

GSA Council Meeting AGENDA

Monday, May 12, 2014 at 6:00 pm

Telus 1-34

A light, vegetarian dinner will be served at 5:15 pm at Telus 1-34.

In accordance with the Standing Orders of Council, **substantive material** (the bulk of agenda materials) is sent to all Council members at least one week prior to the date of the meeting to give members abundant time to review. Any additional substantive material received after this mailing will be emailed as soon as possible.

Reports from committees, Directly-Elected Officers, and management are emailed the Friday before a Monday meeting so that the content is as current as possible.

OPEN SESSION

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of the 12 May 2014 Agenda
3. Approval of the Minutes from the 14 April 2014 GSA Council meeting
Attachments:
 - Minutes from the 14 April 2014 GSA 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*)

Presentations and Councillor Announcements

5. *The Quality of Graduate Student and Post-Doctoral Supervision at the University of Alberta*: Report from Dr. Naomi Krogman
Nathan Andrews (GSA President) will present the item.
Guest: Dr. Naomi Krogman (Provost's Fellow and Professor, Department of Resource Economics and Environmental Sociology)
Attachments:
 - *The Quality of Graduate Student and Post-Doctoral Supervision at the University of Alberta*
6. Community Service Learning Program (CSLP)
Colin More (GSA Vice-President Academic) will present the item.
Guest: Alison Taylor (Director, Community Service Learning)
7. Councillor Announcements

Attached Numbered
Pages

To Be Distributed

5.0 - 5.39

Action Items, Elections, Appointments, Special Business, Updates

8. Elections

- i. GSA Standing Committees
Michele DuVal (GSA Nominating Committee Member) will present the item.

Attachments:

- GSA Budget and Finance Committee, GSA Elections and Referenda Committee, GSA Governance Committee, and GSA Labour Relations Committee Nominees

To Be Distributed

- ii. GSA Senator
Michele DuVal (Nominating Committee Member) will present the item.

Attachments:

- Nominees for GSA Senator

To Be Distributed

9. GSA Board's 2014-2015 Strategic Work Plan Draft: Oral Update
Nathan Andrews (GSA President) will present the item

10. Special Business (**none at this time**)

Reports

11. President (**Nathan Andrews, GSA President**)

- i. President's Report
 - a) 2013-2014 President
 - b) 2014-2015 President
- ii. GSA Board
- iii. Budget and Finance Committee (**no meetings this reporting period**)
- iv. Governance Committee (**no meetings this reporting period**)

To Be Distributed

To Be Distributed

To Be Distributed

a) Nominating Committee

- i. Nominating Committee Report (**presented by Michele DuVal, GSA Nominating Committee Member**)

To Be Distributed

12. Vice-President Academic (**Colin More, GSA Vice-President Academic**)

- i. Vice-President Academic's Report

To Be Distributed

13. Vice-President Student Services (**Megha Bajaj, GSA Vice-President Student Services**)

To Be Distributed

- i. Vice-President Student Services' Report
- ii. Student Affairs Advisory Committee (joint chair: Vice-President External) (**no meetings this reporting period**)

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| <p>14. Vice-President External (Susan Cake, GSA Vice-President External)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Vice-President External's Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) 2013-2014 Vice-President External b) 2014-2015 Vice-President External ii. Awards Selection Committee (this committee meets in the Fall and Winter) | <p>To Be Distributed
To Be Distributed</p> |
| <p>15. Vice-President Labour (Monty Bal, GSA Vice-President Labour)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Vice-President Labour's Report ii. Negotiating Committee iii. Labour Relations Committee (no meetings this reporting period) | <p>To Be Distributed
To Be Distributed</p> |
| <p>16. Senator (Roy Coulthard, GSA Senator)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Senator's Report | <p>To Be Distributed</p> |
| <p>17. Speaker (Daniel Prins, GSA Speaker)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Speaker's Report | <p>To Be Distributed</p> |
| <p>18. Chief Returning Officer (Hamman Samuel, GSA Interim Chief Returning Officer)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Chief Returning Officer's Report ii. Elections and Referenda Committee (will be meeting soon) | <p>To Be Distributed</p> |
| <p>19. GSA Management (Ellen Schoeck, GSA Executive Director)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Executive Director's Report | <p>To Be Distributed</p> |

Question Period

20. Written Questions

21. Oral Questions

Adjournment

GSA Council Meeting CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

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Telus 1-34

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Attached Numbered Pages

3.0 - 3.12

Presentations and Councillor Announcements

5. *The Quality of Graduate Student and Post-Doctoral Supervision at the University of Alberta*: Report from Dr. Naomi Krogman
Nathan Andrews (GSA President) will present the item.
Guest: Dr. Naomi Krogman (Provost's Fellow and Professor, Department of Resource Economics and Environmental Sociology)
Attachments:
 - *The Quality of Graduate Student and Post-Doctoral Supervision at the University of Alberta*
6. Community Service Learning Program (CSLP)
Colin More (GSA Vice-President Academic) will present the item.
Guest: Alison Taylor (Director, Community Service Learning)
7. Councillor Announcements

5.0 - 5.39*
**previously distributed*

Action Items, Elections, Appointments, Special Business, Updates

8. Elections

- i. GSA Standing Committees
Michele DuVal (GSA Nominating Committee Member) will present the item.

Attachments:

- GSA Budget and Finance Committee (**acclaimed**), GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (**acclaimed**), GSA Governance Committee (**acclaimed**), and GSA Labour Relations Committee Nominees (**acclaimed**)

8.0 - 8.1

- ii. GSA Senator
Michele DuVal (Nominating Committee Member) will present the item.

Attachments:

- Nominees for GSA Senator (**paper ballot vote at Council**)

8.2 - 8.4

9. GSA Board's 2014-2015 Strategic Work Plan Draft: Oral Update
Nathan Andrews (GSA President) will present the item

10. Special Business (**none at this time**)

Reports

11. President (**Nathan Andrews, GSA President**)

- i. President's Report
- a) 2013-2014 President
 - b) 2014-2015 President
 - c) GSA President's Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy
- ii. GSA Board
- iii. Budget and Finance Committee (**no meetings this reporting period**)
- iv. Governance Committee (**no meetings this reporting period**)

11.0 - 11.2

11.3 - 11.4

11.5 - 11.8

11.9

a) Nominating Committee

- i. Nominating Committee Report (**presented by Michele DuVal, GSA Nominating Committee Member**)

11.10 - 11.12

12. Vice-President Academic (**Colin More, GSA Vice-President Academic**)

- i. Vice-President Academic's Report

12.0 - 12.1

13. Vice-President Student Services (**Megha Bajaj, GSA Vice-President Student Services**)

- i. Vice-President Student Services' Report
- ii. Student Affairs Advisory Committee (joint chair: Vice-President External) (**no meetings this reporting period**)

13.0 - 13.1

14. Vice-President External (Susan Cake, GSA Vice-President External)	
i. Vice-President External's Report	
a) 2013-2014 Vice-President External	14.0
b) 2014-2015 Vice-President External	14.1
ii. Awards Selection Committee (this committee meets in the Fall and Winter)	
15. Vice-President Labour (Monty Bal, GSA Vice-President Labour)	
i. Vice-President Labour's Report	15.0 - 15.1
ii. Negotiating Committee	15.2
iii. Labour Relations Committee (no meetings this reporting period)	
16. Senator (Roy Coulthard, GSA Senator)	
i. Senator's Report (none at this time)	
17. Speaker (Daniel Prins, GSA Speaker)	
i. Speaker's Report (none at this time)	
18. Chief Returning Officer (Hamman Samuel, GSA Interim Chief Returning Officer)	
i. Chief Returning Officer's Report (none at this time)	
ii. Elections and Referenda Committee (will be meeting soon)	
19. GSA Management (Ellen Schoeck, GSA Executive Director)	
i. Executive Director's Report	19.0 - 19.3

Question Period

20. Written Questions

21. Oral Questions

Adjournment

Meeting MINUTES
14 April, 2014
GSA Council Meeting

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

Brent Epperson (President)	Michelle Borowitz (Anthro)	Sandra Sawchuk (Humanities Computing)	Lauren Richards (Occupational Therapy)
Colin More (VP Academic)	Jennifer Wang (Biochemistry)	Elshan Hasanov (Internetworking)	Emily Douglas (Philosophy)
Monty Bal (VP Labour)	Michele DuVal (Bio Sci)	Luciana D S Cavalcante (Lab Medicine & Pathology)	Jennifer Crawford (Phys Ed & Recreation)
Megha Bajaj (VP Student Services)	Patricia Leighton (Bio Sci)	Solomon Aomateng (Law)	Brayden Whitlock (Physiology)
Hasin Haroon (VP Student Life)	Claire Deng (Business PhD)	Gooneshwaree Beesoon (SLIS)	Leigh Spanner (Poli Sci)
Daniel Prins (Speaker)	Mary Klute (Cell Biology)	Rebekka Puderbaugh (Linguistics)	Dimitar Oudey (Psychiatry)
Roy Coulthard (Senator/Deputy Speaker)	Zhendong Li (Chemistry)	Amir Nosrati (Math & Stats Sciences)	Allison Hahn (Psychology)
Nathan Andrews (Councillor-at-Large)	Chad Iverson (Chemistry)	Michael Akinwumi (Math & Stats Sciences)	Arnold Wong (Rehab Medicine)
Isaac Odoom (Councillor-at-Large)	Jeremy Wohland (Civil and Enviro Eng)	Vanessa Carias (Medical Genetics)	Kyle Kipps (Renewable Resources)
Rob Found (Councillor-at-Large)	Hamman Samuel (Computing Science)	Colleen Reid (Med. Microbiology & Immunology)	Curtis Rollins (Res Econ and Enviro Sociology)
Qiang Li (Councillor-at-Large)	Laura Brin (Earth & Atmos Sci)	Axel P Trujillo (MLCS)	Sarah Prescott (Res Econ and Enviro Sociology)
Shawna Manchakowsky (Councillor-at-Large)	Amanda Radil (Ed Psych)	Micaela Santiago (Nursing)	Kerry Rose (Secondary Ed)
Shiv Vembadi (Councillor-at-Large)	Sulya Fenichel (Elementary Ed)	Oksana Zimka (Nursing)	Susan Cake (Sociology)
Richard Zhao (Councillor-at-Large/Interim DRO)	Amanda Daignault (English & Film Studies)	Lisa Pashniak (Occupational Therapy)	Kelsi Barkway (Sociology)

GUESTS: Kristin Foster (Studentcare, Western and Pacific Director)

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

Roll Call

1. Roll Call of Council Members in Attendance

Approval of Agenda

2. Approval of the 14 April, 2014 Consolidated Agenda

Members had before them the 14 April, 2014 Consolidated Agenda, which had been previously distributed on 11 April, 2014.

H Haroon MOVED to approve the Agenda. SECONDED by R Zhao.

Prepared by M. Caldwell and C. Thomas for the Council Meeting of 14 April 2014

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Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Approval of Minutes

3. Minutes

i. Minutes from the 17 March, 2014 GSA Council meeting

Members had before them the 17 March, 2014 GSA Council Minutes, which had been previously distributed on 04 April, 2014.

B Epperson MOVED to approve the Minutes. SECONDED by M Santiago.

- I Odoom inquired about a statement in the Minutes from D Prins regarding an appeal regarding the Councillor-at-Large (CAL) election, stating that there was no issue with the CAL election. D Prins replied that the Minutes reflected an accurate description of what he said at the time. I Odoom expressed his belief that the statement as reflected in the Minutes was inaccurate. D Prins replied that he perhaps made an error at the time. I Odoom asked if it could be removed and D Prins replied that at that time, it was his understanding that there was an appeal involving candidates in the CAL election;
- R Coulthard: Point of Order - discussing the issue now serves to correct the record (the official record is the amalgamated record of all of our Council meetings) as it will be reflected in the current Minutes; *and*
- I Odoom requested that the record of the 14 April, 2014 meeting reflect that at least one Councillor felt that the Minutes from last meeting did not represent the accurate record.

Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. H Samuel and Q Li abstained.

Changes in Council Membership

4. Changes in Council Membership

i. Introduction of New Councillors

- This was the first meeting for a number of Councillors: Amir Nosrati (Mathematical & Statistical Sciences); L Pashniak (Occupational Therapy); Lauren Richards (Occupational Therapy); and Braydon Whitlock (Physiology).

ii. Farewell to Departing Councillors

This was the last meeting for a number of Councillors: Michelle Borowitz (Anthropology); Rob Found (CAL); Qiang Li (CAL); Isaac Odoom (CAL); Micaela Santiago (Nursing); Shiv Vembadi (CAL); Richard Zhao (CAL); and Oksana Zimka (Nursing).

Action Items, Elections, Appointments, Special Business

5. GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund (HDPRF) - Accessing the HDPRF: Payment of Differences in Premiums 2014-2015

Members had before them an outline of issue which had been previously distributed on April 04, 2014. M Bajaj introduced the item and the guest, Kristin Foster (Pacific & Western Director, Studentcare).

MOTION BEFORE COUNCIL: That GSA Council **APPROVE** on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Budget and Finance Committee that the payment of premium increases to the GSA Health Plan and GSA Dental Plan for 2014-2015, above the current fee contribution collected from graduate students, be paid from the Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund (HDPRF).

In addition, M Bajaj stated the following:

- The Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund (HDPRF) was created to be spent on health and dental insurance. It can be used to reduce fee increases for students from one year to another, or to increase coverage at no extra or reduced cost to students. The last time the HDPRF was drawn down was 2011-2012;
- In 2012, the GSA switched insurance companies and received a locked-in fee for two years. There is now a projected increase for next year, the details of which are given in the attached table on page 6.0 of the material before Councillors;

- If Council approves use of the fund, the fund will be drawn down by approximately \$93,000 and students will not have to pay an increase next year; *and*
- Currently there is \$205,433 in the fund, and based on the information from S Ball, GSA Accountant, after year-end close out is finished the amount will raise to around \$300,000. If approximately \$93,000 is drawn down to cover the fee increase, which will leave about \$200,000 as a balance. This is a healthy balance, and both the GSA Accountant and GSA Financial Manager, D Shiekh, feel there is enough money to accommodate this use and to maintain a healthy balance. Both the GSA Board and the GSA Budget and Finance Committee have looked at the proposal and unanimously agreed to put this proposal to GSA Council to cover the fee increase for 2014-2015.

K Foster spoke about the projected premium increase and raised the following points:

- There is a difference between premiums and fees. Premiums are what is paid to insurance, and includes Studentcare's fees. Fees are what students pay. The difference between these two amounts is what goes into the HDPRF. So the GSA can collect a higher fee and put the difference into the fund, or it can collect a lower fee and use the fund to pay the difference. The amount listed in the material before you is the current fee;
- The GSA has been contributing \$20 per student to the HDPRF for the last two years because they set a higher fee and got a lower quote after that fee was set. This balances out what is being suggested today since \$20 has been being put away, and the proposal would take out \$17 per student;
- K Foster does her own analysis to project any potential fee increases since she has more data available than the plan provider, who only has the information since they began providing the health and dental plan to the GSA;
- Studentcare had Desjardins commit in advance to what their fees would be to use them for coverage and were able to take 4.5% off of costs for all of their clients at a time when they knew usage of the plan was going up. They also got a two-year rate guarantee from Desjardins and funnelled the difference between premiums and fees into the HDPRF;
- Projections have been accurate and on target, and this is the first premium increase in two years. Health claims drive the increase. There has been stagnant enrolment over the past three years, but the same number of students are making more claims more often. So the costs are going up because students are using the plan more; *and*
- This is a legitimate reason to use the HDPRF to give back to the students who have been putting money into it; overall the increase is a positive one, due to usage increase.

Following the presentation, there were a number of questions:

- Z Li asked what the utilization rate is above premiums and has it changed at all? What is the percentage of premiums paid versus how much students are getting back? K Foster replied that the actual above the board increase is 10%, and that the increase on paramedical claims alone is 25%. Health claims (everything except dental) overall are up 12% while dental claims are only up 2%. Z Li further asked what percentage of premiums are paid back to students, what is the loss ratio? K Foster replied that the loss ratio is the amount that the insurance company pays back. As of the end of February, the loss ratio was sitting at 93%. Ninety percent is the break even point for insurance, the remaining 10% of premiums are for taxes and fees. Anything under 90% is a windfall profit for the insurer, and anything over 90% means you are winning. But going over means premiums will go up. K Foster fully expected the loss ratio to be even more of a loss for the insurer and a win for students by the end of the year because April, May and August have traditionally been high claim months;
- Z Li asked if it's a trend and would premiums go up continuously forever? K Foster replied that it is a trend overall in health care, and that 10% over two years, or 5% over one year, is what she sees across Canada for graduate students. The cost of health care and the volume of claims are both going up. There will be years when it levels off, but consistently 5% a year is normal;
- C Iverson asked what Studentcare is doing to streamline some of the issues and questions from members, such as special drug exceptions? D Prins stated that the question is not relevant to the Motion before Council, and that the question can be directed to Studentcare via the Vice-President Student Services;

- A Radil asked if the GSA has a plan to make the health plan more sustainable so that the HDPRF is not constantly being used to the point that the reserve fund is gone? M Bajaj replied that it will depend on what increases are seen. It is possible that it will be drawn down again, but not as much as is projected here, but that this is what the HDPRF is for; *and*
- R Coulthard stated that the fee was set two years ago, and afterwards the plan came in at less than students were paying for it. The GSA has banked \$40/person in the last two years in the HDPRF. If \$17/person is removed next year, the GSA can continue at this rate for three years before the HDPRF is out of money. There are options at this point and at some point in the next year there will be a fee increase and possibly some more draw down of the fund. This is not unusual, it was done in 2011 as well. The GSA does not yet have a specific plan, but are committing to something responsible for next year. There is plenty of money in the HDPRF and the GSA can sustain this. R Coulthard encouraged people to support the Motion and B Epperson stated that the GSA has a three-year rolling plan.

MOTION: That GSA Council **APPROVE** on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Budget and Finance Committee that the payment of premium increases to the GSA Health Plan and GSA Dental Plan for 2014-2015, above the current fee contribution collected from graduate students, be paid from the Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund (HDPRF). M Bajaj **MOVED**. R Coulthard **Second**.

Motion PASSED. One opposed.

D Prins thanked K Foster.

Presentations and Councillor Announcements

6. Councillor Announcements

7. B Epperson made the following statement regarding the 2014 GSA General Election Re-Run for Vice-President External: "You are all likely aware that some concerns have been raised surrounding the last GSA election. The GSA had an appeal of the CRO's ruling in the election for the VP External position. As a result of the appeal, a new election was called. I want to assure you all that the GSA followed Policy and Bylaw (as approved by GSA Council) and the appeal process worked as it was intended. The GSA had consistent legal counsel throughout the appeal process. That said, this election has brought to light aspects of our Bylaw and Policy that could be improved. Pockets of the graduate student community have expressed concerns about the election processes (which, in my view are based on inadequate information) that should also be addressed. To that end in May, Council will be asked to consider a proposal to form an Ad-Hoc General Elections Advisory Task Force, for the purpose of hearing from any graduate student who has suggestions for improving GSA election Bylaws and Policy. The Ad-Hoc General Elections Advisory Task Force will report to the Elections and Referenda Committee (ERC). My suggestion as GSA President is that the Ad-Hoc Election Advisory Task Force be Chaired by the GSA President and be composed of four (4) members of GSA Council and two (2) at-large members. Lastly, neither the Ad-Hoc General Elections Advisory Task Force nor ERC are designed to hear specific complaints. Any complaints go to Judicial Committee, which meets as necessary. In our previous election, our CRO (current Speaker) had 47 recommendations go to ERC, which Council voted on in October and November. So, this is part of an ongoing process to fine-tune our elections and referenda Policy and Bylaw. Having just returned from a national conference of GSAs, I can tell you that we are not the only GSA considering such changes. I have full faith and confidence in our elections process and see the review as part of a culture of continuous improvement at the GSA";
- Following B Epperson's statement, M Bal stated he had questions to ask on behalf of a graduate student J Kong;
- I Odoom: Point of Order – That Council was not privy to what M Bal was going to read. D Prins projected questions for Council and stated M Bal had agreed to put forward questions on behalf of the graduate student who is not a Member of Council. I Odoom was concerned that the questions were directed to then Acting Speaker V Pimmett who was not in attendance. D Prins stated that B Epperson would attempt to answer questions and if unable to do so would be transparent about that;

- M Bal stated that the questions he was reading were addressed to the then Acting Speaker; First question asked if V Pimmett was designated or elected. B Epperson outlined how V Pimmett was elected by ERC to hear the appeal based on advice from GSA lawyers;
- The second question asked if both parties to the appeal were heard. B Epperson outlined that this had been addressed in the decision, and that the decision states the CRO was asked for his complete record;
- Discussion between I Odoom, D Prins, B Epperson and Q Li over transfer of speaking rights to non-Council member. Q Li wished to move to allow J Kong to speak and D Prins stated that he would entertain the Motion to extend speaking rights to this one student for this one meeting of Council;
- I Odoom wished to second the Motion and spoke to it, stating that he asked Council to give the student the right to speak. B Epperson also spoke to the Motion, stating that he saw it as unnecessary action, as the student can give his questions to his representative, and that it would set a negative precedent for an organization to suspend its own rules;

MOTION: That Council suspend Standing Orders to allow J Kong to speak. Q Li **MOVED**. I Odoom **Second**.

Motion FAILED. Four in favour, the rest opposed.

- I Odoom stated that he Agreed with B Epperson on the need for an advisory task force and questioned the statement about Council having voted on ERC recommendations. D Prins outlined how recommendations came to Council as a comprehensive reform package;
- I Odoom asked why Speaker and Deputy Speaker did not hear the election appeal. B Epperson replied they had recused themselves due to a conflict of interest. D Prins explained he recused himself as he felt his involvement in the initial appeal had compromised his objectivity. Deputy Speaker R Coulthard explained he recused himself as he had supported candidates and could not then be seen as impartial. I Odoom stated that GSA Bylaw prohibits Deputy Speaker from endorsing candidates. B Epperson stated he did not view Bylaw in that manner and D Prins noted that Bylaw can be interpreted differently and should be clarified;
- Q Li stated that these questions were for the then Acting Speaker, who according to GSA Bylaw, has the power to make decisions, so has accountability to Council;
- M Akinwumi stated he had been at March Council and felt that issues arising from the 2014 GSA General Election had not been addressed. He felt embarrassed that as a Council representative he could not respond to enquiries and felt a loss of trust in him as he could not speak to the issue to his constituents. He felt some communication should have been given to Councillors before all graduate students. B Epperson responded that he understood the frustration but felt it important to follow legal advice to restrict discussion of the election at the last Council meeting. B Epperson agreed that rebuilding needs to happen and that the GSA needs to be proactive to address concerns about elections;
- M Akinwumi asked a question regarding J Kong's second question and the involvement of all parties in the appeal decision. M Akinwumi noted there was evidence that one party was not consulted or involved in the process and B Epperson replied that all the relevant information was included in the then Acting Speaker's decision in which it stipulated that the complete record was requested from the then CRO;
- M Akinwumi stated a concern that the report of the then CRO contradicted the position of the GSA. The report stated the CRO was absent but he was able to send emails while he was supposedly absent;
- B Epperson responded the legal advice was that as the CRO was in China he could not supervise the election;
- I Odoom raised a point of information that he was disappointed the President felt he couldn't perform his function and asked where the President got his information that he was in China. He felt the position had been taken away from him as he did not notify anyone that he was travelling to China and requested the President withdraw his statement that the CRO had travelled to China. He stated this was one of the reasons he felt he needed to resign as CRO;
- Discussion ensued as to how/when the GSA and the lawyers were informed that the CRO was in China and it was agreed by D Prins and B Epperson there was nothing on record to show the CRO could not perform his duties. M Akinwumi then asked why an Acting CRO was elected and B Epperson responded that although there was nothing on record it was believed the CRO was in China;

- R Found stated he understood I Odoom's concern regarding the integrity of the record and asked if the CRO could state that he was in the country and able to perform his duties as CRO. I Odoom respectfully declined to respond;
- R Coulthard stated he would be interested in knowing if the former CRO felt, given that he was a party to the appeal which resulted in the then Acting Speaker calling for a re-run of the Vice-President External election, that he was in a position of conflict of interest and should not be involved in the 2014 GSA General Election Re-Run for Vice-President External;
- M Akinwumi stated that students in his department had lost confidence in the GSA because of issues with the elections and his current question was as there was nothing on record that the CRO could not perform his duties what happens with the 2014 GSA General Election Re-Run for the VP external position;
- Discussion ensued with B Epperson stating that the lack of a formal record of the CRO's absence does not impact the procedure that followed;
- I Odoom asked if any members of the GSA Nominating Committee were present to speak to GSA Bylaw and Policy regarding vacancies and B Epperson asked I Odoom if he told anyone in the GSA Office that he would be in China and noted that I Odoom had not responded to the question posed by R Coulthard regarding a conflict of interest;
- H Haroon made a point of order that Bylaw states that Nominating Committee determines if there is a vacancy and thus no official communication from I Odoom was required;

MOTION: That Council limit discussion of this item. R Coulthard **MOVED**. C Iverson **Second**.

Motion PASSED. Four opposed.

[Later in the meeting, additional information was presented in the Executive Director's Report to Council.]

Action Items, Elections, Appointments, Special Business

7. Change in Portfolios of the Vice-President External and the Vice-President Student Services

Members had before them an outline of issue, a letter from the GSA President, a track-changes document with the proposed changes, and the proposed policy if approved. B Epperson presented the item.

MOTION BEFORE COUNCIL: That the GSA Council **APPROVE**, on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Board, the proposed revisions to GSA Policy on **Officer Portfolios**, as outlined in the attached tracked-changes document, effective immediately.

Additionally B Epperson noted:

- The proposal before Council reflects discussion that has been had over the last year in Council;
- Council formally changed the title to Vice-President External in the interest of the organization and the need for more effective advocacy;
- The GSA could have added a fifth vice-president, but believed that some responsibilities could be moved from Vice-President Student Life to Vice-President Student Services rather than creating a new position;
- For the last year the GSA had a 'test year' with the Vice-President Student Life doing external advocacy and it worked well; *and*
- To solidify the external advocacy role, the GSA decided on these Policy changes, which were unanimously approved by the GSA Board on 31 March, 2014 in an email vote.

There were no questions.

MOTION: That the GSA Council **APPROVE**, on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Board, the proposed revisions to GSA Policy on **Officer Portfolios**, as outlined in the attached tracked-changes document, effective immediately. B Epperson **MOVED**. M Bajaj **Second**.

Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

8. Elections

- i. Nominees for Interim Chief Returning Officer
Members had before them the nominees for Interim Chief Returning Officer. M DuVal presented the item.

MOTION BEFORE COUNCIL: That Council **ELECT** Hamman Samuel to the position of Chief Returning Officer on an Interim basis, effective immediately and ending upon election of the CRO for 2014-2015.

Following the presentation there were a number of questions:

- I Odoom stated he worked with H Samuel on ERC and thinks he can do the job of CRO. I Odoom also expressed concern about how he was nominated and the process that led to his nomination and D Prins stated GSA followed procedures and advertised the vacancy;
- I Odoom stated he had concerns about the procedures; that before the process to elect a new CRO there had been a substantive CRO and acting CRO at the same time; that the day the decision was released by the Acting Speaker the CRO was not in China;
- D Prins stated that the current vacancy came about by resignation of the CRO and anything that happened before is irrelevant;
- I Odoom replied that H Samuel is or was the Acting Interim CRO and the results of the 2014 GSA General Election Re-Run for Vice-President External were announced by him, not the CRO, so the Acting CRO was abroad but the GSA did not elect someone to be CRO they just asked the Deputy to take over but when the CRO was in China they could not act, they had to elect a new person to the Acting CRO;
- R Coulthard and C Iverson made the point of order that it this was not relevant.

There were no further questions.

MOTION BEFORE COUNCIL: That Council **ELECT** Hamman Samuel to the position of Chief Returning Officer on an Interim basis, effective immediately and ending upon election of the CRO for 2014-2015. M DuVal **MOVED**. R Zhao **Second**.

Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

9. GSA Board's 2013-2014 Strategic Work Plan: Update (For Information)

Members had before them a letter from the GSA President. B Epperson presented the item and raised the following points:

- The last report to Council on the Board Strategic Work Plan was in January;
- There is now a counsellor in Triffo Hall, just for graduate students, which is a big win. Lots of other GSAs across Canada would like to have those separate services. On the whole mental health services on campus have been expanded;
- The GSA has also done a lot to fill Council seats. Two years ago there were a lot more empty seats than today – have been able to fill almost all of those seats;
- The GSA was able to get money to outfit the graduate student lounge in PAW. It could have cost a lot of money, but the GSA had an agreement and fought hard for it to save graduate students a lot of money;
- The GSA has a strong office team, B Epperson believes it is the strongest in the country;
- A big victory on the IDF this year, unfortunately MBA and undergraduates will have to pay the increase. B Epperson voted against the increase at BoG. Victory was won through advocacy to the BoG; in individual meetings with BoG members, the GSA argued that it would be bad for students, and bad for the U of A's reputation as a graduate school. The GSA also argued that until pay can be standardized across campus, the University could not impose a 5% increase, especially when students are facing rent and other increases;
- The GSA has also worked hard to build strong relationships with different ministers and MLAs. It is not common in Canada to have so much access to government. The GSA has also worked with other GSAs in the province to create a new graduate student advocacy group. B Epperson, and GSA Presidents before

him, worked hard to save the old one, but when it could not be fixed it was dissolved. Starting a new organization with new bylaws and agreements so that it will be stronger and a better investment for graduate students;

- The GSA has also been working on increasing professional development opportunities, and the U of A is one of the universities in Canada doing the most work in this area. In the fall graduate students will see increased opportunities for professional development, both through FGSR and in their departments;
- The draft report on graduate student supervision has just been released, and will be passed on to the incoming DEOs so that it continues to be advanced;
- The GSA has made progress in terms of graduate student funding and are working in a hard budget situation; M Bal is currently working on negotiations;
- M Bal and M Bajaj have been working hard on the provision of Permanent Residency assistance services. B Epperson would have liked to have seen more concrete progress but the GSA did get it on people's agendas and are getting much warmer reception than before;
- There has been a lot of talk about FGSR reform. It is currently quiet, but that does not mean it will not come back; graduate students should fight to keep FGSR as their home faculty. The University of Waterloo does not have one and they are not able to advance their interests as effectively as the GSA does;
- Have had less success on discrimination and bullying, but think the approach was wrong. The GSA had wanted to change policy, but it might be better to work on culture change instead; *and*
- The GSA is very close to an MoU with the University on a new prayer and meditation space, and have worked hard on this with the MSA and the Dean of Students. The University should not be recruiting international students and then making them pray in stairwells.

Following the presentation there were a number of questions:

- C Iverson asked if B Epperson could define academic bullying and B Epperson replied that academic bullying came up during campaigning last year, and includes relationships between advisors and students, students and students, faculty and staff, where someone uses their power or influence to control someone, or sabotages someone else to try to get ahead;
- R Zhao asked if B Epperson had any statistics about the use of the counsellor in Triffo Hall and B Epperson replied that he does not but that the Office of the Dean of Students is tracking it and R Zhao could follow up with R Everall through the Vice-President Student Services; *and*
- G Beeson asked if there was a tentative plan to deal with academic bullying at any time in the future and B Epperson replied that the GSA had struggled with the issue because it was poorly defined. Administration responded to attempts by saying it was already covered in existing discrimination and harassment policy, but that that policy doesn't stop it from happening. It can't be fixed through policy and instead they have to work on other initiatives and be collaborative with the other constituencies groups. The long-term change is in people's behaviour and that can't be done through policy changes.

There were no further questions.

7. Special Business (**none at this time**)

Reports

13. President

i. **President's Report:**

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 11 April, 2014. The report stood as submitted. In addition, B Epperson made the following remarks:

- Had a really great experience for the last two years at the GSA, learned a lot about governance and the government of Alberta;
- His own views on effective advocacy have evolved. He used to be more confrontational, but has learned to be more effective through collaboration. Thanked the management team of E Schoeck, C Thomas, and H Hogg for their guidance. He learned a lot from them and they were able to change for the better his approach on a number of issues;

- Thanked the entire GSA staff for making everything the Directly-Elected Officers accomplished this year possible. He believed that the GSA has the most professional and competent staff in the nation;
- Thanked each of his team members personally and stated that the members of the team who are continuing on have different skill sets which combined make a great team;
- N Andrews (incoming GSA President) is a great leader and that he has full confidence in S Cake (incoming VP External) doing an excellent job;
- It has been great to work with Council; he has appreciated the feedback and commitment from Councilors over the last two years. The GSA has the ear of administration and government, and to maintain progress, the GSA must remember it needs committed and capable people;
- Does not regret the debate that happened at Council this meeting because fixing problems is part of having a strong institution and the GSA will continue to work to make itself strong;
- The GSA Board Strategic Work Plan is built on solid principles, and the commitment to these principles should be constant, but the GSA must be flexible and adaptable in the ways that it advocates because it cannot assume that how it earned victories in the past will work in the future. So much of what happens is context dependent and based on relationships with Deans and Provosts.

There were no questions.

ii. GSA Board

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 11 April, 2014. The report stood as submitted.

iii. Budget and Finance Committee

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 11 April, 2014. The report stood as submitted.

iv. Governance Committee

No meetings this reporting period.

a) Nominating Committee

i. Nominating Committee Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 11 April, 2014. The report stood as submitted and, in addition, M DuVal reminded Council that the Nominating Committee was still accepting nominations for GSA Senator (Deadline April 30) and for positions on the General Faculties Council (Deadline April 22).

There were no questions.

14. Vice-President Academic

i. Vice-President Academic's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 11 April, 2014. The report stood as submitted and, in addition, C More made the following remarks:

- Attended the GU15 meeting in Waterloo with B Epperson and would like to note that the GSA has the best management and staff team in the country. The GSA is the best in the country and it is remarkable considering where we were;
- Graduate supervision and professional development were two main themes at the meeting and the GSA is leading in these at the moment and will continue to focus on them next year;
- General Faculties Council reform is underway and will be interesting and a big agenda item next year;

- Personal relationships are important in this job, they take a lot of effort to establish but a lot can be gotten out of them; *and*
- Thanked B Epperson and GSA management for their support this year, and is looking forward to working with the team again next year.

Following the presentation there was one question:

- M Bajaj asked if there are any other universities working on Permanent Residency application assistance and C More replied that there are not any that he can recall.

There were no further questions.

15. Vice-President Student Services

i. Vice-President Student Services' Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 11 April, 2014. The report stood as submitted and, in addition, M Bajaj made the following remarks:

- Have been working since November with the Students' Union and the other student associations on a reduced cost for U-Pass replacements. Transit authorities have agreed to move to a lower-cost model that is fair to students and transit authorities;
- There will be a trial run in fall 2014, with adoption in winter 2015 if it works well;
- The replacement cost price will be prorated with 100% cost in the first month, 75% cost in the second month, 50% cost in the third month and 25% cost in the fourth month of a semester;
- U of A administration, specifically P Clark, have been consulting with the GSA and Students Union in setting up the fee for PAW. Have not yet finalized the fee amount and payment term, but can say that it will be good news. They should be finalized for May Council; *and*
- Thanked everyone on the GSA staff and management, as well as the GSA team and Council. It has been a great year and she looked forward to working with everyone next year.

There were no questions.

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

No meetings this reporting period.

16. Vice-President External

i. Vice-President External's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 11 April, 2014. The report stood as submitted and, in addition, H Haroon made the following comments:

- Attended a lobby event where he was able to talk with Interim Minister Hancock and learned that around \$4 million would be coming to the CARI institutions for graduate students to increase enrollment;
- Has been attending a working group looking at current funding models for post-secondary education with the Ministry of Innovation and Advanced Education;
- Asked Councillors to circulate information about flexible leases in residences and instructed them to email H Haroon if they have questions; *and*
- Had a great experience over the last year. Thanked Councillors for a welcoming and friendly atmosphere, thanked management for their help, thanked the GSA office staff and thanked the GSA Board for exposing him to new ways of thinking and for being inspiring mentors.

Following the presentation there were a number of questions:

- N Andrews asked if the security deposit for students in residence has been increased and if H Haroon was involved in approving it. H Haroon replied that he was part of the discussion and that the change came because deposits were variable between residences and the move was made to standardize security

deposits while also reducing the application fee. Having a set deposit gives the University more leeway to charge for damages to suites, and since it is a refundable deposit if students treat their space well they will get it back. M Bajaj added that with the lower security deposits, if students had to pay charges when leaving after finishing their degrees, academic holds were placed on their accounts if they could not pay which would prevent graduation. This change should make that transition easier;

- C Iverson asked if someone is currently in a lease are they now in a flexible term or do they have to wait until they sign a new lease. H Haroon replied that to be eligible for a flexible lease, a student has to have lived in residence for at least a year, but do not have to wait to sign a new lease to use the policy. Students have to provide 90 days notice that they will be leaving. Alternatively, if a student graduates they no longer have to leave residence right away and can stay until their lease runs out if they so choose; *and*
- H Samuel asked if information about flexible leases and increased deposits have been circulated in the GSA Newsletter. H Haroon replied that they have not yet been circulated because the policy is not official until fall, but until then if a student is eligible under the policy, they can go to Residence Services and ask to be let out of their lease and they will honour it. The deposit increase has not been included in the GSA Newsletter but will make sure it is. H Samuel asked if Councillors could make these announcements to their departments and H Haroon replied that they could.

There were no further questions.

- ii. **Awards Selection Committee**
No meetings this reporting period.

17. Vice-President Labour

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 11 April, 2014. The report stood as submitted and, in addition, M Bal made the following comments:

- The GSA has received a report about safe spaces on campus which is available on the Office of Safe Disclosure and Human Rights website;
- The Negotiating Committee had its first meeting with Administration counterparts. It will be a tough year because of the budget situation but it is going smoothly so far and he believes the team will make progress because the Administration team has asked for additional information regarding some of the asks. Once the Negotiating Committee has received concrete numbers from the other side they will be presented at Council;
- Thanked members of the GSA team for their work together over the last year. Thanked GSA staff and management for putting up with him, but also said he has learned a lot and appreciated the support he has received and looks forward to working with everyone again next year.

There were no questions.

- ii. **Negotiating Committee**
No meetings this reporting period, meeting expected to be scheduled soon.
- iii. **Labour Relations Committee**
No meetings this reporting period.

18. Senator

- i. **Senator's Report**

No written report was required at this time. R Coulthard made the following comments:

- Senate's honorary degrees have been approved and Councillors will see some of them at June Convocation. The Senate Task Force is moving forward with focus groups and a survey going out to alumni and broader community members;
- Senate met with Alumni Council late last week, and this morning R Coulthard met with the Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services who are interested in coming to talk to GSA Council and GSA Board to get a sense of what kinds of services graduate students need; *and*
- Thanked the Directly-Elected Officers.

There were no questions.

19. Speaker

i. Speaker's Report

No report was required at this time.

20. Chief Returning Officer

i. Interim Deputy Returning Officer's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 11 April, 2014. The report stood as submitted and, in addition, R Zhao made the following comments:

- The 2014 GSA General Election Re-Run for Vice-President External has concluded and a new VP External has been elected. The full results are available on the GSA website *and*
- Thanked Council for having him as their Interim Deputy Returning Officer.

ii. Elections and Referenda Committee

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 11 April, 2014. The report stood as submitted.

21. GSA Management

iii. Executive Director's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 11 April, 2014. The report stood as submitted and, in addition, ED Ellen Schoeck made the following comments:

- Ellen said she wanted to return to Council's previous discussion about the election re-run in order to provide some information about what happened after the appeal decision was reached and to provide, as well, some information about the CRO's research trip to China. She prefaced her remarks by noting that GSA Policy provides that the Executive Director can be consulted on procedural matters during an appeals process, and she did so, when asked, with the assistance of the GSA lawyers.
- She first recalled how closely she had worked with I Odoom and ERC over the past year working through the 47 recommendations for change to election Bylaw and Policy as recommended by the previous CRO – a big step forward.
- With respect to the CRO's research trip to China, she said it was CRO I Odoom who had told her he was going on this trip and would not be at Council on March 17 – she was therefore surprised to see him at that Council meeting and admired his decision to postpone the research trip so he could see the process through. She understood he was then leaving for China.
- Ellen then turned to the rapid sequence of events following release of the appeal decision, summarizing the emails that led to election of an Acting CRO and DRO and providing the times the emails were sent over approximately a two-hour timeframe. She said the appeal decision was finalized on Friday 21 March 2014 in late afternoon just before Awards Night. On advice of the GSA's lawyer the decision was first sent to

the parties to the appeal. The appeal decision stated in part that 2014 GSA General Election Re-Run for Vice-President External should be held as expeditiously as possible, with an all-candidates' meeting ideally called by the CRO for the next day, Saturday March 22. Believing CRO I Odoom to be in China, the legal advice was that there should be someone on-site to run the election because of the 'expeditiously as possible' stipulation in the decision of the Acting Speaker.

- The GSA Board then elected an Acting CRO and Acting DRO. Ellen then said she emailed I Odoom to let him know and to say that the password to the CRO account had to be changed as to two individuals could not access the account;
- The All-Candidates Meeting was held on Saturday March 22, beginning the process or re-running the election for VP External.
- She concluded by saying that a great deal had been learned from this entire election experience and that it was clear more needs to be done to improve the election Bylaws and Policies.

D Prins stated that Council had Moved to limit discussion, and asked if there were any objections to questions being allowed. Having no objections from those present, a number of questions were asked:

- I Odoom stated that Ellen was correct that he did postpone his flight, and he had in fact done so twice. He also informed Ellen that if he did decide to go to China he would have let her know, and that the DRO would take over in his absence. I Odoom stated that when the appeal decision was released he had not yet travelled to China;
- I Odoom stated he did not feel the GSA treated him fairly; that he was not heard as part of the appeal process as a party to the appeal; and that he was not informed that the appeal decision had been made public and asked what stopped the DRO from performing the role of CRO in his absence;
- I Odoom stated that he was elected as CRO and does not think there would have been a conflict of interest for him to administer the 2014 GSA General Election Re-Run for Vice-President External;
- He further stated that if he had a conflict of interest, R Zhao, as Interim DRO throughout the GSA General Election, would also have had a conflict of interest because they collaborate on the initial decision that was appealed;
- I Odoom stated that it is not right to have an elected officer treated in this manner because it is inconsistent - the Acting CRO travelled, the Acting DRO acted, and there was no election held;
- B Epperson stated that it was his understanding that I Odoom was in China. I Odoom did not have to communicate his travel to B Epperson or D Prins because that is not their role, but this is the first B Epperson has heard that I Odoom was not in China when the appeal decision was released;
- B Epperson stated that in regards to conflict of interest, if someone appeals the decision you have made in an election there is a conflict of interest.

There were no further questions.

Question Period

22. Written Questions

Two written questions were received and were addressed during Councillor Announcements.

23. Oral Questions

No questions were asked.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm.

**The Quality of Graduate Student and Post-Doctoral Supervision at the University of Alberta
April 2014**

**Naomi Krogman, Professor, Department of Resource Economics and Environmental Sociology,
Faculty of Agriculture, Life, and Environmental Sciences**

Provost's Fellow 2012-13

Executive Summary

In a world in which so many people make significant sacrifices to obtain an advanced degree, it is a privilege to attend graduate school, and it is a privilege to hold a professor position and supervise graduate students and post-doctoral scholars. The University of Alberta is one of the top-rated Universities in Canada, with 170 graduate programs, 6,130 full-time graduate students and 1,300 part-time graduate students as of 2013 (AAUC 2014). As a research-intensive higher education institution, we have both an ethical and a leadership role in molding excellence in graduate student supervision.

This report is written to inform the Provost's office of best practices and different problems associated with graduate student and post-doctoral supervision at the University of Alberta. The report is also intended to help professors, graduate students, post-doctoral scholars, University administrators, and other key professionals in higher education to examine multiple ways to foster a supportive environment for excellence in graduate student and post-doctoral scholar supervision. Overall, the University of Alberta has many programs and practices in place to cultivate an excellent culture of graduate student supervision. Faculty members and graduate coordinators reported strong interest and commitment to improved learning experiences for graduate students at the University of Alberta.

The key recommendations in this report are mainly addressed to departments, faculties, and the Faculty of Graduate Studies. The main areas calling for attention include: 1) Provide earlier guidance to graduate students to improve graduate success. This includes recommendations to supervisors to develop written agreed-upon expectations of graduate students and themselves. Departments can enforce regularly scheduled reviews of graduate students for satisfactory progress, with consequences to students with unsatisfactory reviews, and employ more careful procedures to admit graduate students in individual programs; 2) Increase accountability of supervisors and departments for good supervision. Chairs need to conduct exit interviews and periodic reports on trends in graduate student supervision and to discuss each graduate student's progress at the annual report meeting with supervisors. Departments should establish a process to address and follow up on poor graduate student supervision, and require faculty to write a graduate student mentorship philosophy for their tenure and promotion packages; 3) Provide training and mentorship to supervisors and graduate coordinators to raise standards of supervision and mentorship. Effort needs to be directed toward granting more opportunities to graduate coordinators to develop mentorship programs, mentorship awards, and other learning opportunities unique to their department or discipline, as part of the collective mentorship of graduate students in their department. Graduate coordinators would benefit from more training on how to address supervisory deficiencies in a fair, consistent and transparent manner; 4) Improve the culture of mentorship by continuing to provide, and provide more, forms of guidance to graduate students; 5) Specific to post-doctoral fellows, the academy should better integrate post-doctoral (PD) scholars into departmental culture, provide more training on PD scholar supervision, and offer more PD scholar professional development training opportunities. Above all, the top priority should be to enhance the culture and accountability of supervisors and departments for good supervision. While problems with poor supervision and poor student-supervisor relations are the exception, these cases are very costly in terms of time, resources, morale and institutional reputation. High quality supervision and mentorship is central to an institution committed to seeing their graduate students flourish in their careers and in the contributions they make to the public good. A commitment to, and practice of, high quality graduate student and post-doctoral supervision is part of our University's legacy and reputation.

The Quality of Graduate Student and Trainee Supervision

**Naomi Krogman, Professor, Department of Resource Economics and Environmental Sociology,
Faculty of Agriculture, Life, and Environmental Sciences**

April 2014

Introduction

In a world in which so many people make significant sacrifices to obtain an advanced degree, this report is written from the perspective of a University of Alberta professor who has observed these sacrifices among many of her students. As such, the report articulates that it is a privilege to attend graduate school, and it is a privilege to supervise graduate students and post-doctoral trainees. The University of Alberta is one of the top rated Universities in Canada, with more than 170 graduate programs, 6,130 full-time graduate students and 1,300 part-time graduate students as of 2012 (AAUC 2014). As a key U15 research-intensive higher education institution, we have both an ethical and leadership role in modeling excellence in graduate student supervision. While this report is written to inform the Provost of different problems and best practices associated with graduate student and post-doctoral supervision at the University of Alberta, this report is also intended to help professors, graduate students, post-doctoral trainees, University administrators, and other key professionals in higher education to examine the multiple ways in which a supportive environment for excellence in graduate student and post-doctoral trainee supervision can be fostered.

This report was prompted by concerns expressed by the Graduate Student Association about the quality of graduate student supervision to the Provost, Vice Provost, Dean of Faculty of Graduate Studies (FGSR) and the Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE). In 2011 General Faculties Council requested to have an advisory committee struck to address graduate student supervision issues. This request led the Provost to appoint a Provost's fellow to address the quality of graduate student supervision in thesis-based programs, as well as the quality of post-doctoral trainee supervision.

The report begins with a description of some trends that bear on graduate students and post-doctoral trainee University experience. Best practices and policy recommendations are offered to improve the

context of supervision and the supervisor-student relationship. The material drawn upon for this report includes a literature review, interviews with University of Alberta graduate students, post-doctoral trainees, faculty, leadership and support personnel, focus group consultations with faculty, graduate students and post-doctoral trainees, University documents, and other grey literature on graduate student supervision. An advisory group consisting of three elected members of the Graduate Student Association, a graduate coordinator, a Vice-Provost, Dean of Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, and a research assistant met with the author four times over the academic year 2012-13 to discuss key issues in graduate student and post-doctoral trainee supervision and later provide advice on this report.

The Larger Context of Graduate Student and Post-Doctoral Supervision

More interest among public in earning graduate degrees

Following the US trend (NRC 1996), graduate programs expanded across Canada when in the 1960s higher education and university expansion of graduate programs became a provincial and national priority (Williams 2005). Based on CAUT (2002; 2013) records of national enrollments in Master's and PhD students in Canada, the number of full-time enrollments nearly doubled. Further, the number of full-time workers holding an advanced degree doubled over a 20-year period, from 55,000 full-time workers in 1990 to 1.1 million in 2009 (AAUC 2008), and those with a graduate degree assumed higher proportions of employment gains (Cennerelli 2013). Overall, funding support in Canada has also improved for graduate students since the 1980s (Cennerelli 2013).

Increased educational attainment across many developing and medium-developed countries has also resulted in a greater number of the world's population able to gain entry into Universities. In particular, Canada is considered a desirable country for international students seeking a graduate education. Correspondingly, the number of graduate students in Canadian Universities has increased dramatically. According to Statistics Canada (Stats Can 2011) and AUCC estimates, Baron (2012) reports that Canada's international graduate student enrollment has tripled since 1980. Between the 1999-2000 school year and the 2009-2010 school year international student full-time equivalent graduate program enrollment more than doubled in Canada and this is higher if part-time enrollments are included (CAUT, 2012). For 2011-12, 25% of master's students and 40% of doctoral students were international students. Sixty percent of Alberta's international students state an intention to seek work

in the Alberta after completing their studies (University of Alberta, 2013, p. 25). According to Lisa Collins, our University of Alberta registrar, 34% of our graduate students are international students, and half of our doctoral students are from outside of Canada.

Professor-graduate student and post-doctoral trainee relationship more as co-learners than 30 years ago

One of the privileges professors hold is to work with talented and motivated graduate students and post-doctoral trainees from all over the world. In fact, some Universities regard supervision as an honor that must be earned, and abuses and trust in the supervisory relationship may be considered grounds to take away the right to supervise (Lovitts, 2001). Our graduate students often bring to the University culture a richness of possible inquiries that are grounded in their lifelong learning and profound personal experiences. In addition to the richness that graduate students bring to the very nature of inquiry at the University, the knowledge with which we have to draw on has grown exponentially (Adair and Vhora 2003). Students and faculty have improved access to new data sets, archival records, translated publications, and various forms of knowledge (e.g., videos, meta-data sets, traditional knowledge, new oral traditions, and geographic information). The explosion of opportunity and knowledge makes it unrealistic for most professors to fully stay abreast of the developments in their field (Moghaddam, 1997). Therefore, graduate students and post-doctoral trainees often become colleagues, partners, or leaders in methodological experimentation, new analytic methods, creative works, and knowledge discovery, to a much greater extent than 15- 30 years ago when most full professors were trained. This requires flexibility in framing a research project for both graduate students and professors, where professors must confront the limits of their knowledge and graduate students must be confident about co-learning with their professors and take more self-directed responsibility for knowledge discovery. Graduate students' learning journeys, for some Master's level students, and many PhD students and especially post-docs, is generally without a clear set of "how to" guidelines to carry out their creative works and theses. While research procedures may be more clearly laid out in laboratory-based work, students have more discretionary decision-making in their research given the pace of new methods, problem-solving options, options to display information, and innovative discoveries upon which to build (Dolan and Johnson, 2010). For the remainder of this report, "students" includes graduate students and post-doctoral trainees.

Pressures on faculty and graduate students increased

From the outset, we must recognize that student supervision takes place in the changing context of higher education. Performance expectations of faculty have increased, especially for numbers and impact of refereed articles to earn tenure, and in the case of students, to acquire a tenure-track position. At the University of Alberta, published research articles, reports, and other outputs are required for merit increments and promotions. University expectations regarding professors' success at obtaining and managing research grants have changed. Grant-writing abilities and research budget management are required skills for professors in many departments (e.g. Engineering, Agriculture, Biology, Psychology). While funding has increased for graduate students in Canada since the 1980s, Abu-Laban and Rule (1988) showed that "from the early 1970s on, except for a short period in the early 1980s, SSHRC funding has deteriorated" (p.11). Baron (2012) noted that national support from Canada's research councils decreased by about 25% in 2011 suggesting there is not enough money nationally to maintain traditional levels of funding for an expanded number of graduate students. Williams (2005) reports that the Canadian government's shift to increase the production of new knowledge and the training of highly qualified personnel in the late 1990s manifested itself in funds directed toward areas of national economic interest, more transfer of knowledge outside of academe, requirements for matching funding from other sources, and higher levels of accountability on research productivity. Each of these trends may have increased pressures on faculty members to develop research programs in particular areas, with particular partners, to obtain research funding to support their scholarship and graduate students.

Funding agencies have increased expectations for effective dissemination of research findings, and varied forms of dissemination are encouraged, including refereed journal articles, refereed reports, radio programs, newspaper and magazine articles, newsletter summaries, small video productions, presentations to various audiences with a stake in the research, workshop leadership and University showcase events. Tri-council funding, particularly the National Science and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) has placed more emphasis on "highly qualified personnel" and thus the training quality and numbers of graduate students and post-doctoral trainees is given greater emphasis in grant evaluation. Graduate students and post-doctoral trainees are increasingly expected to be supportive and integral to research publications, obtaining grants, managing projects, building and maintaining partnerships, and leading or contributing to various forms of research dissemination. *The expectations for faculty are reflected back to graduate students and post-doctoral trainees.* Graduate students and

post-docs are often watching their supervisors closely and seek greater guidance on how to professionally carry out all of a professor's duties and meet University expectations, as well as maintain a healthy work-life balance.

The number of professors hired has not kept pace with the number of graduate students admitted to U15 Universities (Cennerelli 2012; CAUT, 2012). The ratio of undergraduate students to professors has doubled over the last few decades, with a Canadian University average of 12 to one in the late 1970s to over 22 to one today (Cennerelli 2012). While teaching loads vary among faculty, class sizes tend to increase as more students are admitted into the University, and professor expectations to update their course material and use available classroom technologies, electronic sites, and other innovative teaching methods adds to the time commitment required of professors to continuously enrich their teaching and the learning in their classrooms. This time requirement must be negotiated with other time required to responsibly and effectively supervise graduate students.

The practice of research has become global and collaborative, and often involves crossing boundaries with other universities and civic and government institutions (Rose 2012). Professors are frequently required to reach out to more community partners, speak to the press about their work, and collaborate with appropriate government departments, foundations, First Nations, and so on. This greater engagement makes University professors more connected to the rest of the world, but may also require sustained commitment of professors to build relationships and invest in various styles of communication appropriate for varied audiences. Skills to build relationships and partnerships with other Universities and other organizations are also expected of graduate students and post-doctoral trainees who obtain their education at the University of Alberta. Professors are increasingly called on to be role models to graduate students. Professors demonstrate to their graduate students how to initiate and negotiate research projects with partners, actively listen and integrate ideas across multiple agendas and disciplines, compromise, and be respectfully responsive throughout the duration of a project. These skills are likely required of MSc/MA and PhD students upon completion of their degrees for the suite of positions they may obtain. One study suggested that faculty can be so heavily engaged in research activities that it detracts from the time they have for their graduate students (AAU 1990). The context of the contemporary university is one of increasing demands on faculty, students, and post-doctoral trainees to incorporate various research activities into their work and still complete their degrees in a timely manner. Despite the added pressure, there is evidence that those students who

are actively engaged in research activities early in their program, and those who publish, are more likely to complete their degrees and experience career success (Larivière 2012).

Stress levels and mental health issues increased for both faculty and graduate students

While the position of University Professor was recently listed as one of the most desirable, and least stressful jobs in the world in a popular survey by CareerCast.com (Kensing, 2013), there are a number of studies that suggest that faculty have felt greater stress in recent years in their positions at research intensive universities (CAUT 2007). A workplace workload/work life study done at the University of Alberta (AASUA and the University of Alberta 2009) found that of the 74% of University of Alberta academic staff who responded to the on-line survey reported experiencing work-related stress “very” or “fairly” frequently. It was self-reported in the on-line survey sample that work-related stress has resulted in psychological health problems for 38% of academic staff and physical health problems for 61% of academic staff. A key finding in this study is that much of the stress was related to professional and non-professional administrative tasks, i.e., administrative obligations. When faculty members are under stress and distracted with administrative tasks, this can affect the quality and quantity of time they have to mentor graduate students. If graduate students see their professors visibly stressed and know they are unavailable to them due to other job duties, this also sends a message to graduate students that they are less important and the University is a stressful workplace. In some cases, those students assigned to supervise other students in laboratory settings may feel saddled with responsibilities to which their supervisors cannot attend. Graduate students may also feel discouraged about earning a PhD if the professor position appears unduly difficult. *Professors’ workloads, and workplace wellness, can reflect back to their graduate students and post-doctoral trainees.*

Similarly, graduate students may face mental and physical health issues related to their experiences in graduate school. A number of factors may contribute to graduate student depression. Contributors include the intense workload, the “imposter syndrome” or a sense that one could be “found out” for not having the intellect required to earn the degree or publish their work, and the sense of dependency on the supervisor while at the same time the expectation to develop a professional identity. Particularly at the thesis-writing stage, many students experience a sense of stress over what they can ask of their professors, and they might feel quite isolated in the writing process (especially in the humanities and social sciences). Science graduate students also experience a significant transition in the nature of their work, often going from a field or laboratory environment, with its structure, schedule and camaraderie,

to the solitude of writing at a computer.

Additionally, the competition for a good supervisor, funding, and a degree-appropriate job after graduation can be intimidating and depressing for some students (Fullick, 2011). In my interviews, and described by Fullick's (2011) in a *University Affairs* article, graduate students often feel that the definition of success for how one employs their PhD after they finish has narrowed to having a research-focused position. Even though a small proportion of students will obtain permanent faculty positions, professors may treat all graduate students as headed for research-oriented academic careers. There is growing concern that universities must consider non-academic career paths for students and post-doctoral trainees (McCook, 2011; Scaffidi and Berman, 2011; Lovitts, 2001), for business, government, non-profit and charitable sectors. While some students may not feel particularly stressed or depressed, these same factors can contribute to disillusionment with graduate school and slow progress. For some students, the uncertainty of what they have to offer for different employment sectors and where they will obtain employment results in their discontinuation of their graduate program.

At a 2008 Meeting for the Canadian Association of Graduate Schools in Edmonton, Lisa Brandes, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs at Yale University, provided an overview of studies on Graduate student mental health. In this overview she cited a University of California Student Mental Health Committee report that stated, "Graduate students as a group have been identified as a population at higher risk for mental health concerns. The level of stress for graduate students is magnified by their relative isolation from the broader components of campus life, the intense academic pressures of their advanced studies, and the increased presence of family and financial obligations." Brandes (2008) warned that the consequences of this stress have been associated with suffering and depression, delays in progress to earn the degree, reduced productivity in teaching and research, and in rare cases, student suicide and self-harm (Lovitts 2001).

Recent budget cuts have intensified fears among some faculty about job security and workplace satisfaction. Faculty worry about increased workload with fewer support staff, larger and more classes, higher expectations to fund research and graduate students, and their ability to maintain work-life balance. Given the provincial government reductions in higher education funding in Alberta, this will be an important period to assure that graduate student and post-doctoral trainee supervision remains a high priority to the leadership at the University of Alberta, and that support is provided for both professors and graduate students to work well together even as shifts are made in University resources

and various decision-making structures.

Costs of graduate school

Graduate education tuition costs increased steadily between the 1980's and early 2000's at which point it plateaued (CAUT, 2012). While the cost of graduate education is average at the University of Alberta compared to other U15 University graduate programs in Canada, Alberta has a higher cost of living than many other University cities and towns in Canada. Between 2012 and 2013 the consumer price index increased by 2.3% in Alberta, and only 0.5% in Ontario, 0.7% in Quebec, and decreased by 0.6% in BC (Statistics Canada, 2012). Some graduate students do not have adequate funding to cover their housing, food, transportation, and other household costs over the duration of their programs.

Doctoral candidates in Canada, according to Williams (2005), rely, in descending order, on the university, their own resources, the federal government and then the province. A “Survey of Earned Doctorates: A Profile of Doctoral Degree Recipients” report from Statistics Canada indicates that in 2003-2004 nearly 64% of recent graduate students had University teaching assistantships, 58% University scholarships and another 30% from university research assistantships. Thirty-nine percent of all doctoral students relied on personal savings, 33% on personal earnings, 31.5% on family earnings, and 27.3% on loans (Statistics Canada 2013b). A larger proportion of graduate students have student loans, and graduate student indebtedness increased in the early 2000s (Human Resources and Social Development Canada 2006).

Some graduate students seek outside work when their stipends are inadequate to cover their costs, their funding runs out, or their expenses are too high. Full-time, good standing, international students may work on-campus but must obtain a permit to work off-campus, and depending on the country of citizenship, may also need to obtain a resident visa (pers comm. Santiago, Immigration Advisor, November 4, 2013). When graduate students work on alternative projects to earn money, most find their thesis progress slows (NRC, 2005). Many professors at the University of Alberta have observed this is especially the case when full-time students switch to a full-time job and cannot devote the hours necessary to write their theses. Living in Alberta, more so than other provinces, may entice students into paid employment in which they can earn good incomes in the current job market, particularly for domestic students, where our April 2013 unemployment rate of 4.4% was the second lowest in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2013b). Thus opportunity to step into a full time position may be even easier in the

Alberta context, before one completes their degree. Even service industry jobs are plentiful in Alberta, and while useful for providing supplementary funding to a student trying to financially support themselves to the end of their graduate studies, service industries also require time and commitment that can subtract from the student's energy to work on their research or final project. Sleep and other types of restorative activities may diminish if students are trying to write a thesis and work part- or full-time, adding to stress, and by association, distraction (Mullainathan, and Shafir 2013).

While it may seem as though a student's financial standing is a private matter, supervisors would be wise to openly discuss with their students the limits of the funding available, the expectation of what a full-time student and part-time student accomplishes as associated with different levels of funding, and the student's approach to supplemental employment, especially as the funding for the graduate degree or post-doctoral position declines or stops. In some cases tensions have risen between supervisors and graduate students in regards to the graduate students' amount of outside paid employment while they work towards completing their degree, and in regards to graduate student unmet expectations for continued funding. In other cases, when graduate students are funded to certain levels by a large scholarship, or many scholarships, they are not supposed to take additional paid work, as the funding is for full-time devotion to one's studies. Secure, guaranteed amounts of funding for a set number of years (e.g. 2.5 years for Master's, 5 for PhD) may alleviate much of the problem of graduate students seeking outside employment as their degree is underway. Larivière (2013) in fact found that students who received scholarship funding from provincial and federal research councils were more likely to graduate and publish, and the amount of funding had no impact on the number of articles they published (as described in Tamburri, 2013:18).

According to a recent study by Larivière (2013: 27) who uses data from the province of Quebec to examine the relationship among excellence scholarships, research productivity, scientific impact, and degree completion, he found that: “funded students publish more papers than their unfunded colleagues, but that there is only a slight difference between funded and unfunded PhD students in terms of scientific impact. Funded students, especially those funded by the federal government, are also more likely to graduate. Finally, although funding is clearly linked to higher degree completion for students who did not publish, this is not true of those who managed to publish at least one paper during the course of their PhD.” This suggests that students who are socialized early in their program to publish may be less daunted by financial hardships given their focus and dedication to complete their degrees in a timely manner and gain the professional markers of success in their field.

Demographic Features of Graduate Students

While students in the past may have typically gone straight from a Bachelor's degree into a Master's degree program, the median time gap between a Bachelor's and Master's student is currently approximately seven years in Canada (Statistics Canada 2013). The age breakdown of full-time master's and PhD students has shifted during the last 30 years. Master's and PhD students were generally older in 2010 than they were in 1980, but younger than they were in the early 1990s. In 1980, 26 percent of full-time Master's students were 30 years of age or older, increasing to a 30-year high of almost 36 percent in 1994, and then decreasing to 31 percent in 2010. The trend was similar for PhD students. In 1980, 46 percent of PhD students were 30 years or older, increasing to 62% in 1992, and then decreasing to 56% in 2010.

Thus, the age at which an individual will earn an MSc or a PhD varies widely (NRC 2005). Students may be older when they return to graduate school than the average was perhaps twenty years ago. Part-time PhD students in particular are almost always older and include more women (AUCC 2002). Williams (2005, p. 11) reports, "Students tend to be oldest in education (46 years old on average) and younger in the sciences (31 years old in chemistry)." Many more graduate students are women (NRC 1996; 66), combining graduate school with slowly changing roles as wives and mothers. Thirty years ago, many more male graduate students were being supported by their wives who were holding a paid job. Many more graduate students today are international students (Williams 2005) and people of color. Williams (2005) reports that in Canada, 75% of international students are male and that foreign students represent 45.6% of all students in the sciences and engineering, 25.4% in the social sciences and humanities, and 24.1% in the health sciences. These trends are worth noting in that most contemporary graduate students are being supervised by professors who obtained their doctorates in a very different environment (far less diversity), where graduate school was perhaps done earlier in one's adulthood and could more easily be a full-time pursuit.

Completion Times & Attrition

In a twelve-year period (2000-2011) at the University of Alberta, University of Alberta Faculty of Graduate Studies data for MA/MSc students reveals that students generally complete their degrees in three years. Completion times for PhDs for the same time period have gone from gone from 5.5 years

to 6.1, effectively adding one or two semesters to the students' degree program. Twenty-two percent of our doctoral students for the period 2000-2011 left the program without any credential, about 8% left with a Master's degree, and 70% earned their PhD. While it makes no sense to compare across campus programs, it does make sense to compare with similar programs at other schools, and we are near the median in time to completion with other U15 Universities (Shirvani, pers comm. 2013). Students in Science lab and team based programs have a higher completion rate, and this is often attributed to the social support and accountability students have to a group-driven schedule to complete steps of a project. Alternatively, Social Sciences and Humanities students are often working independently, and the isolation and less frequent contact with their supervisor and cohort appears to be associated with a slower completion of their thesis, and higher withdrawal rate from graduate school (Nerad and Cerny 1991; Lovitts, 2001). Kenneth Gibbs, a fellow with the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), argued in a recent presentation for the Careers and Opportunities in Science committee meeting that I attended at the 2013 AAAS annual meeting, that the elongation of PhDs and post-docs periods tends to work against minorities and women, who tend to negotiate greater family obligations during their degrees.

A Canadian Association Graduate Studies Survey (2005) found a 45% completion rate in the Social Sciences and Humanities and 75% for other disciplines. According to a National Research Council (1996) report, attrition rates have risen at many US institutions as well. Some institutions place graduate attrition rates for selected fields in the sciences and humanities at 50%; others have reported attrition levels at over 65% for some programs. The report asserts that the rates reported at institutions that have tracked attrition consider these high because attrition rates were only 20-40% in 1960 (Berelson, 1960; National Science Foundation, 1996, p. 1). Programs that have a more selective screening process, such as medical and law schools, have a much lower attrition rate. There is also a lower attrition rate in the Sciences than there are in the Social Sciences and Humanities.

Recommendations for Best Practices in Graduate Student and Post-Doctoral Supervision

The following section is written to highlight best practices for graduate student supervision, from both the wisdom of professors, graduate students, and professionals at the University of Alberta, and literature on graduate student supervision. This section concurrently addresses some of the common problems with supervision and various levels of University organization that may assist in developing approaches and practices to address these problems.

1. Provide earlier guidance to graduate students to improve student success.

1.1 *Make expectations clear between supervisor and student at the beginning of the program, and periodically updated thereafter*

Throughout interviews with successful supervisors and in written guides for supervisors from several Universities is the advice to encourage supervisors and students to make expectations clear from start to finish of the degree, starting early in the graduate student's program. The University of Alberta's FGSR promotes such discussions by providing a document on their website devoted to resources for supervisors that includes a checklist of topics to discuss at the first meeting, and provides websites for various offices and services on campus available to graduate students, and policies important for graduate students. This list of expectations below is a more supervisor and student-focused list of expectations to discuss at the beginning and midway point of the program. This list is borrowed from guidelines offered by the University of British Columbia, with a few other expectations added. In written form, the supervisor could, for example, make these commitments to the student in writing.

As your supervisor, you can expect me to:

- Demonstrate commitment to your research and educational program, and offer stimulation, respectful support, constructive criticism, and consistent encouragement.
- Assist with identification of a research topic that is suitable for you and manageable within the scope of your degree.
- Have sufficient familiarity with your field of research to provide guidance as a supervisor, or assure you that we will include highly knowledgeable professors on your supervisory committee to assist the development of your research.
- Assist you in gaining access to required facilities or research materials for your projects.
- Discuss your financial support issues and assist with scholarship applications and/or provide advice on academic employment opportunities.
- Act in accordance with the University of Alberta's Collective Agreement with the Graduate Student Association.
- Provide guidance in the ethical conduct of research and model research integrity.
- Discuss with you the implications of engaging with activities/work unrelated to your thesis topic.
- Provide information about my availability for meetings and expectations about preparation for meetings.
- Assist you in planning your research program, setting a time frame, and adhering as much as possible to the schedule.
- Encourage you to finish when it would not be in your best interest to stay longer.

- Be accessible for consultation and discussion of your academic progress and research at a minimum of once a term. [On average, our meetings will be held _____.]
- Minimize my expectations for activities/work that may interfere with your thesis completion.
- Institute a supervisory committee (with appropriate input from you) and prepare for committee meetings, which will occur on a regular basis (at least once a year) to review your progress and provide guidance for your future work. I will arrange committee meetings.
- Involve the supervisory committee further when there are areas of confusion or disagreement between us on your appropriate research directions.
- Support you in your preparation for the comprehensive examination and admission to candidacy, which will be completed within 36 months of program initiation.
- Act as a resource about managing program requirements, deadlines, etc.
- Attend your presentations in appropriate venues and join in associated discussion.
- Submit recommendations for external examiners and university examiners (for the doctoral dissertation) within the time frames required by the Faculty of Graduate Studies.
- Acknowledge your contributions, when appropriate, in published material and oral presentations [Discuss policy regarding authorship, etc. of papers] in accordance with good scholarly practice and the University's scholarly integrity policies.
- Provide reasonable expectations about workday hours and vacation time in accordance with University policies.
- Clarify my preferred style of communication with students about areas, such as student independence, approaches to conflict, direct questioning, and mentoring.
- Explain my expectations for mode of address, professional behavior (e.g. punctuality), when to seek assistance, responses to constructive criticism, and academic performance expectations.
- Assist you in overcoming any cultural difficulties with norms and expectations.
- Respond thoroughly (with constructive suggestions for improvement) and in a timely fashion to submitted, written work. I will generally try to return written work within three weeks, and indicate otherwise if I cannot meet this deadline.
- Promote a research environment that is safe and free from harassment.
- Assure you are aware of field safety procedures and where possible, obtain appropriate training.
- Assist in managing conflict or differences among members of the supervisory committee.
- Make arrangements to ensure adequate supervision if I am absent for extended periods, e.g. more than a month.
- Encourage you to present your research results within and outside the University. [Approximately how often? _____.]
- Provide mentoring in academic writing.
- Provide advice and mentorship with respect to career opportunities, which may be assisted by resources, skills, professional development, and other avenues.

Similarly, here are agreement guidelines for student expectations with their supervisor:

As your student, you can expect me to:

- Take responsibility for my progress towards my degree completion.

- Demonstrate commitment and dedicated effort in gaining the necessary background knowledge and skills to carry out the thesis.
- At all times, demonstrate research integrity and safety precautions, and conduct research in an ethical manner in accordance with University's policies and the policies or other requirements of any organizations funding my research.
- In conjunction with you, develop a plan and a timetable for completion of each stage of the thesis project.
- As applicable, apply to the University or granting agencies for financial awards or other necessary resources for the research.
- Meet standards and deadlines of the funding organization for a scholarship or grant.
- Adhere to negotiated schedules and meet appropriate deadlines.
- Keep you and the Faculty of Graduate Studies my contact information when I change addresses.
- Meet and correspond with you when requested within specified time frames.
- Report fully and regularly on my progress and results.
- Maintain my registration and ensure any required permits or authorizations are kept up to date until the program is completed.
- Be thoughtful and reasonably frugal in using resources.
- Behave in a respectful manner with peers and colleagues.
- Conform to the University and departmental/school requirements for my program.
- Meet at regular intervals with my supervisory committee (no less than yearly).
- Progress to my candidacy defense (including completion of my comprehensive exam) within 36 months of the initiation of my program.
- Go to you first with my concerns about graduate student supervision or research steps, to try and work out difficulties before taking it to higher authorities.
- Keep orderly records of my research activities and be able to send copies of specific joint items easily to supervisor or research team, when requested.
- Develop a clear understanding concerning ownership of intellectual property and scholarly integrity (Policy websites can be listed).
- Attend any required training programs that are discussed and agreed.
- Work at least regular workday hours on my research project after course-work has been completed.
- Discuss two months in advance with you, with you my plans for vacation, and how that fits with the research project schedule.
- Discuss, with you, the policy on use of computers and equipment.
- Complete my thesis and course work within timelines specified by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and suitable for my discipline.
- Finish my work and clear up my workspace when program requirements have been completed.
- Return any borrowed materials on project completion or when requested.
- Explain to you my comfort with modes of communication (e.g. formal or informal, use of questioning) and independent activities.
- Make it clear to you when I do not understand what is expected of me. Ask for more help when needed.
- Describe my comfort with approaches to our academic relationship, e.g. professional versus personal.

- Contribute to a safe workplace where each individual shows tolerance and respect for the rights of others.
- Respond respectfully to advice and criticisms (indicating acceptance or rationale for rejection) received from you and members of my supervisory committee.
- Inform you in a timely manner about any of my presentations to facilitate attendance and project record keeping.
- Discuss, with you, my career plan and hopes for professional growth and development.
- Request in a timely manner (two weeks in advance for example), letters of reference for scholarships or other juried opportunities to which I would like to apply.

1.2 Refine the Selection of Students Admitted into our Programs

Many professors held that more supervisory problems occur with students who are not a good fit for that discipline, well-prepared, or performing well in graduate school. As the student falters in course work, passing a program-required exam, or in delivering appropriately written thesis chapter drafts, stress is increased particularly for that student, but is frequently felt by the supervisor as well. The supervisor may ask the student to increase their effort and time toward studying, preparation, or practice. More guidance and mentorship is needed for students who are unclear or unsure about how to perform better, and more time is required by the professor and student to communicate and prepare for the next milestone of the student's program. This is especially the case when a student has failed a comprehensive or candidacy exam, as their confidence may be significantly diminished. This added attention and time competes with professor's other work expectations, and is often not planned for in the suite of commitments a professor has already made. Hence, students who need more attention clearly can be a drain on professor productivity. This added attention and time from the supervisor is what the student often needs to succeed, and it is part of the supervisory responsibility of the professor. When a professor does not step up with additional time or attention, many students will feel adrift and unsupported, which can further erode their confidence. These feelings can lead to delays in the student completing the program, student attrition, or even grievance proceedings against their professors.

Graduate student admissions processes could change to consider the strategy of "broad-based admissions" to more carefully screen and select students for admission, beyond using grades and letters of reference as criteria. For example, at the University of British Columbia undergraduates are required to describe the challenges they have faced as well as their leadership and teamwork skills as part of their application (Drolet 2013). Departments could develop their own "broad-based admissions"

application requirements, potentially informed by their own analysis on the relationship among incoming graduate students' grades, standardized exam scores, letters of reference, writing samples, research and work experience, and student success. While interviews have become one way to more carefully choose student applicants, there is some evidence that it is less reliable as a check on the likelihood of future performance than might be expected (Kahneman 2011; Monahan, 2013). Evidence of the student having adequate undergraduate-level knowledge in a particular area, completing tasks in a timely manner, having a strong work ethic, working well with others on project-based and intellectual pursuits, and demonstrating writing ability could be more carefully assessed at the application stage to more carefully admit incoming graduate students. Each department may be able to identify trends among those students who have not done well in their programs, or dropped out, and tailor their increased scrutiny around the desired knowledge areas, skills, and work orientations that they see among those who tend to succeed.

A recent informal survey at the University of New Brunswick identified these best practices among successful graduate students: 1) Were goal driven and highly organized; 2) Focused on their well-being; 3) Proactively managed their supervisors and supporting individuals; 4) Applied specific writing techniques (Gupta 2013). Similarly, Lovitts (2005) found that those students who did well in completing their degree beyond coursework had a high degree of discipline concerning their work, an ability to delay gratification, perseverance in the face of frustration, a high degree of autonomy, a strong internal locus of control, a high level of self-initiative, were task-oriented and strove for excellence. Departments may want to consider what “broad-based criteria” they may want to require for applications to their specific departments in relation to these best practices and personality trends of those students who tend to do well.

1.3 Require graduate students to be reviewed for satisfactory progress to continue in the program after Year I, for the Masters of Arts or Sciences degree, and in Year II, for the Doctoral degree, with consequences for unsatisfactory review.

Many professors held that students who did not make satisfactory progress in their courses and completing other exams (preliminary, qualifying, specialization exams) were allowed second chances that were sometimes followed by a weak performance, just “at, or above the bar” that allowed the student to stay in the program, and suggested that the remainder of the program for those students was often a struggle. Supervisors are often reluctant to be so critical as to suggest the program of study may

not be suitable for the student, and the student may not be aware of the significant improvements necessary to be competent and competitive alongside their peers in the field.

It is at these junctures of difficulty when a supervisor's observational and mentoring skills are most important, in that they must work more closely with the student, in most cases, to guide them through the remaining stages, be it passing the candidacy or rewriting part of written work to satisfy the supervisory committee or research team. Supervisors who have a "sink or swim" attitude toward the student, or who are not committed to providing more attention and advice to students who are struggling at particular junctures, may end up with a student who takes a very long time to complete their degree, and who ultimately is not a strong competitor for positions in their area once the degree is earned.

Aside from more training to supervisors *about how to provide constructive, honest advice* on their assessment of students' critical thinking, research synthesis, writing, methodological, and presentation skills as required by the standards of their field, departments could put in place a set of guidelines to address a failed course, exam, or prolonged period to complete a research proposal or other assignment that is part of the graduate degree. When student falters at any stage, a plan should be put in place between the supervisor and the student about the steps that will be taken to move toward the next goal. While it may be unknown how long it will take for a student to be at a stage where the student is ready for the next milestone, such as an exam (for example, qualifying or candidacy), a time line to place targets is warranted. There is evidence that progress monitoring is quite effective in hastening students' progress (Mullainathan and Shafir 2013).

Departments could play a stronger role in setting up such plans when a student fails an exam, or does not have satisfactory progress at stages of review. A student might also be asked, "What would support your success?" to allow flexibility in the kinds of mentorship and support the student might access, through various programs on campus. Under-utilized programs, such as the programming targeted at graduate students through the Student Success Centre (on topics such as thesis writing and referencing), Faculty of Graduate Studies seminars tailored to graduate students, and University Teaching and Learning Centre programming should be recommended to our students, especially at important junctures where they are seeking information about how to succeed. For example, when a student fails a course or takes longer than the recommended time to meet a particular milestone (finishing courses, proposal defense), a meeting could be required that involves a graduate coordinator,

supervisor and the student to openly discuss the factors that are contributing to the poor or slow performance, and what kind of support the student would find most useful.

If departments had tracking information on the relationship among failed courses, stalled progress, and the likelihood of the student finishing in various time frames, this kind of information could be used to inform the student about where they stand relative to others in that program, and it may allow the student to reconsider their suitability as a student in that program, and the likely time it will take them to complete their degree. The best response may not always be, “try again” if graduate coordinator and supervisor do not see the determination and aptitude, for example, that they believe will be required to achieve reasonable progress to complete the degree. On the other hand, if the student is committed and determined, the department and supervisor need to provide the supports they can to help the student succeed, overcome barriers to success, and move forward with confidence.

2. Increase accountability of supervisors and departments for good supervision.

It is a privilege to attend graduate school, and for professors, it is a privilege to supervise graduate students. The supervisory privilege gives the professor more power than that which is accorded to the graduate student, and with that power comes responsibility. Most professors at the University of Alberta appear to take the responsibility seriously, and I heard far more reports of good supervision than poor supervision. Assessments from students about their experiences with supervision, the good and the bad, are not systematically collected at the University of Alberta, and thus it is a complaint-based system that highlights the poor supervision only.

2.1 Encourage or require chairs to hold exit interviews to gain information about graduate student experience and supervision.

One way to better monitor how University of Alberta supervisors are received by those they supervise is to encourage, or require, department chairs to hold exit interviews with each graduating student to gain information about graduate student experience and supervision. These exit interviews could inform Chairs of the more nuanced good practices and less effective practices of supervision among their faculty, allow discussion of the departmental mentorship environment, and point to areas of guidance, training and even reprimand, that could cultivate better supervision. Ideally, such exit interviews would be repeated one year later, to obtain more reflective, perhaps circumspect information

on the graduates' supervisory experience, and to gain information about the employment of the graduate and their assessment of the usefulness of their graduate training for their particular occupation.

Summary reports, every five years for example, could characterize the positive, negative and changing experiences that graduate students report for supervisors, as a whole, in that department. Additional information of interest, from the post-year-later interviews could include a description of potential additional training may help graduates succeed in their careers. This could provide fodder to department chairs and graduate coordinators (generic term used that includes Associate Chairs and Associate Deans of Graduate Studies) about the kinds of investments they may wish to make in professor and graduate student training, and engage the topic of supervision and related student career success alongside discussions about the departmental quality of teaching and research.

2.2 Require chairs to follow-up on progress of each graduate student with supervisors during their annual review meeting to understand delays in progress and plans to address problems.

Many professors are aware of the significant contributions that good supervision can make to a thriving learning environment, students' in school and career success, and their own learning and productivity. It is perhaps a gap then that this important part of the professor job is rarely addressed in annual reports beyond students who are listed as supervised, students who have completed their degrees, and in numbers of co-authored presentations and publications with the student. One way to address this gap is to require department Chairs to review the progress of each graduate student listed under those supervised, or co-supervised by that professor. Questions along the lines of "This MSc student has been in our program four years. What are they working on now? Why have they not completed their thesis? What is their plan to finish?" This will also allow the Chair to evaluate, in a qualitative sense, the attentiveness of supervisors to the stages and rates of progress of their students, and to add language in the summary assessment about supervisory trends for that professor for the past year. It would also allow department chairs to potentially identify patterns among their faculty members in regards to student progress and completion, thereby being able to address supervisory problems such as a professor with recurring poor communication with some of their graduate students, or unreasonable additional work required of the student to earn the post-graduate degree. Similarly, a review of each professor's graduate student progress can provide an opportunity for the Department Chair to say, "It looks like you are a good graduate supervisor. Your students are productive and engaged in the

department and professional activities. Thank you for adding to the culture in our department of good supervision. Please share with our new professors in the department what seems to have worked best for you.” Recognizing good supervision may be as important as recognizing poor supervision in elevating the importance of supervision at the University of Alberta. Given most professors are highly sensitive to the norms of their profession and department, creating a culture where good supervision is lauded and discussed can enrich the culture of supervision.

2.3 Require departments, or Faculties, to establish a process to correct recurring poor supervisory performance.

When poor supervision occurs, few departments at the University of Alberta have a routine process or established policy to address the problem. Blatant forms of poor supervision consist of cases where there is recurring neglect, excessive micro-management, verbal abuse, work exploitation or sexual harassment, and demands made of the student beyond what is reasonable for that discipline, program, set of research or teaching responsibilities, or thesis standards of “pass”.

To increase accountability by departments for poor supervision, a procedure could be put in place to address recurring student complaints about a supervisor. Graduate coordinators are often in an awkward position of hearing the complaints, and are often sworn to secrecy by the student. The graduate coordinator must often explain to the student that it is only with the student’s permission they will take the complaint forward to the attention of the supervisor. In most cases, the student is seeking an informed opinion about their supervisory problem and is looking for non-adversarial options to resolve the problem. A student may not want their complaint to reach the supervisor, for fear supervisor reprisal. In some cases graduate coordinators, concerned about the situation, inform Department Chairs about the complaints they hear about, and in other cases they hold that information in confidence. Some graduate coordinators feel awkward about being in a position to deliver a complaint to a departmental colleague.

In one department, the Department Chair informally asked the graduate coordinator to annually make comments on the quality of supervision, from the coordinators’ vantage point, for each of the professors in that department. The graduate coordinator’s impression of supervisory quality was taken into account in the Department Chair’s annual evaluation for each professor. These capricious (because of turn-over among department chairs and graduate coordinators), non-transparent practices are not

advisable, as it reduces the clarity around how graduate student supervision is evaluated as part of the Professor's duties.

Established procedures for graduate coordinators to address serious or recurring complaints about a professor's supervisory practices should be established, as many graduate coordinators feel like administrators with no real authority, and can find their decision about how to take things forward overturned by the department chair. For example, graduate coordinators do not generally know if they should ask students for detailed letters of complaint to document a problem, how to store these letters or register these letters with the department, their duty to inform the professor who is criticized, if it is ever appropriate to warn prospective students about the poor track record of relations between a particular supervisor and his or her students, or when it is appropriate to take the issues to a higher level. Ultimately, problems of a serious nature (verbal abuse, threats, issues of safety of any kind) should be reassigned to a higher level of authority, as graduate coordinators are not trained or equipped to address the more serious issues, some of which could have legal ramifications (e.g. a professor seeking redress for wrongful treatment in response to reported student complaints), and are embedded in a department in which they generally seek to maintain long term positive relationships with their colleagues. Someone not tied to the department, who is fully aware of the legal responsibilities for the University to protect students and treat professors fairly, and who has the authority to investigate what has happened, would be in a better position to address the more serious problems. Department chairs may also need training in regards to how to address "the recurring professor with supervisory problems", as some tend to bide their time to see if the problem will resolve itself or diffuse, and others proactively seek longer term solutions.

Supervisors with poor track records of supervision could be required to co-supervise with other successful graduate student supervisors and mentors, to gain the peer-to-peer learning about what is often entailed in "good" supervision. When recurring problems occur for a supervisor, some departments have required a hiatus for the professor who has, for example, had many of his or her students leave the program due to a conflict with those students. This hiatus can allow the professor time to re-evaluate their history with dissatisfied students, reflect on ways to improve their relationships with their graduate students, and provide time for additional supervisory training. While some professors may find it crippling to their research program to be without graduate students, it behooves them to develop the managerial skills needed to work effectively with graduate students, just as what would be required in other work settings.

Some universities require a trial period for assistant professors to co-supervise with tenured professors first, and then achieve certain markers, e.g., student completion, of graduate student success before they are allowed to supervise on their own. Other pro-active ways to demonstrate the privilege of supervision could be for a certain number of training courses to be completed before a professor is allowed to supervise, given the lack of exposure many new professors have to different supervisory styles and skills available to them. Indeed, an opportune time for providing training could begin with the new professor orientation led by the Centre for Teaching and Learning. One of the professionals at the University of Alberta who works closely with graduate students mused that recent hires at the University of Alberta disproportionately represent a highly accomplished set of professors, and that with that can come an inflexibility in supervision given the productivity to which these new professors are accustomed, and the standards of productivity they may superimpose on their own graduate students. How to supervise in a way that respects diversity of student ability, speed and work style may be important in the context of increased requirements for assistant professors, for example, to supervise students to completion as they accomplish other markers of productivity to earn tenure. One graduate coordinator noted how the stages of a professor's career and the pressures placed on graduate students can be intricately intertwined, especially as a professor is concerned about an adequate publication record to earn tenure.

2.4 Require graduate student mentorship/supervisory philosophy statement for tenure and promotion to recognize its importance in professor performance and University priorities.

Graduate student supervision has obtained increasing attention from higher educational institutions as fundamental to student success, and yet it is rarely directly addressed in tenure and promotion packages and reviews. Faculties could require that professors write a graduate supervision and mentorship philosophy statement as part of their tenure packet for promotion to Associate and Full professor. By virtue of stating one's philosophy one also is given cause to reflect and develop such a philosophy, just as professors can now, unlike fifteen years ago, articulate their teaching philosophy. One issue to address in the philosophy statement is the number of graduate students a professor can supervise and supervise well, as there are cases where the graduate supervisory load has been too high, which can dilute the attention a professor has available to all of their students. Other matters worthy of attention in such a philosophy statement is the style in which a professor guides and interacts with his/her graduate students, and their observations about their approach to helping graduate students succeed,

and dealing with particular challenges graduate students have faced while studying with them. While annual reports vary across campus, professors who have had problems with supervision could state goals and plans to improve their supervision in their annual report, just as some faculties require stating goals and plans to improve teaching or research productivity in their annual report.

3. Provide training and mentorship to supervisors to raise standards of supervision and mentorship.

3.1 Continue and expand training for supervisors to raise standards of supervision:

The team of three FGSR Associate Deans were put in place by the Dean of FGSR for the very purpose of helping secure both quality and standards, and they regularly present on supervision of graduate students at Faculty and departmental retreats, and orientations for new faculty members. In addition, FGSR Council has provided guidance on supervisor and departmental roles to promote good supervision in section 1 of the Graduate Program Manual (<http://www.gradstudies.ualberta.ca/gpm/Section1.aspx>). FGSR Council is the decision-making body comprised of all the representatives of the various graduate programs and the graduate students and meets once per month. The Associate Dean team has also used FGSR Council as a forum for spreading best practices, and they regularly include presentations at FGSR Council on current issues, for example, on student academic and disciplinary cases (pers comm. Joanna Harrington).

“Best practices of graduate student supervision” training, preferably through interactive workshops, could continue to be offered through the Faculty of Graduate Studies and additionally the Centre for Teaching and Learning. Such training could address a multitude of issues. Foremost, best practices training would address the expectations that graduate students and supervisors may have of each other (as described under section 1.1). Other topics, and this is not an exhaustive list, could include how to guide proposal development, goal setting and tips to cultivate discipline to complete tasks, the effectiveness of various forms of communication and meetings (group-, one-on-one, student-to-student, quick check-ins) that are associated with a cooperative and productive relationship, demonstrating and promoting self care, guiding students in writing throughout their program, working through tensions and conflicts in supervisor-student relationships, ways to provide more tailored assistance to international graduate students, the etiquette and ethics of authorship, respecting and benefitting from cross-cultural differences, directing healthy and respectful laboratory environments, the varied roles of

the supervisory committee to help guide the student, preparing students for candidacy exams and defenses, helping students recover from failure (of a course, an exam), identifying mental health and financial difficulties in graduate students and directing them to appropriate resources, and common problems to avoid associated with the Collective Agreement (e.g., appropriate pay scales and numbers of hours a student should be expected to work) and the Student Code of Conduct (especially in regards to plagiarism).

A peer-to-peer mentorship program for new supervisors, or supervisors who are experiencing problems, could be put in place to link them with more experienced supervisors. University of Alberta's has had such a mentorship program available in the past, but it is no longer in operation, and was not focused on mentorship for supervision. Professors would ideally have the option to choose someone in their own faculty, in a field similar to their own, or outside the faculty, to have a greater sense of privacy in what they share. The three FGSR Associate Deans also make themselves available two days a week to meet with supervisors, graduate students and graduate coordinators, who regularly come to them for advice (pers com. Joanna Harrington).

3.2 Provide graduate coordinator training to foster a culture of mentorship

Graduate coordinators are central to the culture of departmental mentorship and resolving supervisor-student problems. They may also be in a key position to develop department-specific programming for specific skills workshops, and career information sessions, for that particular discipline. Graduate coordinators may also be able to organize a student-to-student mentorship program to help students easily access advice about working well with their supervisor, writing proposals, passing exams, and so on. FGSR organizes workshops for graduate coordinators on operating a graduate program and has a section on the FGSR website for graduate coordinators where they post guidance that might assist them with current common issues. Graduate coordinators could work with the department to develop more awards for good graduate student supervision, and make those awards available to post-doctoral trainees where appropriate, as well. FGSR could also provide more guidance to graduate coordinators in their role as mediator to resolve graduate student-supervisor problems (as discussed under 2.3), and when to take matters to higher levels, to augment what is already available.

Graduate coordinators are in a key position to share with graduate students the resources available at the University of Alberta. The University of Alberta has an Ombudservice office that can help

supervisors and graduate students resolve problems and provide advice. Other places graduate coordinators may refer students includes the Office of Safe Disclosure and Human Rights, for issues of very private nature, and group and individual counseling sessions are available through the Graduate Student Assistance Program as contracted with Homewood Human Solutions.

4. Continue to provide to provide various forms of guidance and mentorship to students to improve the culture of mentorship

There is a multitude of services and professionals on campus that create a culture of graduate student mentorship at the University. Mentorship involves recognizing the whole person, and the broader goals the student may have for their learning journey and career preparation at the University of Alberta. The opportunities at the University of Alberta are extensive, so mentorship and training need not be exclusive by any means between the supervisor and the student.

Graduate students can learn a great deal about the services available to them through the Graduate Students Association's orientation program that is held at the beginning of each academic year. When departments admit a student with a letter of acceptance, they could invite the student at that time to the orientation, as attendance could be much higher than it currently is to this orientation.

FGSR also provides professional development seminars on communication, career development, graduate teaching and learning, and professional practice. A vast number of tip sheets are available on many topics, such as pregnancy and graduate school, surviving the candidacy examination, and preparing for one's defense on the FGSR website. Specific teaching tips are provided on topics such as teaching with an accent, developing your teaching philosophy, and guidelines for electronic communication with students. In regards to writing, the Faculty of Graduate Studies holds various training sessions on how to write a successful tri-council proposal and other scholarship applications.

The Student Success Centre offers workshops tailored to the needs of graduate students available on a cost-recovery basis (cost is \$40-\$130) such as workshops on thesis-writing strategies, writing a literature review, crafting a thesis or dissertation proposal, writing a scholarly abstract, writing an effective funding proposal, and for non-native users of English, developing one's academic English with writing strategies. There are communications workshops as well, on how to create engaging presentations, prepare for an oral defense, carry out impromptu presentations, and present scientific data. The Student Success Centre also has individualized coaching to assist graduate students with

disabilities to use their strengths to move around areas of challenge created either by the impacts of disability or by inaccessible/less inclusive environments that are particularly valuable to graduate students.

The University of Alberta's Career Centre, CAPS, holds numerous seminars and career forums to help students, both undergraduate and graduate, plan their careers. Career advising consultations are available, as are one-on-one consultations for resume, CV and cover letter advice. Students can book one-hour appointments for mock interviews, and be linked up to a mentor in the employment positions they hold interest. CAPS additionally holds creative presentations and dialogues on topics such as: "Are PhDs too smart or slow for government; Myths about careers in the public sector"; and "How to write personal statements for graduate school applications."

The Centre for Writers provides writing tutors for drop-in and pre-planned appointments, as well as free writing workshops. The Learning Shop of the University of Alberta also offers dozens of other workshops and seminars to learn about teaching, research, managing, E-learning, computers and technology, personal development and health, wellness and fitness. There are also learning opportunities offered by Community Service Learning on experiential learning, presenting works-in-progress, and how to effectively collaborate on research. The Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) offers Teaching and Learning, and Educational Technology Sessions to graduate students, faculty, and sessional instructors on campus. This past year 2013-14, four specific workshops were offered around best practices for graduate student supervision, how to guide graduate students in writing throughout their program, how to resolve conflict between supervisor and student, and the various purposes of a graduate supervisory committee. Graduate students who have specific eLearning problems/issues or those who have teaching responsibilities needing assistance or advice with course design can also make use of the consultation services available through CTL.

Additionally, the University Wellness Centre provides events that can help students from everything from solving sleep problems, to "increasing motivation when you are down", to healthy eating habits and how to deal with cross-cultural relationships with one's supervisor. Tailor made programs to enhance student mental health are continually being developed in our Student Services office as well. An "international college" is being considered that would serve to better bridge undergraduate and graduate students with the culture and expectations at the University of Alberta.

It appears that the University of Alberta actually has a great deal to offer to support the mentorship of graduate students. Where we can improve is by making these services widely known among our professoriate (including department chairs, graduate coordinators and professors) and graduate students. In some cases, professors are in a position to pay for graduate students to obtain added professional training as part of their grant obligations to contribute to highly trained professionals (e.g. as is found in most NSERC grants).

A particular need for supervisory training may be in the area of recognizing the increasing number of students not planning on working in an academic job, and steering that student to other career related skills and knowledge learning opportunities. Fewer than 30% of doctoral students, for example, are expected to obtain academic jobs (Rose 2012). To address this need, FGSR has recently struck Graduate Student Professional Development Advisory Council to develop an innovative program on professional development, specifically for graduate students and post-doctoral trainees. In addition to teaching and research skills, programming around professional and career-related skills will be developed. Transferable or workplace readiness skills might include personal and interpersonal skills such as communicating with different audiences, across cultures, with media, project and time management, and leadership and team management. Career-related skills could include such topics as career paths outside of academia, networking, and self-assessment (Rose 2012).

5. Better integrate PD scholars into department culture; provide more training on PD scholar supervision, and more PD scholar professional development training opportunities.

The training mentioned above is also of importance to post-doctoral trainees who are specifically interested in improving their chances of employment across a wide range of PhD level positions. Post-docs in particular in Canada reportedly want more training that will put them in good stead for the next step of their career (Standford et al 2010). While the University of Alberta has a Postdoctoral Fellows (PDF) Office, there are currently no professional development activities, other than website advice about how to develop an independent development plan. Other support activities are not offered. Only a few of the 600 post-docs at the University of Alberta engage with the Postdoctoral Fellows Office. The Faculty of Graduate Studies' new Graduate Student Professional Development Advisory Council could develop a set of best practices for PDF training.

A 2010 Canadian Association of Postdoctoral Scholars (CAPS) survey suggests that post-doctoral trainees, most of who are in their 30s, are subjected to low pay and few job benefits. They are concerned about lengthening their post-doc terms (Stanford et al. 2010), where on average they are earning \$38,000-\$50,000 a year (Thon 2012). In Canada PDFs may not apply for and hold grants, although in some cases they are allowed to be co-applicants with their PDF mentor (Standford, 2010). Many PDFs are envious of the Australian PDFs' arrangement where they may apply for and hold grants and are treated as research-focused faculty members, where annual pay raises and other faculty-level opportunities for recognition are provided.

There is no guidance at the University of Alberta about “best practices for supervising PDFs” and this is apparent in the varied experiences PDFs described in their supervision at the University of Alberta. Some PDFs work closely with a supervisor, who directly funds their position, and are given significant responsibilities, for example, to run a research laboratory. These PDFs may have a very productive relationship with their supervisor and with other graduate students over which they help supervise. There is also the risk that the PDF is sufficiently pre-occupied with running the professor's research lab or program that she or he is not making progress on writing and submitting research articles, thereby diminishing his or her opportunity to obtain an academic job after their post-doctoral position ends. Others are bringing in their own post-doctoral funding to study in an area complimentary to a professor's research focus. The latter group is more at risk of being neglected, and left to their own devices on writing and publishing articles. Few of the PDFs plot out goals with their supervisor for the year or two they will stay at the University of Alberta, and many of those with whom I spoke did not feel they received much guidance on writing articles, and thought they would benefit from a closer working relationships on papers with their supervisors. It appears that when professors agree to supervise a post-doctoral trainees, few figure in the additional mentorship time and effort that would be appropriate to truly enrich their PDFs learning from their supervisor and in their particular department. There appears to be little to no discussion at the University of Alberta about scaffolding, or the various forms of guidance and mentorship that would be most effectively provided at the Masters, vs. PhD, vs. Postdoctoral stage of a person's professional development. At the minimum, FGSR, graduate coordinators, and department chairs should encourage professors who hire PDFs to draw up written expectations between the supervisor and the PDF for the committed period in which they will be working together. The expectations could be similar to those provided in section 1.1 of this report, but additionally recognize the laddering of PhD skills, where the supervisor agrees to guide the PDF in

leading proposal development, writing and revising refereed articles, developing creative works, teaching, supervision of students, engaging with the press and other interested audiences, and so on.

Additionally, many post-doctoral trainees in Canada reportedly feel as though there “significant contribution to the academic enterprise is underappreciated and their concerns are largely ignored” (Standford, 2010:19). Each department who has post-doctoral trainees could do a number of things to better integrate PDFs into the department, including allowing them to attend and possibly vote (depending on the terms of reference in that department) at department council meetings, present a seminar in the department, guest lecture in some of the courses in which the PDF can most appropriately contribute, invite PDFs to departmental social events, and allow a certain amount of funding in the department to be allocated to PDF training and travel, should that not be available through the funding they hold for the PDF. Some PDFs would like the opportunity to teach their own course, and in some cases this could be negotiated with their supervisor and the department chair. I was struck by the isolation that many post-doctoral trainees reported feeling, where there was little intellectual conversation built into their workdays. This daily sense of intellectual connection and sense of belonging in the hosting department is not something the supervisor can do alone, nor can it be provided by the University’s Postdoctoral fellow’s office. Departments vary in culture, and developing a supportive environment for PDFs may be best left to graduate coordinators through specific efforts they make to see what works best given the number and kinds of PDFs they currently have in their department, and the formal and informal department opportunities PDFs could have to interact with other graduate students and faculty.

Summary Recommendations and Potential Delegation of Responsibility

Professors, graduate students and post-doctoral trainees are more likely to address the quality of supervision as part of their professional training, ethos and desired behavior if it is built into the institution’s monitoring and professionalism practices, and reward system. Toward that end, the top priority to improve the quality of graduate student supervision is to *increase accountability of supervisors and departments to promote good supervision* (#2 below). While there are good practices of supervision in common across disciplines, there is variation in departmental and disciplinary cultures, and mentorship for success in each particular department is likely best done at that level. This will require substantially more reflection and discussion about the strengths and weakness of current graduate student supervision procedures, practices, and the very nature of

mentorship, at department council meetings, and in focused discussions with graduate student and post-doctoral trainees in that particular department.

The following section reviews the recommendations above and provides more detail in regards the level at which implementation may be most effectively delivered.

Delegation of Responsibilities

1. Provide earlier guidance to students to improve student success

Recommendation	Potential responsible party for implementation
Require graduate students to be reviewed for satisfactory progress to continue in the program after Year I (MSc), Year II (PhD), with consequences for unsatisfactory review	Department
Add requirement for each graduate student and supervisor to submit written agreed-upon expectations of each other at the beginning of program.	Department Training on reasonable expectations provided by CTL or FGSR
Increase standards to accept graduate students as these students are more likely to succeed	FGSR Department training on options to employ to more carefully select graduate students

2. Increase accountability of supervisors and departments for good supervision to address hidden weaknesses

Recommendation	Potential responsible party for implementation
Require chairs to organize exit interviews with students to gain information about graduate student experience and supervision.	Department Exit interviews can be held by arm's length person assigned by department chair
Require chairs to follow-up on progress of each graduate student with supervisors during their annual review meeting to understand delays in progress and plans to address problems.	Department FEC, i.e., progress of graduate students recognized as important in annual report and in FEC discussions
Require Departments/Faculties to establish	Department Chairs

a process to address poor supervisory performance, and improve student experience.	FGSR procedure for how to address serious and recurring supervisory problems
Require graduate student mentorship/supervisory philosophy statement for tenure and promotion to recognize its importance in professor performance and University priorities.	Faculty (FEC) Tenure and promotion documents changed to include mentorship philosophy statement as part of the consideration for advancement

3. Provide training and mentorship to supervisors to raise standards of supervision and mentorship

Recommendation	Potential responsible party for implementation
Offer training, and possibly require training for new faculty, in the following areas to raise standards of supervision. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best practices of supervision • Understanding the challenges for international students and other support available for their success • Skills to avoid and resolve conflicts • Guidance on writing assistance throughout the student's program • Obligations in the Collective Agreement • Rule and violation processes for the Student Code of Conduct 	FGSR CTL
Graduate coordinator training to foster a culture of mentorship	Department FGSR
Forms of recognition at departmental level, e.g., for excellence in supervision or in creating a culture of good supervision	Department Faculty (Nomination committee)

4. Provide various forms of guidance and mentorship to students to improve culture of mentorship

Recommendation	Potential responsible party for implementation
Graduate Student Areas of Interest for Training and Guidance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing well, and routinely • Proposal writing • Publishing, responding to reviews • Teaching effectiveness 	FGSR CTL Departments, i.e., for specific areas of training and guidance

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaking and writing for different audiences • Managing work-life balance • Leadership • Grant and Project Management skills • Skills and competencies for employment options outside of academe 	
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5. Better integrate post-doctoral (PD) trainees into department culture; provide more training on PD scholar supervision, and more PD scholar professional development training opportunities.

Recommendation	Potential responsible party for implementation
Provide professional development knowledge areas and skills training	Professional Development committee, FGSR Departments
Engage post-doctoral trainees in departmental scholarly and social events & guest lecturing	Departments

Conclusion

High quality supervision and mentorship is central to an institution committed to seeing their graduate students flourish in their careers and in the contributions they make to the public good. A commitment to high quality supervision and mentorship is also tied to the value we as educators have to the continued expression of human potential in creative and intellectual pursuits. More practically, the increasing number of graduate students at the University of Alberta, their central role in research productivity, and the challenges they face on the job market, make graduate student supervision and mentorship very important. Supervisors are faced with a number of privileges and pressures as part of their professor duties, and fostering a culture of good supervision and mentorship is an institutional responsibility.

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Appendix

Consultations with the following (interviews, participation in focus group, email discussion):

Provost’s Fellow Advisory Council

Provost Fellow, Chair, Naomi Krogman
 Office of the Provost and Vice President (Academic), Murray Gray
 President, GSA, or designate, Ashlyn Bernier (2012), Brent Epperson (2013)
 Vice-President Academic, GSA, Nathan Andrews (2012), Colin More (2013)
 Vice-President Labor, GSA, Brent Epperson (2012), Simarjit “Monty” Bal (2013)
 Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies, Mazi Shirvani
 Departmental Graduate Coordinator, Heather McDermid

Three Focus Groups (4-14 members in each):

- Post-doctoral trainees
- Two Professor groups of across areas of NSERC, SSHRC and CIHR focused areas.

Other groups meetings:

Informal meeting with a 4 GSA elected members.

Other individual meetings/discussions:

Health sciences, Medical school

Lili Liu, Dept Chair of Occupational Health
 Lory Laing, former Dean of Public Health Sciences
 Jeff Johnson, CRL Chair, Public Health
 Debby Burshtyn, Department of Medical Microbiology and Immunology, Graduate Coordinator 2009-
 Ruth Wolfe, Practicum Program Director and Capstone Course coordinator, Chair, Professional
 Degrees Committee of Public Health

Sciences, Engineering

Ellen McDonald, Associate Dean of Research (in 2012), ALES
 Peter Blenis, Renewable Resources, former graduate coordinator, ALES
 Heather McDermid, Biology

Social Sciences

Ken Caine, Sociology, Assistant Professor,
 Harvey Krahn, Department Chair, Sociology

Business

David Deephouse, Associate Chair of Graduate Studies, oversees thesis-based Business MAs and PhDs

Physical Education and Recreation

Dean Kerry Mummery

Engineering

Michael Brett, Professor, Electrical and Computer Engineering

Resources for Graduate Students Experts

Jayson MacLean, Ombudsperson for graduate students.

Frank Robinson, Dean of Students

Robin Overall, Acting Dean of Students, former Provost's fellow on student mental health

Dr. Wendy Doughty, Director of Student Success Centre

Teddi Doupe, Associate Director of Specialized Support and Disability services, Student Success Centre

Keith Haimila, Peer Education Coordinator, CAPS

Agatha Beschell, social worker, Mental Health Centre

Sheree Kwong See, Interim Director, Centre for Teaching and Learning,

Joanne Harrington, Professor, Law and Associate Dean of Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

Catherine Swindlehurst, Director, Office of the President

Tony Santiago, Immigration Advisor, International Student Services

Other Post-doctoral trainees

Anna Koop, Post-doctoral trainee, Computer Science

Ravi Gaikwad, Post-doctoral trainee, Chemical and Materials Engineering

GSA STANDING COMMITTEE NOMINEES: FOR INFORMATION

List of Nominees Previously Distributed to Council on May 5, 2014; Advertisements for Positions on BFC and GC Distributed to GSA Council on April 22, 2014; Advertisements for Positions on LRC and ERC Distributed via the GSA Newsletter on April 25, 2014

Recommended Motion:

GSA Council is asked to consider the following Motion:

That the GSA Council, acting on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Nominating Committee (NoC), **receive for information** the newly-elected GSA Council members for the GSA Budget and Finance Committee, GSA Governance Committee, GSA Elections and Referenda Committee, and GSA Labour Relations Committee. **Newly elected member names appear below in red.**

Jurisdiction:

Policy Manual, Nominating, 6.6

“The NoC will provide Council with nominations for [...] all GSA standing committees [...]. Additional nominations may be made by Councillors, **in writing**, in advance of the Council meeting where elections will take place.”

No additional nominations were received by the deadline provided of 12 (noon) on Friday May 9, 2014.

The nominees presented on this report are therefore declared **elected**.

Nominating Committee Mandate from GSA Policy:

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

Budget and Finance Committee: Vacancy: ONE COUNCILLOR

The voting composition of the BFC, according to GSA Policy, is:

- i. “The President or delegate, as Chair [Nathan Andrews, Political Science].
- ii. The Vice-President Labour, Vice-Chair [Monty Bal, Political Science].
- iii. One (1) Councillor, elected by Council [Vacant as of April 30, 2014; currently Nathan Andrews, former Councillor-at-Large].
- iv. Two (2) members of the GSA, elected by Council [Continuing GSA Members: Dasha Smirnow, Business, and Karen Turpin, Public Health]” (GSA Policy, Standing Committees, 4.1)

Continuing Members on this Committee (2): Dasha Smirnow (Business) and Karen Vera Lyn Turpin (School of Public Health)

GSA Council Member Leaving this Committee (1): Nathan Andrews (CAL term ended April 30, 2014)

Newly elected GSA Council Member on the Budget and Finance Committee:

- 1. Harsh Thaker (Medicine, CAL)**

GSA Governance Committee: Positions: TWO COUNCILLORS

The composition of the GC, according to GSA Policy, is:

- i. "The President, as Chair;
- ii. The Vice-President Labour, who shall assume the duties of the Chair in the absence of the President;
- iii. The Speaker and Executive Director (or delegate) as non-voting members; and
- iv. **Three members of Council elected by Council**" (GSA Policy, Standing Committees, 3.1)

Continuing GSA Council Members on this Committee (1): Lacey Fleming (Councillor, Anthropology)

GSA Council Members Leaving this Committee (2): Micaela Santiago (Former Councillor, Nursing) and Rob Found (CAL, Biological Sciences)

Newly elected GSA Council Members on the Governance Committee:

1. **Sulya Fenichel (Councillor, Elementary Education)**
2. **Sandra Sawchuk (Councillor, Humanities Computing)**

Labour Relations Committee: Positions: ONE - TWO MEMBERS OF THE GSA

No set composition yet. In consultation with the LRC Chair (GSA VP Labour, Monty Bal), LRC will have approximately **5-6 members** with as broad representation as possible (with no more than two students from any one department), and ideally at least one GSA Councillor.

Continuing Members on this Committee (4): Hannah Madsen (Library and Information Studies), Michal Juhas (Psychiatry), Qiang Li (Chemical and Materials Engineering), and Saeed Nusri (CAL, Chemical and Materials Engineering).

Newly elected members on the Labour Relations Committee:

1. **Amanda Daignault (Councillor, English and Film Studies)**
2. **Richard Zhao (Computing Science)**

Elections and Referenda Committee: Vacancy: THREE MEMBERS OF THE GSA

The composition of ERC, according to GSA Policy, is:

- "i. The Chief Returning Officer (CRO), as Chair.
- ii. The Deputy Returning Officer (DRO), as Vice-Chair.
- iii. At least one (1) Councillor, elected by Council.
- iv. Up to four (4) graduate students, elected by Council" (GSA Policy, Standing Committees, 9.1)

Continuing Members on this Committee (3): Virginia Pimmatt (Councillor, Cell Biology), Hamman Samuel (Councillor, Computing Science; Interim CRO until June 2014), and Richard Kanyo (Physiology, coming off ERC in June 2014)

GSA Council Members Leaving this Committee (1): Micaela Santiago (Former Councillor, Nursing)

Newly elected members on the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee:

1. **Jennifer Bell (Councillor, Nursing)**
2. **Zhendong Li (Chemistry)**

GSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE (NoC)
**GSA SENATOR
 NOMINEES**

The GSA NoC advertised this position to all graduate students in the GSA Newsletter on April 1, 2014 and received **two** nominations, including bios and brief resumes by the deadline of Wednesday April 30, 2014 at 12:00 PM (Noon). ***This was the first time that the Nominating Committee has had two exceptional nominees to bring forward to GSA Council.*** Council was invited to make additional nominations. **No additional nominations were received by the deadline of Wednesday May 07, 2014 at 12:00 PM (Noon).**

GSA Bylaws state “The Senator shall be elected by a **simple majority vote** of Council, normally for a one-year term, **at the May meeting of Council.**”

There will be an anonymous paper ballot vote held at the May 12, 2014 GSA Council meeting to elect the GSA Senator for 2014-2015.

The biographies and brief resumes of all nominees are listed below in alphabetical order. Nominees shall be listed on the ballot in reverse alphabetical order.

Qualifications as set out in GSA Policy (Officer Portfolios Policy, Section 9)

9.2.b “The Senator should have prior experience acting as a representative for the GSA and/or as a liaison with bodies external to the University.”

Duties of Senator (GSA Policy, Standing Committees, GSA Board):

2.d “All Council-Elected Officers (GSA Bylaws, Part IV, Officers, Section 3) are non-voting members of the GSAB.”

Duties in Bylaw (Part IV Officers, Section 3 Council-Elected Officers and Officer Portfolios Policy, Section 9)

3.3.4 “The Senator is the GSA’s representative to the University of Alberta Senate.”

GSA Policy governing the NoC states “in all cases, nominees will be required to provide a brief resume and bio“(GSA Policy, Nominating, 5.5). Additionally, the NoC is required to provide Council with nominations for Senator. **Biographies and brief resumes of the GSA Senator nominees (2) are ATTACHED on pages 8.3 - 8.4. Biographies and brief resumes have been attached as received (i.e. not edited).**

Nominees are listed in alphabetical order and will be presented in reverse alphabetical order on the ballot:

1. Gary Barron (PhD Program, Sociology)
2. Karen J. Pheasant-Neganigwane (PhD Program, Educational Policy Studies)

Biography and Resumes of Nominees:

1. Gary Barron

Gary Barron: Biography

I was raised in Calgary where I received bachelor's degrees in sociology and psychology, as well as a master's degree in sociology at the University of Calgary (U of C). I enjoy engaging in service and teaching and so took on the role of undergraduate student mentor, and regularly attended the U of C's open house to inform interested high school students about university life and education. I am now entering the fourth year of my doctoral studies. My research interests are primarily concerned with the production, organization, and use of knowledge. My research on the production and dissemination of university rankings is well underway. Humans have an obsession with ranking things—from human “races” to motor vehicles—everything we turn our attention toward must be measured and ranked. As such, my research contributes to a growing corpus of critical studies of quantification, classification, the culture and politics of knowledge. Outside of the university I enjoy applying my academic training as a consultant, spending time with my partner, walking my dog, and cycling.

Gary Barron: Resume

As an undergraduate I served as the Sociology undergraduate student's association events coordinator for two years, organizing a number of academic, social, and fund raising events. During my undergraduate education I worked full-time or near full-time hours; first at Costco as a customer service representative, and then as a support worker for dually diagnosed adults. I also worked as a research assistant with the former Alberta Mental Health Board, now Alberta Health Services Addiction and Mental Health, until Summer 2012. At the master's level I served on the Sociology Graduate Student Caucus (SGSC) graduate studies committee and took part in a process to revise the doctoral candidacy exams. I also served as the SGSC chair, acting as a liaison with faculty in regard to student concerns, as well as many other duties. Outside of my home department I served with the Graduate Student Association's (GSA) Bylaws Committee, that revised the GSA bylaws. Last year I was elected Sociology Graduate Student Association President, and I have served as the Canadian Sociological Association Student Concerns Committee Western Canada Representative for 2011-2013. I also have an ongoing curiosity in professionalization and the academy. As such, I have pursued activities to assist students junior to me at every opportunity. In 2012-2013 my research assistant appointment was with the University of Alberta Provost's Fellow identifying best practices in graduate student supervision. I am now developing scholarly and journalistic publications as well as workshops on graduate education and non/alternative-academic careers. I also served on General Faculties Council (GFC), GFC Academic Standards Committee (ASC), and ASC Subcommittee on Standards for 2013-2014 as a member at large.

2. Karen J. Pheasant-Neganigwane

Karen J. Pheasant-Neganigwane: Biography

Pheasant upholds the value of community engagement and participation. This past year she earned noteworthy representation by being the first First Nations person to run for Edmonton Public School Board. She believes that inclusion of all peoples is a requirement to governance systems. Currently Karen is the Vice President of the Educational Policy Studies Graduate Students association. Karen grounds her scholarly studies as a Cultural Knowledge resource volunteer with Junior High School students at an Inner City School with the Edmonton Public School Board.

Karen J. Pheasant-Neganigwane: Resume

Pheasant is a Teaching Assistant for the acclaimed EDU 211 course which earned the University of Alberta Human Rights Education Recognition Teaching Award. The award is given to instructors that increase the profile of human rights education and issues at the university. Karen's work as an educator over the past twenty years has been consistent with building bridges between worlds; whether between nations, rural and urban or bringing traditional knowledge to a contemporary world. She has sat with National Boards (CCARTS) and participated in Governance initiatives as a Community Representative. Currently her scholarly research is titled, *Dance for Change: Achieving Mnaamodzawiiin* (The Good Life). Karen J Pheasant is seeking a Senate seat as a GSA representative.

**2013-2014 GSA President
Report to Council for May 12, 2014 GSA Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Brent Epperson
Date: May 9, 2014

Dear Council Colleagues,

My final report to GSA Council consists of the list of meetings I attended in April and **parting thoughts on strategic initiatives in progress**. I spoke about some of this in my April Council report on the GSA Board's Strategic Work Plan.

You have an excellent team of GSA Directly-Elected Officers, management, and staff for the 2014-2015 year and I am confident that you will all accomplish a lot together. **If I can be of any help to you in my new roles as Graduate Ombudsperson and FGSR Professional Development Research Assistant, please do not hesitate to contact me.** I wish you all an enjoyable and successful year on GSA Council!

(1) **The Tangled Web—Tuition, Fees, Other Sources of Revenue, and Expenses**

The GSA Board's Strategic Work Plan position on tuition and fees served us well in 2012-2013 and 2013-2014, allowing for flexibility and inviting dialogue with both the university administration and provincial government. That said, understanding these issues and working to prevent increases took a lot of time in the last two years. Canadian debates on tuition and fees, public versus private funding of post-secondary education, salaries, benefits and pensions of university administrators and faculty, and tenure and faculty employment security all intersect in complex ways. Because of the complicated and changing environment in post-secondary education, tuition and fees will remain contentious issues to the GSA for the foreseeable future. The U of A and universities across Canada are in unenviable financial positions as provincial governments continue to cut their share of funding while institutional outlays for salaries and benefits increase. In these conditions, it is tempting for universities to increase tuition and fees, but it is also uncreative and detrimental to social mobility, undermining the common good. **I hope that the GSA will always insist on dialogue and transparency in tuition and fee matters, fighting for public funding on principle and working with the university administration to secure other revenue resources as alternatives to tuition and fee increases.** For example, the issue of Indirect Research Costs continues to trouble me. It should be a point of determined dialogue with the university administration as well as the provincial and federal governments until it is resolved. **In 2014 and for the next few years, the Provost's ideas around sovereign revenue generation at the faculty level deserve the GSA's attention (and, in my view, our support).** Within and beyond Canada, the intersecting debates on pensions, administrative and faculty salaries and benefits, and increasing reliance on underpaid and undervalued adjunct faculty will eventually force important systemic changes (for better or worse). In the meantime, the GSA will need to tread carefully and keep strategic alliances in mind as it makes statements or takes positions on these matters. I hope that the coalition of constituencies, the new provincial advocacy organization, and federal GU-15, CAGS, CBoC, and CASA conferences will remain places of dialogue to understand the economic, political, and discursive interplay of these issues at every level.

(2) **Prayer and Meditation Space**

We came very close to securing additional prayer and meditation space in 2013-2014, thanks in

large part to the 2013-2014 GSA VP External Hasin Haroon's work and the indefatigable support of Dean of Students Frank Robinson. **As international student recruitment has increased (and, in particular, as our Muslim community has grown) this has become a social justice issue. A memorandum of understanding on new space should be within reach for the GSA soon. Please keep pushing and get this done.** And don't forget to invite Hasin, Frank, and me when the ribbon is cut for the new space!

(3) **Graduate Professional Development**

I am proud of the progress that the GSA and FGSR made on this issue from 2012-2014. **Everything appears aligned between the GSA, FGSR, the Provost's and President's Offices, the Board of Governors, the Government of Alberta, and federal players such as CAGS and the Conference Board of Canada to continue progress in 2014-2015.** We can reframe graduate education and improve employment outcomes for graduate students. **I am confident that FGSR will produce a strategic vision and work plan for graduate professional development that sets the university on a promising new path in the 2014-2015 academic year.** I look forward to continuing to work with the GSA Directly-Elected Officers on the issue in my new role as a Professional Development Research Assistant in FGSR.

(4) **Collective Bargaining**

Outcomes in collective bargaining negotiations depend heavily on context. The GSA will have some hard decisions to make on collective bargaining and larger labour issues in the next few years. **The decisions you make on labour matters will largely depend on your vision of the future for the GSA, but I advise you to think strategically and never sacrifice long-term organizational health and efficacy because of any temporarily inconvenient circumstances.**

(5) **Department Liaison Initiative (DLI) and Graduate Student Engagement**

No student association can remain strong or healthy without a consistent connection to its base in the departments. I worked hard to strengthen student engagement in my year as VP Labour and at the start of my Presidency, but sometimes I overstretched my commitments and let attention to this priority slip. **I saw that the GSA was healthy enough to strengthen its advocacy role and I had a more external focus than my recent predecessors because of the complex 2013-2014 political environment and provincial budget cuts. The shift to greater external advocacy still makes sense for the GSA, but there should be a balance with internal graduate student community building.** The GSA Board and Council may have to work to increase graduate student community engagement, buttressing organizational foundations. **DLI should play a key outreach role in the 2014-2015 year.**

(6) **External Advocacy**

Provincial government relations and cooperation with Alberta GSAs and SUs will always be essential to the GSA's organizational efficacy. **My team and I came close to completing the creation of a new provincial advocacy organization and I remain hopeful that the new GSA team will finalize this in the first months of their term.** Federally, I recommend **continuing GSA participation in the bi-annual GU-15 conferences, the annual CAGS conference, and the Conference Board of Canada symposium. The information sharing and relationship building at these conferences gives more strength to the GSA.** I also recommend maintaining observer status in CASA, but I think a well-functioning provincial advocacy group should be established (then tried, tested, and grounded in its own organizational identity) before the GSA pursues full CASA membership. The federal government is increasing its role in post-secondary education and the GSA needs to establish relationships with federal players and remain informed of federal initiatives and policies, but the

GSA cannot neglect provincial effectiveness to advocate federally. Lastly, **I encourage the GSA to maintain a strong media presence on key post-secondary education issues.** Public outreach through media is essential to framing the policy debates. Be open and transparent with the university administration about your media communications as long as the university returns the favour (no one likes surprises).

(7) International Graduate Student Issues (Including the Priority of Canadian Permanent Residency Application Assistance)

Targeted outreach to international graduate students could be integrated into DLI. International students comprise a substantial and growing percentage of the graduate student community. In light of both federal and university administration priorities, the percentage of international students is likely to increase. Unfortunately, the services and supports offered to international students at the U of A (as in Canada's other large research universities) cannot meet the needs of the current community, much less a larger international cohort. Investments in scholarships and bursaries for international graduate students, writing resources, English and French (for CSJ students) language assistance, and permanent residency application assistance will all be essential going forward. I had extensive discussions late in my term with administrators across campus on these issues. I will continue dialogue with the new GSA team and play a supporting role to improve international student services and assistance in my new roles at the Student Ombudservice and FGSR.

(8) Mental Health and Bullying

The University of Alberta and the GSA worked together to make great strides to improve student mental health in the last two years. I suggest that the **GSA continue dialogue with the Dean of Students' Office to track progress on this issue and contribute to the culture of continuous improvement that seems to have taken root in student mental health at the U of A.** I hope that the new GSA team will work with other constituency groups and the university administration to develop new approaches to curtail all forms of bullying on campus, continuing to treat cessation of bullying as a strategic planning priority.

Thank you for all of your support and friendship in two great years at the GSA.

All the best,

Brent Epperson, GSA President 2013-2014

I was on Academic and Personal Leave from April 15, 2014 to April 27, 2014.

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between April 14, 2014 and April 30, 2014:

April 28	BURC
April 28	BLDC
April 29	Professional Development Advisory Board
April 29	BFPC
April 29	SU/GSA Dinner
April 30	FGSR Council

**2014-2015 GSA President
Report to Council for May 12, 2014 GSA Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Nathan Andrews
Date: May 9, 2014

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope you are all enjoying what feels like 'spring' in Edmonton. I am personally looking forward to a much warmer summer. Besides the ups and downs of the weather, it has been a great few days in office as the President of this esteemed organization. Even though I previously worked as a Vice-President Academic (2012-2013), **I find this new role to be challenging but at the same time a great area to learn certain key skills in governance, administration, and general interpersonal relations. I am more excited about the team of Directly-Elected Officers I am going to work with for the rest of the year.** With all their experiences and talents combined, I believe my life will be a very pleasant one for the year ahead.

As May is typically a month of transition and learning for newly elected officers, I am delighted about the work the GSA management and staff have done to bring all of us up to date with the key priorities/issues of the organization. **We have spent the past week discussing the ongoing reputation of the GSA, advocacy (both internal and external), bylaws and policies, and professional development.** All of these items are in the **GSA Board's Strategic Work Plan**, which will be presented at the June Council meeting. **We will also be developing a clear action plan to roll out some, if not all, of the recommendations from Naomi Krogman's report, "The Quality of Graduate Student and Post-Doctoral Supervision at the University of Alberta" (April 2014),** which is being presented at Monday's Council Meeting.

Following through with the former President's (Brent Epperson) recommendation to strike an **advisory commission to review the bylaws, policies, and general processes surrounding elections**, I have also spent a bit of my time working on the Terms of Reference and timelines for this body (see pages 11.5 - 11.8 of the attached material). **I will give a brief oral report about this and welcome questions or any feedback Councillors may have.** Let me conclude this report by saying that although it already appears the year will be busy I believe that, based on the great team of Directly-Elected Officers, management and staff, the journey is bound to be very enriching.

Cheers,

Nathan Andrews, GSA President 2014-2015

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between Apr 23, 2014 and May 12, 2014:

April 23	GFC APC
April 29	SU/GSA Dinner
May 1	Preview Active Shooter Video
May 5	Lunch with Vice-Provost (Academic)
May 5	Dean of FGSR
May 7	SU President and Board of Governors' Representative
May 7	Meeting with Student re GSA Elections
May 8	Killam Excellence in Mentoring
May 8	University Secretary and Board Secretary
May 8	Meeting with Student re GSA Elections
May 8	Board of Governors' Recognition Dinner
May 9	Board of Governors
May 12	Meeting with Student re GSA Elections
May 12	Naomi Krogman - Supervision Report



Dear Council Colleagues,

May 9, 2014

At the April 14, 2014 meeting of GSA Council, former GSA President Brent Epperson reported that the GSA would be forming an “*Ad Hoc* General Elections Advisory Commission” for the purpose of hearing from any graduate student who has suggestions for improving GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy. Brent also indicated that Council would hear more about the proposal at its May meeting.

I write today regarding **the organization of a GSA President’s Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy**. **My vision for this Task Force is that it will invite all graduate students** (through an invitation in the GSA newsletter) **to bring forward suggestions in a series of sessions, as well as invite contributions directly from former GSA Presidents, and current and former CROs, DROs, Speakers, and Deputy Speakers.**

The Task Force **includes the current and recent former graduate student members of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (ERC) and the GSA Nominating Committee (NoC) (except the current CRO and DRO and any former CROs, DROs, Speakers, or Deputy Speakers. These individuals will be invited to speak directly with the Task Force)**. Both the GSA NoC and the GSA ERC consist of representatives elected by Council (indeed, many of the members are current GSA Councillors).

As Chair of the Task Force I would like to **introduce the members:**

- **Lacey Fleming (as Vice-Chair of the Task Force and of the GSA NoC, and alternate GSA Councillor for Anthropology)**
- **Richard Kanyo (ERC member and former GSA Councillor for Physiology)**
- **Zhen Li (ERC member, NoC member, and GSA Councillor for Chemistry until May 31, 2014)**
- **Jennifer Bell (ERC member and GSA Councillor for Nursing)**
- **Michele DuVal (NoC member and GSA Councillor for Biological Sciences)**
- **Micaela Santiago (Former ERC member and former GSA Councillor for Nursing)**

These individuals are required by GSA Policy to be neutral and impartial. **What I am aiming for is to have those who bring forward suggestions feel that they are addressing them to a neutral body.** For more information on the GSA NoC and ERC, see GSA Policy Standing Committees, Nominating Committee and Elections and Referenda Committee, http://gsa.ualberta.ca/en/~media/gsa/GoverningDocuments/Policy_Manual.pdf.

Similar to the tuition forums hosted last summer by the GSA, **three blocks of time will be set aside for the Task Force to meet with graduate student. A separate meeting of the Task Force with former Presidents and current and former CROs, DROs,**



Speakers, and Deputy Speakers will also be scheduled. As I noted, an invitation will be extended to all graduate students inviting them to RSVP for the session they wish to attend. Graduate students who are interested in meeting with the Task Force but are unable to attend any of the scheduled sessions will be encouraged to contact me to arrange an alternate meeting time. Graduate students interested in meeting with individual members of the Task Force are invited to contact them directly. **Written submissions in advance of any sessions will be encouraged and graduate students who are unable to attend one of the sessions will also be invited to make written submissions.** Those wishing to submit written suggestions and feedback can do so through email or anonymously via the drop box at the GSA office in Triffo Hall.

The Task Force will prepare a report regarding all feedback received either in writing or through the sessions (feedback will be anonymized in the report). The GSA ERC will consider all feedback contained in the report as they undertake their annual review of elections and referenda Bylaws and Policies. Any recommendations arising from this review will be considered by Council.

Below please find the Terms of Reference for the Task Force and a Timeline/Action Plan. I will be happy to answer any questions at Council.

Best,

Nathan Andrews, GSA President

GSA President's Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy - Terms of Reference

1. Composition

- a. Chair of the Task Force: GSA President
- b. Vice-Chair of the Task Force: Vice-Chair of the GSA Nominating Committee
- c. Task Force Members:
 - Current and former graduate student members of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (not including the current CRO and DRO and any former CROs, DROs, or Speakers – these individuals will be invited to speak directly with the Task Force)
 - Graduate student members of the GSA Nominating Committee.
- d. Ideally the Chair and three other members of the Task Force will be present at each session. Any members who are unable to attend a session will be provided with a full record of the discussion.

2. Mandate

- a. The Task Force will hear from any graduate student who has suggestions for improving GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy in person or in writing.
- b. The Task Force will consider all suggestions and generate a report to ERC concerning GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy.

GSA President's Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy - **Timeline/Action Plan**

Date	Action
Monday, May 26, 2014, 2 pm to 3 pm	Task Force meets to have preliminary discussion about the sessions.
Monday, June 2, 2014, 9 am to 11 am Friday, June 6, 2014, 1 pm to 3 pm Tuesday, June 10, 2014, 3 pm to 5 pm	Sessions are held (these sessions have been scheduled on different days and at different times to ensure a maximum level of accommodation for graduate students' differing schedules). All graduate students inviting them to RSVP for the session they wish to attend. Submission of advance written suggestions for improving GSA Elections will be encouraged and graduate students who are unable to attend one of the sessions will be invited to make written submissions to the Task Force Chair until June 11, 2014. Graduate students who are interested in meeting with the Task Force but are unable to attend any of the noted sessions are encouraged to contact the Task Force Chair to arrange an alternate meeting time. Graduate students interested in meeting with individual members of the Task Force are invited to contact them directly. Those wishing to submit written suggestions and feedback may do so through email or anonymously via the drop box at the GSA office in Triffo Hall. All feedback received either in writing or through the sessions will be anonymized in the report that will be generated.
Thursday, June 5, 2014, 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm	Session with former GSA Presidents, and current and recent and former CROs, DROs, Speakers, and Deputy Speakers.
Wednesday, June 11, 2014	Deadline to receive written feedback.
Thursday, June 12, 2014, 2 pm to 4 pm	Meeting of the Task Force to discuss received suggestions – additional meetings/sessions may be scheduled.
Thursday, July 10, 2014	Report of Task Force submitted to GSA President.
July 14, 2014 (July Council)	GSA President presents the Task Force's report to GSA Council for discussion with members of ERC (ERC members will be invited to attend).
July 15, 2014 - August 15, 2014	ERC meets to consider the feedback contained in the report as they undertake their annual review of elections and referenda Bylaws and Policies. Any recommendations arising from this review will be considered by GSA Council.
September 22, 2014 (September Council)	GSA Council considers for first reading changes to GSA Elections Bylaw and GSA Elections Policy (reminder that changes to Policy require only one reading of Council to pass).
October 20, 2014 (October Council)	GSA Council considers for second reading changes to GSA Elections Bylaw.

**GSA Board
Report to Council for May 12, 2014 GSA Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
 From: Ellen Schoeck, Executive Director and Coordinator of the GSA Board; Heather Hogg, Director of Operations; and Courtney Thomas, Director of Services and Governance
 Date: May 9, 2014

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. Open session Minutes are available upon request. The President, Vice-Presidents, Director of Operations, Director of Services and Governance, Financial Manager, and I will be happy to answer any questions or provide more information at the Council meeting.

23 April, 2014 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Directly-Elected Officer Request for Vacation or Leave: Request Form

Motions and Agreements:

The GSA Board agreed to **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the document entitled "Directly-Elected Officer Request for Vacation or Leave."

30 April, 2014 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Draft GSA Board Strategic Work Plan 2014-2015; May 2014 Away Times; Fiduciary Duty and Transition Issues; Council Chambers Design/Layout; University of Alberta Convocation: Mentor Participation; External Relations Travel Expenses: Actual Expenses for Attendance at the CASA 2014 AGM, from March 14-26, 2014, in Charlottetown, PEI; Worker's Compensation Board Report; Graduate Students' Association of Canada (GSAC): Dissolution Report

Motions and Agreements:

Board Members **AGREED** to post the summary of actual expenses incurred through attendance at the CASA 2014 AGM, from March 14-16, 2014, in Charlottetown, PEI.

07 May, 2014 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Designation of Executive Vice-President and Line of Succession for Acting President; Line of Succession for Chair of the GSA Board; GSA Board's 2014-2015 Strategic Work Plan: Draft 3; Connecting with MLAs, MPs and Ministers

Motions and Agreements:

Board Members **AGREED** upon the succession for Chair of the GSA Board: 1) Vice-President Academic, Colin More; 2) Vice-President External, Susan Cake; 3) Vice-President Labour, Monty Bal.

In addition, the following motions were considered by the voting members of GSAB via email.

14 March 2014 (an oversight resulted in this Motion not being brought to Council in the 14 April, 2014 GSA Board Report to Council)

That the GSA Board, as the "senior administrative authority" of the GSA, **DELEGATE AND INSTRUCT** the Executive Director to call a meeting of the four graduate student members of the ERC (Richard Kanyo, Virginia Pimmet, Hamman Samuel and Micaela Santiago) and have ERC elect or select, as expeditiously as possible, an individual or individuals -- who may or may not be a member(s) of ERC -- to hear the appeal. BE **MOVED**. HaH seconded. **CARRIED**.

14 April, 2014

That the GSA Board **APPROVE** the estimated expenses for one representative of the GSA to attend the CASA Foundations Conference, May 9-13, 2014, in Ottawa, ON, as shown in the attached proposed budget. BE **MOVED**. MoB seconded. **CARRIED**.

**GSA Nominating Committee (NoC)
Report to Council for May 12, 2014 GSA Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Lacey Fleming, Vice-Chair of the GSA Nominating Committee
Date: May 9, 2014

Dear Council Colleagues,

The report from the GSA Nominating Committee (NoC) 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 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.

I also wanted to take this opportunity to thank Zhen Li, Council appointed member on the GSA Board and GSA Nominating Committee, for his dedicated service for two years on Council, the Board, and the NoC. Zhen's last meeting of GSA Council will be Monday May 12, 2014 and we are sad to see him go. He has been an instrumental part of the GSA Nominating Committee and its constant work to match a diverse set of graduate students with dozens of committee opportunities across the University and on GSA Standing Committees.

Sincerely,

Lacey Fleming, Vice-Chair of the GSA Nominating Committee

GSA Council-Elected Officers

2014 GSA Senator Council Election

This position was advertised through the GSA Newsletter on April 1, 2014, with nominations closing on April 30, 2014. **Two** bios and resumes were received. Additional nominations were accepted until Wednesday May 7, 2014 at 12:00 PM (Noon). **No additional nominations were received. SEE ITEM 8 - ELECTIONS, GSA SENATOR, PAGES 8.2 - 8.4.**

2014 - 2015 GSA CRO, Speaker, and Deputies – Nominations Now Open

Nominations for the positions of GSA Chief Returning Officer, Deputy Returning Officer, Speaker, and Deputy Speaker opened on May 2, 2014. The nomination period will last **one month, with nominations closing on Friday May 30, 2014 at 12:00 PM.** Contact the Nominating Committee if are interested in these positions and would like to learn more.

GSA Standing Committees

The GSA Nominating Committee forwarded a number of nominations to Council for positions on the following GSA Standing Committees: *Budget and Finance Committee, Governance Committee, Labour Relations Committee, and Elections and Referenda Committee.* **SEE ITEM 8 - ELECTIONS, GSA STANDING COMMITTEES, PAGES 8.0 - 8.1.**

GSA Judicial Committee

GSA Policy requires that “The Judicial Committee shall be comprised of eight (8) Councillors who are selected at random as members of the Committee at the outset of each semester” (GSA Policy, Standing Committees, 11.1). **Quendresa Beka, Blake Fensom, Ahmad Adl, Amanda Daignault, Luciana Da Silveira Cavalcante, Solomon Amaoteng, Lisa Pashniak, and Jennifer Crawford** were selected at random to serve on the Judicial Committee for the Spring term.

Bodies External to the GSA

Council has delegated to the NoC the responsibility of filling positions on all committees external to the GSA. Normally, all vacancies are advertised. According to Policy, “advertising may be waived in instances where, in the NoC’s view, it is urgent to fill a vacancy” (GSA Policy, Nominating, 5.2).

1) General Faculties Council (14 graduate student-at-large positions) for 2014-2015

There are **14 graduate student-at-large** positions on the General Faculties Council (GFC) for 2014-2015. **Eighteen strong biographies and resumes were received for the 14 positions.** The GSA Nominating Committee looked for a diversity of members and took many factors into account including a mix of continuity and new members, and a diversity of departments and backgrounds, and made their selections to create as diverse a group as possible.

1. Gary Barron (PhD program, Sociology)
2. Richard Zhao (PhD program, Computing Science)
3. Ahmad Al-Dabbagh (PhD program, Electrical and Computer Engineering)
4. Quendresa Beka (MSc program, Epidemiology)
5. Brayden Whitlock (MSc program, Physiology)
6. Brianna Wells (PhD program, English and Film Studies)
7. Cuiying Jian (PhD program, Mechanical Engineering)
8. Madiha Mueen (MPH program, Health Policy and Management)
9. Harsh Thaker (MSc program, Medicine)
10. Shahriar Rozen (MPH program, Health Promotion)
11. Michal Juhas (PhD program, Psychiatry)
12. Saeed El Khair Nusri (MSc program, Chemical and Materials Engineering)
13. Mohib-UI-Haque Khan (MSc program, Mechanical Engineering)
14. Ali Assi (MPH program, Global Health)

2) Vargo Teaching Chair Selection Committee

This committee requires a GSA Executive or delegate to adjudicate applications for the Vargo Teaching Chair. Vargo Teaching Chairs were created to foster excellence in teaching at the University. **Jasmin Hirschberg (PhD program, Modern Languages and Cultural Studies)** was elected to serve as the GSA’s delegate on this committee.

3) University Cup Selection Committee

This committee requires a GSA Executive or delegate to adjudicate applications for the University Cup, which is the highest honour of the U of A, granted to those individuals who have achieved outstanding distinction in each of the areas of scholarly research, teaching, service to the University and the community at large. **Joshua Pemberton (PhD program, Biological Sciences)** was elected to serve as the GSA’s delegate on this committee.

4) Distinguished University Professor Selection Committee

This committee requires a GSA Executive or delegate to adjudicate applications for the title of Distinguished University Professor and Distinguished University Professor Emeritus to those individuals who have achieved outstanding distinction and scholarship in each of the areas of research, teaching, and service to the academy and the community at large. **Scott Varga (MA program, Human Ecology)** was elected to serve as the GSA's delegate on this committee.

**GSA Vice-President Academic
Report to Council for May 12, 2014 GSA Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Colin More
Date: May 9, 2014

Dear Council Colleagues,

Hello everyone!

It's been yet another quiet month, yet there are still a couple of things to talk about!

The first is the **effort being made by FGSR to construct professional development opportunities and a PD program for graduate students**. As part of this effort they are holding **consultations with various types of employers (governments, non-profits, charities, businesses, etc.) to understand what they look for in (and what they may not understand about) advanced degree holders**. I am pleased to report that these consultations are proceeding nicely. Three subgroups have been formed to examine various facets of the problem, and another meeting of the full body is expected to be held in the next month or so. Hopefully we'll have an outline of a working program sometime this summer!

Second, **Dr. Naomi Krogman recently filed her (very comprehensive) report on graduate supervision**, and it is impressive! **There are a number of excellent recommendations in it, and the GSA Board is still considering how best to proceed with them**. As an organization, we will be constructing an action plan in the coming weeks which will serve as a road map for the next several years, as Nathan reported. Given the magnitude of several recommendations in the report, change will not happen quickly. But, at the very least, we will lay the groundwork for the years ahead.

Finally, allow me to express my thanks for allowing me to serve another year as your VP Academic! I've learned an absurd amount in the past year, and I intend to use that knowledge to best effect in the coming year! **Actions arising from the supervision report will likely take up much of my time, but I'll still be alert to all the other issues already underway, GFC and FGSR reform among them**.

Until next time!

Colin More, Vice-President Academic

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between April 14, 2014 and May 12, 2014:

April 15	SU President
April 15	Strategic Planning with Jonathan Schaeffer
April 22	Facilitated Consultation
April 22	Lunch with the Provost and SU President
April 23	Negotiations Meeting
April 24	Acting Dean of Students
April 29	Professional Development Advisory Board
April 29	SU/GSA Dinner
April 30	FGSR Council
May 1	Preview Active Shooter Video
May 7	GFC CLE
May 12	Naomi Krogman

**GSA Vice-President Student Services
Report to Council for May 12, 2014 GSA Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Megha Bajaj
Date: May 9, 2014

Dear Council Colleagues,

Hope you are well. The last year with the GSA as the VP-Student Services has been a great learning experience for me. I look forward to continuing to serve you in this role for 2014-2015, along with our awesome team.

PAW Steering Committee Meeting:

The projected “substantial completion” of the PAW Centre is September 2014 and the projected final completion of spaces ‘intended for student use’ is January 2015. These ‘student spaces’ will be the main gym area, climbing wall, and graduate student lounge. In the past few meetings both the GSA and the SU have been pushing for a **January 2015 commencement for the collection of the PAW fee.** In other words we don’t want students to start paying the fee until all the areas meant for student use are complete and ready for use. **A potential ‘soft launch’ of PAW is being planned for the Fall 2014 term, but fee collection will not commence until January.** The main idea behind the ‘soft launch’ is to promote health and wellness on campus and to showcase the new spaces in the PAW building to students and student groups. Event planning for the ‘soft launch’ will be done by the PAW Strategic Operating Committee, which will be struck soon. This probably means I will have another committee/meeting to attend, not that I am complaining!

PAW Site Tour:

I did the PAW site tour along with Courtney Thomas, GSA Director of Services and Governance. **Overall, we are happy with the large fitness area and the graduate student lounge space. The patio (attached to the graduate student lounge) is huge!** However, I am looking forward to doing the tour again, once the PAW Centre is closer to substantial completion.

GPAC (Graduate Program Administrators’ Committee):

The School of Business will be offering new certificate programs, one in business fundamentals and the other in entrepreneurship starting Fall 2014. These certificate programs will be open to all post-Masters students, post-docs, working professionals outside the U of A, and non-U of A students in all disciplines. The details of the certificate program will be posted on the School of Business webpage soon.

Sincerely,

Megha Bajaj, Vice-President Student Services

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between April 14, 2014 and May 12, 2014:

April 17	U-Pass Admin
April 22	Meeting with Student re SU Bylaw Change
April 23	Negotiations Meeting
April 24	Acting Dean of Students
April 24	GFC FDC
April 25	URPC
April 29	PAW Steering Committee
April 29	Professional Development Advisory Board
April 29	EB Appeal Hearing
April 29	SU/GSA Dinner
May 1	Preview Active Shooter Video
May 5	PAW Centre Tour
May 7	GPAC
May 8	Grants
May 8	Supplementary Bursary Appeal Committee
May 12	Naomi Krogman - Supervision Report

**2013-2014 GSA Vice-President External
Report to Council for May 9, 2014 GSA Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Hasin Haroon
Date: May 9, 2014

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope you are all well. The highlights of my last couple of weeks in office -

Prayer Space – Unfortunately we were not able to sign a MoU with the university regarding Prayer Space, due to unforeseen issues with the University’s contractual agreements with Aramark surrounding CAB. The CAB space is therefore no longer on the table. However, on a positive note **we are now pushing for the space in HUB that will be vacated by UAI by spring 2015**. Although this pushes the timeline on the project back, the space is likely to be of a better quality and we still have all the key stakeholders on board.

Alumni Council – The Deputy Minister for IAE presented to the Alumni Council, regarding the IAE ministry’s priorities under the new Premier. Unfortunately much of what he had to say was quite concerning and echoed what we heard last year from Minister Lukaszuk, such as **Results Based Budgeting, prioritising funding, and support based on economic output etc.**

Monthly Meeting with IAE – The IAE representatives presented a **couple of different funding models used in Canada and worldwide, and these will be kept in the background when discussing the issue of revamping Alberta’s funding model**. I also raised our concerns regarding the Deputy Ministers comments earlier at Alumni Council.

I would like to thank you all for making my time with the GSA a rewarding and memorable one.

Sincerely,

Hasin Haroon, GSA Vice-President External 2013-2014

I was away on Personal Leave from April 28, 2014 to April 30, 2014.

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between April 14, 2014 and April 30, 2014:

April 15	Tuition Meeting
April 22	Meeting with Student re SU Bylaw Change
April 23	Alumni Council
April 23	Prayer Space
April 23	IAE Monthly Meeting
April 23	Negotiations Meeting
April 24	Acting Dean of Students
April 24	Communications Advisory Council
April 25	Flexible Leases
April 29	SU/GSA Dinner

**2014-2015 GSA Vice-President External
Report to Council for May 12, 2014 GSA Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Susan Cake
Date: May 9, 2014

Dear Council Colleagues,

I am very excited to be writing my first report and quite disappointed that I will not be able to attend the first Council meeting in person, as I am currently away from Edmonton at the Canadian **Alliance of Student Associations conference in Ottawa, Ontario**. I am looking forward to a great year and hope to see everyone soon.

Although I have been in this role for just over one week, I have had the opportunity to attend some potentially vital meetings for graduate students. The first meeting was a **Ministry of Innovation and Advanced Education tuition meeting with external stakeholders**. In these working groups there is ongoing discussion of funding model reforms for the post-secondary sector, results-based budgeting, and student financial aid reforms. In this meeting we were able to **discuss some of the current issues with tuition and fees as well as brainstorm some potential solutions**. Moving forward, the key issues we will focus on are **issues with mandatory non-instructional fees, market modifiers and international differential fees**.

There has also been some progress with **Prayer Space**. Working with the University Architect Ben Louie, the Dean of Students' Office through Rob Washburn, the SU and the Muslim Students Association I'm happy to report things are still moving forward. **We are currently assessing some of the layout options of the space and are aiming to have a proposal to university governance in June**.

I am excited to see what the year's priorities will be for this federal student advocacy group and will report back next Council.

If there are any questions, concerns or interest in my report please feel free to send an email.

Take care,

Susan Cake, GSA Vice-President External 2014-2015

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between April 28, 2014 and May 12, 2014:

April 29	Professional Development Advisory Board
April 29	SU/GSA Dinner
May 1	Preview Active Shooter Video
May 5	Tuition Meeting with Stakeholders
May 7	Prayer Space
May 8	Student Connect Advisory Council
May 9-13	CASA

**GSA Vice-President Labour
Report to Council for May 12, 2014 GSA Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Monty Bal
Date: May 9, 2014

Dear Council Colleagues,

Below are some of the highlights of what I've been up to since we last met (it's a bit shorter than usual because I'm currently in the process of driving back to Edmonton from New York to get back in time for May's council meeting and don't really get much time to do anything other than drive and sleep).

Federal/Provincial Post-Secondary Education Policy Coordination Workshop

I was able to attend an workshop put on by the University of Victoria (UVic) European Union Centre of Excellence (EUCE) in Alberta on the **transferability of policy coordination processes in the EU to Canada**. We discussed the potential value and roadblocks to implementing an open method of cooperation mechanism. Specifically, I was able to present the case that **this type of method would help students due to its holistic approach at looking at issues and providing a prolonged engagement of relevant actors**, whereas the current method of engagement in Canada, at the national level, exists at more or less an *ad hoc* basis. For example, the model would allow for the inclusion of a number of ministries which would allow for understanding the interconnected nature of changes instituted by individual ministries. Furthermore, **I believe it would help create an outward facing international identity which Canadian universities sorely lack**.

International Competitiveness in Post-Secondary Education

I attended a presentation by Daniel Guhr, an expert on the internationalization of PSE. Although the data he presented was largely based on undergraduate students, there were nevertheless interesting insights which may help the GSA understand the **impact of international students to Canadian PSE and how Canada and the UofA can attract more international students** as it seeks to increase the number of international students on campus. Of particular interest was his belief that **Canada is the most international student friendly destination out of Western countries with respect to immigration, studying, and working**. He also presented information regarding the timely completion rates for undergrads, where Canada is falling behind (AUS 96% of students complete on time). Furthermore, other countries admission processes are far more streamlined (AUS 5-12 days from application to acceptance, NZ it takes 10 days to get a student study permit). He feels that **the UofA should begin to implement some of these policies which would help it gain international prominence**. However, he warns that the international PSE business is cyclical and there will be a downturn. This may impact Canada's ability to attract international students.

CA Negotiations Meeting

We met again with our counterparts in University administration and received a counter offer. The GSA Negotiating Committee will meet shortly to discuss in detail the implications it might have for students and decide how we choose to proceed.

Finally, as always, if there are any issues you have related to your RA/TAship, please contact us directly so we can work to help you out.

Thanks,

Simarjit S. Bal (Monty), GSA Vice-President Labour

I was away on personal leave from May 1, 2014 to May 11, 2014.

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between April 14, 2014 and May 12, 2014:

April 16	Federal/Provincial Coordination in Post-Secondary Education
April 23	Negotiations Meeting
April 24	Acting Dean of Students
April 25	International Competitiveness- Daniel Guhr
April 29	SU/GSA Dinner
April 30	FGSR Council
May 12	Naomi Krogman - Supervision Report

**GSA Negotiating Committee (NC)
Report to Council for May 12, 2014 GSA Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Monty Bal
Date: May 9, 2014

Dear Council Colleagues,

The GSA NC met for a second time with the University Negotiating Team on April 23, 2014. We continued our discussions with the Administration's team (as you will see in my Vice-President Labour report to Council) and plan to meet again shortly. I will report further orally.

Sincerely,

Simarjit S. Bal (Monty), GSA Vice-President Labour and Chair of the GSA Negotiating Committee

**GSA Executive Director
Report to Council for May 12, 2014 GSA Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Ellen Schoeck, GSA Executive Director
Date: May 9, 2014

Dear Colleagues,

The transition from one elected group to the next has gone smoothly, especially with three incumbents re-elected and the President having been a former Vice-President Academic. In the GSA office, however, we take nothing for granted and look at all our procedures, rollouts, support in the delivery of services, and ways of doing things anew, so that what we are doing accords with the incoming group. It is part of my responsibility to tell Council if I see anything amiss in transition, and I do not.

MY MAIN POINT IN THIS REPORT concerns GSA Bylaws and Policy. Major structural change is needed before Council can move forward with substantive changes. I have brought this issue forward for discussion before, and now the office team is ready to go.

Step one is to *join up in one document your Bylaws and Policies*. This may sound dull, but right now, if you want to get the whole picture on, say, the Legal Defense Fund, you have to flip some 40 pages apart between Bylaws and Policy to get the entire regulatory framework.

Please stay tuned. The GSA Governance Committee can approve on your behalf editorial changes, but substantive changes will be coming your way.

Email me if you want to know more.

Best,

Ellen Schoeck, GSA Executive Director

Management Report to the GSA Board, April 23, 2014

Dear All,

The following have issues have dominated management's attention in the week since the last GSA Board meeting on April 9, 2014:

Strategic

- **Main Issues Dealt With in the Past Week:** Council follow up, elections bylaws and policies, Elections Advisory Task Force, transition planning (developing shadowing schedule), survey to GSA Council, GSA Judicial Committee, forward thinking on the 2015 General Election timeline, GU15 follow up, Health and Dental Plan bylaw, Health and Dental strategic calendar, early thinking on Fall Orientation, PAW fees and other issues, Facilitated Coaching and Learning.
- **Ongoing review of the Collective Agreement and the beginning of negotiations.**
- **Continued work on student groups** (renewing the MOU with the DoS and SGS, template constitution, alcohol liability waiver, ability for the GSA to intervene with groups experiencing governance issues, registration assistance), **the next stage of the DLI** (getting back into departments), and **connecting effectively with constituents.**
- **Bylaw and Policy Review (Editorial:** review of all bylaws and policies for inconsistencies and errors is ongoing, as is long-term thought on combining bylaws and policy into one document, utilizing alternate formatting, and creating a "definitions" section and **Substantive:** forward thinking regarding a review of the Board Policy Manual is underway, as is thinking about students groups and elections bylaws and policies. A thorough review of the policies and processes surrounding councillor remuneration is also planned).
- Continued work associated with building GSA wiki pages as a mechanism to **effectively track issues.**
- **Development and review of Awards Night and Fall Orientation roll out plans.**
- **Planning for the last 2 GSABs** for current group of Directly-Elected Officers and **wrap up of Board SWP initiatives and lingering issues** (NPP, CJSR, PAW, PNP white paper, etc).

Grants and Operations

- Thorough **review of the GSA website and forward thinking on the design of the GSA newsletter.**
- **Social Media:** Facebook = 351 likes (up 4 from April 9), Twitter = 211 followers (up 8 from April 9).
- **Grants review and processing** \$50,865 remaining for PDAs and 56 applications submitted this period, **CCGs closed (all funds expended)** and 25 applications submitted this period, **ASGAs closed (all funds expended)** and 5 applications submitted this period, \$10,000 remaining for EBs and 0 applications submitted this period. **NOTE:** THE CURRENT GRANTING PERIOD OPENED ON APRIL 1 BUT, AS COLLECTIVE BARGAINING HAS NOT BEEN CONCLUDED, FUNDS HAVE NOT BEEN REPLENISHED (BEYOND THE REALLOCATION OF THE REMAINING BALANCE FROM 2013-2014 INTO THE CURRENT GRANTING PERIOD AS APPROVED BY THE GSA BOARD ON APRIL 2, 2014)

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- Compiling the **GSA Media Tracker**; assisting with **the issues tracking wiki**; assisting with **Council action and follow up.**
- Assisting with **preparations** for transition; assisting the NoC with **filling vacancies on several committees (GFC, GSA Standing Committees, etc)**; forward thinking on the GSA Senator, CRO, and Speaker elections.
- Assisting with developing a **master list of all delegates** on various committees, working groups, etc.
- Tracking **requests for use of the GSA logo.**

Management Report to the GSA Board, April 30, 2014

Dear All,

The following have issues have dominated management's attention in the week since the last GSA Board meeting on April 23, 2014:

Strategic

- **Main Issues Dealt With in the Past Week:** Supervision Report, navigating multiple absences in May and coordinating calendars to keep the ship of state afloat, transition and final sign offs, potential labour and funding issues in two departments, development of the Board SWP 2014-2015, early thinking on Fall Orientation and events to connect with constituents (eg, "BBQ"), Facilitated Coaching and Learning (final "handbook" detailing a consultation process) GSA Judicial Committee, forward thinking on the 2015 General Election timeline, GU15 follow up, new AGC (draft bylaws, etc), Health and Dental strategic calendar, PAW fees and other issues (business relationship with the SU).
- **Ongoing review of the Collective Agreement and negotiations.**
- **Bylaw and Policy Review (Editorial:** review of all bylaws and policies for inconsistencies and errors is ongoing, as is long-term thought on combining bylaws and policy into one document, utilizing alternate formatting, and creating a "definitions" section and **Substantive:** forward thinking regarding a review of the Board Policy Manual is underway, as is thinking about students groups and elections bylaws and policies. A thorough review of the policies and processes surrounding councillor remuneration is also planned).
- Continued work associated with building GSA wiki pages as a mechanism to **effectively track issues.**
- **Ongoing work on student groups** (renewing the MOU with the Dean of Student and Student Group Services, template constitution, alcohol liability waiver, ability for the GSA to intervene with groups experiencing governance issues, registration assistance), **the next stage of the Department Liaison Initiative** (getting back into departments), and **connecting effectively with constituents.**
- **Planning for upcoming GSAB and Council meetings** (blocking out time to discuss major issues).

Grants and Operations

- Thorough **review of the GSA website and the design of the GSA newsletter.**
- **Social Media:** Facebook = 353 likes (up 2 from April 23), Twitter = 213 followers (up 2 from April 23).
- **Grants review and processing** \$7,041 remaining for Professional Development Awards and 151 applications submitted this period, **Childcare Grants closed (all funds expended)** and 25 applications submitted this period, **Academically-Related Student Group Awards closed (all funds expended)** and 5 applications submitted this period, \$8,000 remaining for Emergency Bursaries and 1 application submitted this period.
NOTE: THE CURRENT GRANTING PERIOD OPENED ON APRIL 1 BUT, AS COLLECTIVE BARGAINING HAS NOT BEEN CONCLUDED, FUNDS HAVE NOT BEEN REPLENISHED (BEYOND THE REALLOCATION OF THE REMAINING BALANCE FROM 2013-2014 INTO THE CURRENT GRANTING PERIOD AS APPROVED BY THE GSA BOARD ON APRIL 2, 2014)

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- Compiling the **GSA Media Tracker**; assisting with **the issues tracking wiki**; assisting with **ongoing thought on connecting to constituents via events like a "BBQ"**.
- Assisting with **preparations** for transition; assisting the Nominating Committee with **filling vacancies on several committees (GFC, GSA Standing Committees, etc)**; forward thinking on the GSA Senator, CRO, and Speaker elections.
- Assisting with developing a **master list of all delegates** on various committees, working groups, etc.
- Tracking **requests for use of the GSA logo.**
- **Assistance with transition.**

Management Report to the GSA Board, May 7, 2014

Dear All,

The following have issues have dominated management's attention in the week since the last GSA Board meeting on April 30, 2014:

Strategic

- **Main Issues Dealt With in the Past Week:** President's Task Force of GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy, navigating multiple absences in May and coordinating calendars to keep the ship of state afloat, Board Policy regarding requests for vacation and research leave from Directly-Elected Officers, surveys about GSA services, Council preparation, Supervision Report (meeting with N Krogman and Directly-Elected Officers), potential labour and funding issues in two departments, development of the Board SWP 2014-2015 (and associated cover letters), early thinking on Fall Orientation and events to connect with constituents (eg, "BBQ"), GU15 follow up, new anti-spam legislation, Senator election, Health and Dental strategic calendar, PAW fees and other issues (business relationship with the SU).
- **Collective Agreement negotiations.**
- **Bylaw and Policy Review (Editorial:** integrating bylaw and policy into one document (a draft is being prepared), a review of all bylaws and policies for inconsistencies and errors, and creating a "definitions" section and **Substantive:** forward thinking regarding a review of the Board Policy Manual is underway. A thorough review of the policies and processes surrounding councillor remuneration is also planned).
- **Continuing work on student groups** (renewing the MOU with the Dean of Student and Student Group Services, template constitution, alcohol liability waiver, ability for the GSA to intervene with groups experiencing governance issues, registration assistance), **the next stage of the Department Liaison Initiative** (getting back into departments), and **connecting effectively with constituents.** Early stage planning for Fall Orientation and departmental orientations will begin soon.
- **Planning for upcoming GSAB and Council meetings** (blocking out time to discuss major issues).

Grants and Operations

- Thorough **review of the GSA website and the design of the GSA newsletter.**
- Developing a proposed **grants budget.**
- **Social Media:** Facebook = 356 likes (up 3 from April 30), Twitter = 214 followers (up 1 from April 30).
- **Grants review and processing: Professional Development Awards closed (all funds expended)** and 153 applications submitted this period, **Childcare Grants closed (all funds expended)** and 25 applications submitted this period, **Academically-Related Student Group Awards closed (all funds expended)** and 5 applications submitted this period, \$4,500 remaining for Emergency Bursaries and 3 applications submitted this period. **NOTE:** THE CURRENT GRANTING PERIOD OPENED ON APRIL 1 BUT, AS COLLECTIVE BARGAINING HAS NOT BEEN CONCLUDED, FUNDS HAVE NOT BEEN REPLENISHED (BEYOND THE REALLOCATION OF THE REMAINING BALANCE FROM 2013-2014 INTO THE CURRENT GRANTING PERIOD AS APPROVED BY THE GSA BOARD ON APRIL 2, 2014)

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- Recording Compiling the **GSA Media Tracker**; assisting with **the issues tracking wiki**; assisting with **ongoing thought on connecting to constituents via events like a "BBQ"**.
- Assisting with the **election of GSA Senator** and developing a **master list of all delegates** on various committees, working groups, etc.
- Assisting with **preparations** for transition; assisting the Nominating Committee with **filling vacancies on several committees** (Vargo Teaching Chair Selection Committee, University Cup Selection Committee, GSA Standing Committees, etc); **proactive work on all of the committee positions that need to start being filled** (Arts Faculty Council, Green and Gold Leadership and Professional Development Grant Adjudication Committee, etc); **forward thinking on the GSA CRO and Speaker elections.**