 15	Meeting with Student
May 15	GSA Board
May 15	FGSR Council
May 16	GFC ASC
May 21	Meeting with D Chelen and S Dew
May 21	GSA Council
May 22	GSA Board
May 29	Meeting with Dean Shirvani
May 29	GSA Board
May 30	Meeting with Phyllis Clark, Vice-President Finance and Administration
May 30	T-BAC/M-BAC

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

To: GSA Council
From: Megha Bajaj, VPSS
Date: June 12, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

I attended a number of meetings this month. Below are the important points from the meetings:

89th Avenue Residence Tour and Meeting:

Expected move in dates are from September 1st onwards. The GSA wants to ensure the units have reached “substantial completion” by August 1st week to ensure that the basic utilities and unit conditions are adequate for students to move in from September 1st onwards.

Departmental GSA AGM:

I worked with a Departmental GSA, along with Speaker Fred Wu, to assist in facilitating their upcoming election and development of a new constitution.

PAW Steering Meeting:

Members were updated on the sustainability initiatives at PAW. Tours of the PAW construction site for GSA elected officials will happen in July 2013. A new capital project sign is being prepared and mock-ups will be shown to the Steering Committee. A new project involving the redesign of the Varsity Field was mentioned, however the project is currently under discussions with Phys. Ed. and student groups will be contacted for suggestions/ideas on redesigning in the subsequent meetings.

I also attended the **GFC meeting** and the **GFC APC** as the **Acting President** for the GSA this month and the details are as below:

GFC:

President Samarasekera mentioned that she believes the **PSLA need not be opened**. She will be supporting this in her subsequent meetings with the minister.

The submission deadline for the MOU between the University and government has been extended to October 30th. The draft will be presented in the September GFC meeting and will be open for discussion then.

A small task force will be set up to review the working of all sub-committees of GFC. Reports and recommendations from this task force to be presented at the September GFC meeting. The task force will be comprised of 2 faculty members, 1 graduate and 1 undergraduate student with relevant governance experience.

Minor changes were suggested to the University's Budget Principles by some GFC members. They will be forwarded to the BoG for approval at its meeting on June 21st.

GFC APC:

Approval of FGSR's recommendation for addition of a program requirements milestone for Doctoral students. The program requirements milestone for doctoral students was approved at this meeting. These requirements include required coursework, academic integrity and ethics requirements, candidacy exams and, in some cases, comprehensive examinations to be completed within three years of the commencement of the student's program. (These requirements may vary from department to department.) In **exceptional circumstances, a student who has failed to complete the requirements in the specified time limit may be considered for an extension.** (To be considered with well-documented reasons, the department has to recommend this extension and will go to FGSR for approval). **The 3-year rule does not apply to departments of Educational Psychology, English and Film Studies, Philosophy and the doctoral program in Medical Sciences in Orthodontics.** The program requirements will be specified in their individual program proposal.

Sincerely,

Megha Bajaj

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between May 8, 2013 and June 12, 2013:

May 13	GSA Council
May 14	89 th Avenue Housing Tour
May 15	GSA Board
May 16	U-Pass Admin
May 17	Student Financial Aid Task Force FGSR
May 21	U-Pass Subsidy
May 21	GSA Council
May 22	GPAC Presentation
May 22	GSA Board
May 23	Student Group Meeting
May 23	Friends of the U of A AGM
May 29	GSA Board
May 31	Grad Res Tour
June 3	GFC
June 5	GSA Board
June 6	Convocation
June 6	PGSA AGM
June 7	Convocation
June 11	PAW Steering
June 12	GFC APC

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

To: GSA Council
From: Hasin Haroon, VPSS
Date: June 12, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

I hope this report finds you all in the best of health. The past month has been a rather eventful one at the GSA, with the release of the University's CIP (the implications of which were discussed in the May Special Council meeting). As you are all aware by now, the GSA will be holding discussions with graduate students from each of your faculties, and we hope you and your colleagues turn up in full force!

The meetings of note that I attended since my last report are outlined below, followed by the full meeting list.

- **RBAC, 9th May** – Residence Budget Advisory Committee – This committee will be meeting regularly over the course of the year. **The main points I will be pushing for are increased flexibility in graduate student leases in residence, and access to services for graduate students on leave.** I will be updating you on progress in this regards as we go.
- **Meeting with University Associate Vice-President (Government & Corporate Relations), 28th May** – I attended this meeting along with Brent Epperson, GSA President. **We discussed the possibility of a public awareness campaign, and the possibility of cooperating with our peer institutions across Alberta to make it a province-wide campaign, with a larger impact.** We are currently looking into numbers and logistics from the 'I Love Alberta Universities' campaign from the early 2000's, a highly successful campaign at the time.
- **Meeting with Alison Redford, Alberta Premier, 29th May** – I attended this meeting as the UofA's AGC representative. The meeting was arranged to present the AGC platform to the Premier, and to introduce our lobbying objectives for the year. I also raised the issue of potential tuition increases at the UofA and our insistence on proper consultation that is actually taken into account with regards to proposals (such as the CIP, for example), and that this is currently lacking in our institutions.

I look forward to seeing you all in Council, and at our discussions on the tuition issue at the GSA.

Sincerely,
Hasin Haroon

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between May 8, 2013 and June 12, 2013:

May 9	RBAC
May 13	GSA Council
May 15	GSA Board

May 17	Student Connect Advisory
May 21	Community Standards Review Committee
May 22	GSA Board
May 28	Meeting with Associate Vice-President Karen Wichuk
May 29	AUGSA Dinner
June 3	Tour of Graduate Residence
June 5	Community Standards Review Committee
June 5	GSA Board
June 7	Convocation

**GSA Vice President Labour
Report to Council**

To: GSA Council
From: Monty Bal, VPL
Date: June 12, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

I attended a number of meetings since last GSA Council. Below are highlights from some of these meetings in chronological order.

Meeting with Councillor Susan Cake on potential gaps in the new CA:

Susan Cake, Heather Hogg, Courtney Thomas, and I discussed some **potential issues we might want to consider in the next round of collective bargaining**. These included: the 8-month qualification requirement for eligibility for maternity/parental leave, medical illness provisions, and clarification of the type of protection and support that an AEGS would get during termination proceedings.

University Research Policy Committee:

Implemented a new University policy, which would allow students to hold Tri-council awards under their own name, rather than the name of the supervisor. This would allow students to spend their award money as they see fit, but this spending would be reviewed by supervisor. However, I am concerned that there still may be supervisor pressure to spend their award money in a specific way, if that is not dealt with, there's limited impact of this change.

There was **also discussion of the desire to create a new review mechanism for faculty applicants to NEC/CERC**. This would take the form of a committee of previous award winners, with potential incentives involved, including monetary support. If the committee does prove successful, I would like to know if students would like this type of review mechanism set up for graduate students. It does worry me however that there appears to be no support for international applicants in these awards programs as they concentrate on Tri-Council funding.

There was a discussion of the problem of **low levels of recovery of indirect costs at the University level**. Currently the university only recovers 1.5% of total overhead costs in research partnership and grants. The goal has been to recover 20%, though even at 20% this would be the lowest in all of Canada. Researchers have not been asking for this cost in their grant apps. The current overhead cost for every \$1 of grants received is \$.58, this has resulted in a loss of \$3 million for every 1% of overhead costs not recovered. Currently, of the money that is recovered, central gets 48% and the faculty 52%. There is talk of a potential redistribution of this, which may include researchers potentially using this money to reinvest in infrastructure. Foundations currently do not cover this cost, however, other actors including the government will not cover the costs as other private actors are often subsidized. The UK has a model where researchers are mandated to ask for 120% the cost of the project to recover overhead costs or not receive the grant or partnership. There is a desire to set up a centralized program which could provide information to researchers about these types of indirect costs. The GSA has written to both the VP (Research) and VP (Finance & Administration) to provide more detail on the amount of money involved in this matter.

Board Safety, Health and Environment Committee:

Meeting was an information session as there was no quorum. There was discussion of a **number of risk highlighting and mitigating initiatives that the University is undertaking currently**. Goals for 2014 and 2015 include enhancing the visibility of risk culture enhancements on campus, implementing HUB mall report recommendations, working with the ministry to develop a results-based-budgeting strategy, enhance mental health programs, develop and implement a restructuring plan to deal with budget cuts, and identify and implement new revenue opportunities.

In addition to this, the **University will continue the roll out of the environment, health & safety management system**. This is 5-year program to enhance safety culture, which includes a new incident reporting mechanism.

The GSA is working to make sure that there is adequate graduate student representation on these various projects.

GFC Campus Law Review Committee:

The first was to vote to **approve a change to the Code of Student Behaviour to clarify the issue of student suspensions and re-admission**. The new policy would state that any student who was suspended for 12 months or more, would have to reapply to his or her faculty. This would be in line with the wider University policy on absences from programs, whereby students need to reapply to their faculty after a 12-month absence from the program. In effect this would not create any new changes, however students would now be instructed to go to the University Calendar for further information on suspensions. This motion was approved.

The second issue was **the creation of a policy regarding the use of Text-Matching Software in order to deal with the issue of plagiarism**. There was a report on the use of TMS software at other universities highlighting the benefits and costs. Specifically of concern to me was the issue raised in the report concerning government access to student papers through off-site databases (specifically, the US government). Although the Chair Steve Penney reassured us that the gov't of Canada has a number of protections to ensure privacy, I'm still not entirely sold that Canadian protections will do much to deal with the possible American threat. We would not want a student, being marked for the rest of their career because of comments made on an early paper. I also raised the fear, and this is a concern that some professors at the meeting shared, that students will not be able to express their ideas freely if there is the possibility of repercussions. I asked for greater clarification regarding a potential opt-out for this type of program and what type of information students would be provided by the instructor if they did use TMS.

I also am worried that this doesn't deal with the more problematic issue of paper-mills. I feel that students who are maybe making mistakes due to a lack of proper instruction on citing are being targeted while there may not be enough being done to stop those who pay others for papers, which in my mind is a far bigger problem in terms of academic integrity.

It was agreed at the meeting that the report would be forwarded to a number of parties, including the faculty associate deans who may be dealing with the issue at the faculty level. Additionally, a one-page guide would be created to inform student, profs, TAs, highlighting the current lack of policy on TMS services. There was a decision to make a presentation on the issue to ASC and GFC Exec. Finally, there was a call to educate students on the rights they have if their instructors are using TMS with databases and how they could opt-out.

The final discussion item was the desire by M Haggerty-France, University Secretary, to incorporate smaller cosmetic changes into an omnibus package to make educating stakeholders easier and more consistent, as this would be done once for a large package of items rather than piecemeal over a longer period of time. I'm concerned that if there is an omnibus process for rule changes, unless these changes are cosmetic, I would have a problem with the utilization of this type of process.

New Collective Agreement

As I highlighted at the last Council, **it is essential that students become acclimated to the new CA and work to educate themselves by reviewing the document.** It has already been brought to our attention that there may be some unintended consequences of the new CA due to wording changes. We are currently working with our Administration counterparts to rectify these issues before the September 1 implementation. If more students were to train their eyes on the new CA, we can catch and clarify any issues before implementation. If there are any issues or concerns you see in the new CA, please bring it to our attention as soon as possible.

Thanks,

Simarjit S. Bal (Monty)

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between May 8, 2013 and June 12, 2013:

May 13	Lunch with Dean Schaeffer
May 14	Meeting with Dean Cormack
May 14	Associations Coalition
May 14	Collective Agreement Meeting with Student
May 15	GSA Board
May 15	FGSR Council
May 21	GSA Council
May 22	Academic Policy and Process Review
May 22	GSA Board
May 23	Associations Coalition
May 23	E-USRI Session
May 28	Presentation to Chinese Delegation
May 28	German Energy Policy Lecture
May 29	GSA Board
May 29	BSHEC
May 30	Meeting with Phyllis Clark
May 31	University Research Policy Committee
June 3	General Faculties Council
June 5	Convocation
June 6	GFC Campus Law Review Committee
June 8	Pride Parade U of A Float
June 11	Meeting with Tom Churchill
June 11	Labour case

**GSA Executive Director
Report to Council**

To: GSA Council
From: Ellen Schoeck, Executive Director
Date: June 12, 2013

Dear Council,

My report this month is short and sweet, but it packs a huge punch given the GSA's recent history.

First, audit. The GSA is required by the province's *Post-Secondary Learning Act* to have an annual audit. Audit protects the GSA from mismanagement of funds and gives us advice and direction concerning our financial and overall health.

I am one of two signatories to the GSA audit; the other signatory is the President. I am pleased to report that we have a "clean" audit and that we are in good financial standing. Our Auditor is pleased with the progress we have made these past three years as the GSA has rebuilt from the ground up, but he cautions that we still have a way to go; he urges vigilance in moving forward with our rebuilding. My only caveat is that the GSA needs to see significant progress in reforming the Alberta Graduate Council, as continuing members will already have read about in my reports to the Board, and in other reports.

Second, quarterly financial statements. The GSA now has a positive balance for the first time since I started with the GSA in 2010. I am the initial authority regarding most expenditure, subject to internal controls involving the elected officials, BFC and Council. I have been extremely conservative with expenditure as we work our way out of deficit budgets. At the same time, I have been keenly aware of market pressures in relation to salaries and benefits, and feel we have struck a healthy balance that has allowed us to attract and retain excellent managers and staff.

My more detailed reports to the Board are attached and, as is so with this report, represent the views of your management team: Heather Hogg, Courtney Thomas and me. I would like to commend to Council the excellent and diligent work of our Accountant Shirley Ball and Financial Manager Dorte Sheik.

**Executive Director, Director of Operations, and Associate Director
Report to the GSA Board, May 15, 2013**

Week in Review – Strategic:

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

- **Department Liaison Initiative** (moving forward after the recent “in-service” training module for elected officials, developing roll out plan, *etc.*).
- **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.**
- **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 **Department Liaison 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.**

**Executive Director, Director of Operations, and Associate Director
Report to the GSA Board, May 22, 2013**

Week in Review – Strategic and Problem Solving:

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

- Complaint regarding a **GSA student group election.**
- **Student Group Services/student group “mediation”.**
- **Department Liaison Initiative.**
- **NoC search for CRO and Speaker.**
- **Budget letters and the provincial budget.**
- **Bylaw and policy review** (recently resumed, had a **half day retreat to work on intensively**).
- **GSA Grants** (gathering historical data and a major review of policy).
- **Councillor remuneration** issues.

- **Closed Professional Development Awards (PDA)** as all funds have been allocated for this period (will reopen August 1).
- **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 **Department Liaison Initiative** and **grants data collection**.
- **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 **planning of Fall Orientation**.
- Various staff members are **cross-training into each other's positions** to ensure that everyone has two back-ups.
- **GSA Media Tracker**.
- Assisting with **preparations for the Special GSA Council meeting**.

Executive Director, Director of Operations, and Associate Director Report to the GSA Board, May 29, 2013

Week in Review – Strategic and Problem Solving:

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

- **Department Liaison Initiative**.
- Complaint regarding a **GSA student group election**.
- **NoC search for CRO and Speaker**.
- **Budget letters and the provincial budget**.
- **Fall Orientation and the GSA Agenda/Handbook** (planning, developing a comprehensive rollout plan).
- **GSA Board Strategic Work Plan rollout**.
- Setting up the **GSA Facebook and Twitter** profiles.
- **GSA Grants** (gathering historical data and preparing for a major review of policy).
- **GSA Awards** (preliminary thinking about streamlining awards and reviewing policy).
- Setting up the **GSA Facebook and Twitter** profiles.
- **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 **Department Liaison Initiative**, the SWP rollout, and **grants data collection**.
- Preparation of **2013-2014 GSA Agenda/Handbook** and assisting with the **planning of Fall Orientation**.
- Ongoing work associated with **filling various vacancies** (Arts Faculty Council, Faculty of Arts Academic Appeals Committee, *etc.*).

- Various staff members are **cross-training into each other's positions** to ensure that everyone has two back-ups; training staff to take on Courts' duties (her last day is May 31).
- Aiding with the set up of the **GSA's social media presence**.
- **GSA Media Tracker**.

**Executive Director, Director of Operations, and Associate Director
Report to the GSA Board, June 5, 2013**

Week in Review – Strategic:

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

- **Department Liaison Initiative.**
- **Budget letters and the provincial budget** (GFC discussion of the Budget Principles).
- **GSA Awards** (thinking about streamlining awards has led to a review of current policy).
- **NoC search for CRO and Speaker.**
- **Fall Orientation and the GSA Agenda** (planning, developing a comprehensive rollout plan).
- **GSA Board Strategic Work Plan rollout.**
- **GSA Grants** (gathering historical data and preparing for a major review of policy).
- Populating the **GSA Facebook and Twitter** profiles with content (currently 24 Twitter followers and 73 Facebook likes).

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- Preparation of **2013-2014 GSA Agenda/Handbook** and assisting with the **planning of Fall Orientation**.
- Assisting with the **Department Liaison Initiative**, the SWP rollout, and **grants data collection**.
- Assisting with **councillor remuneration**.
- Ongoing work associated with **filling various vacancies** (approximately 8 committees).
- Various staff members are **cross-training into each other's positions** to ensure that everyone has two back-ups; training staff to take on Courts' duties (her last day was May 31).
- **Video interviews** for CRO and Speaker.
- Aiding with the set up of the **GSA's social media presence**.
- **GSA Media Tracker**.