

GSA Council Meeting CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

Monday, July 14, 2014 at 6:00 pm

Telus 1-34

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

Substantive material is sent to all GSA Council members at least one week prior to the date of the meeting to give members abundant time to review (in accordance with the Standing Orders of Council). 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.

Speaker Sarah Prescott in the Chair

OPEN SESSION

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of the 14 July 2014 Agenda
3. Approval of the Minutes from the 16 June 2014 GSA Council meeting
Attachments:
 - Minutes from the 16 June 2014 GSA Council meeting
4. Changes in GSA Council Membership
 - i. Introduction of New Councillors (*If you are new to GSA Council, please let us know it is your first meeting*)
 - ii. Farewell to Departing Councillors (*If this is your last GSA Council meeting, or if your last Council meeting is approaching, please let us know*)

**Attached Numbered
Pages**

3.0 - 3.12

Action Items

5. 2013-2014 GSA Audited Financial Statements
Nathan Andrews (GSA President) will present the Item and introduce the guest. Ellen Schoeck (GSA Executive Director), Shirley Ball (GSA Accountant), and Dorte Sheikh (GSA Financial Manager) will be available to answer questions.

Guest: Tom Gee (Auditor (MBA, FCA), Peterson Walker LLP Chartered Accountants)

GSA BFC Members present as members of GSA Council: Nathan Andrews (GSA President and BFC Chair), Monty Bal (GSA Vice-President Labour and BFC Vice-Chair), Dasha Smirnow (Councillor, Business PhD) and Harsh Thaker (Councillor-

at-Large). **GSA BFC Member invited to GSA Council as a guest:** Karen Turpin.

Attachments:

- Outline of Issue
- Auditor's Cover Letter
- Report to the Board with Respect to Matters Arising from the Audit
- 2013-2014 GSA Audited Financial Statements

5.0
5.1 - 5.2
5.3 - 5.5
5.6 - 5.20

6. GSA 2014-2015 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report
Nathan Andrews (GSA President) will present the Item and Ellen Schoeck (GSA Executive Director), Shirley Ball (GSA Accountant), and Dorte Sheikh (GSA Financial Manager) will be available to answer questions.

GSA BFC Members present as members of GSA Council: Nathan Andrews (GSA President and BFC Chair), Monty Bal (GSA Vice-President Labour and BFC Vice-Chair), Dasha Smirnow (Councillor, Business PhD) and Harsh Thaker (Councillor-at-Large). **GSA BFC Member invited to GSA Council as a guest:** Karen Turpin.

Attachments:

- Outline of Issue
- GSA 2014-2015 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report
- GSA 2014-2015 Quarterly Operating Budget Narrative
- GSA 2014-2015 Quarterly Restricted and Other Funding Narrative

6.0
6.1 - 6.2
6.3 - 6.14
6.15 - 6.17

Presentations and Councillor Announcements

7. International Student Services Provided by University of Alberta International
Megha Bajaj (GSA Vice-President Student Services) will present the Item and introduce the guest.

Guests: Anica Dang (Programs Coordinator, International Student Services) and Kumarie Achaibar-Morrison (Associate Director, International Student Services)

8. Councillor Announcements

Action Items, Elections, Appointments, Special Business, Updates

9. GSA Health and Dental Plan: Proposed Increase to Vision Coverage
Megha Bajaj (GSA Vice-President Student Services) will present the Item and Roy Coulthard (GSA Consultant) and Ellen Schoeck (GSA Executive Director) will be available to answer questions.

Attachments:

- Outline of Issue

9.0 - 9.1

10. Final Report of the GSA President’s Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy
Nathan Andrews (GSA President) will present the Item.

Guests: Members of the Task Force have been invited to attend (the majority of members currently sit on GSA Council. A list of Task Force members is provided on page 10.2).

Attachments:

- Outline of Issue
- Final Report of the GSA President’s Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy

10.0
10.1 - 10.15

11. Elections

- i. **Acclaimed Election** - Advisory Review Committee for the Vice-President (University Relations)

Michelle DuVal (GSA Nominating Committee Member) will present the item.

Attachments:

- Nominees for the Advisory Review Committee for the Vice-President (University Relations)

11.0

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

Reports

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

- i. President’s Report
ii. GSA Board
iii. Budget and Finance Committee
iv. Governance Committee

13.0 - 13.1
13.2 - 13.3
13.4
13.5

a) Nominating Committee

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

13.6 - 13.7

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

- i. Vice-President Academic’s Report

14.0

15. 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**)

15.0 - 15.1

16. Vice-President External (**Susan Cake, GSA Vice-President External**)

- i. Vice-President External’s Report
ii. Awards Selection Committee (**this committee meets in the Fall and Winter**)

16.0 - 16.1

Meeting MINUTES
16 June, 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:

Nathan Andrews (President)	Harsh Thaker (Councillor-at-Large)	Amanda Radil (Ed Psych)	Manoj Parmar (Pharm & Pharmaceutical Sci)
Colin More (VP Academic)	Alphonse Ndem (Anthropology)	Sulya Fenichel (Elementary Ed)	Jennifer Crawford (Phys Ed & Recreation)
Monty Bal (VP Labour)	Lacey Fleming (Anthropology)	Amanda Daignault (English & Film Studies)	Ruijia Wang (Physics)
Susan Cake (VP External)	Michele DuVal (Bio Sci)	Sumit Mandal (Human Ecology)	Ruojng Zhou (Psychology)
Megha Bajaj (VP Student Services)	Patricia Leighton (Bio Sci)	Luciana D S Cavalcante (Lab Medicine & Pathology)	Tharsini Sivananthajothy (Public Health)
Roy Coulthard (Senator/Deputy Speaker)	Mike Trites (Bio Sci)	Gooneshwaree Beesoon (Library and Information Sci)	Kyle Kipps (Renewable Resources)
Hamman Samuel (Interim CRO/Computing Science)	Virginia Pimmett (Cell Biology)	Amir Nosrati (Math & Stats Sciences)	Angela Bentley (Res Econ and Enviro Sociology)
Qendresa Beka (Councillor-at-Large)	Jeremy Wohland (Civ & Env Engineering)	Grant Norman (Neurosci)	Curtis Rollins (Res Econ and Enviro Sociology)
Risha Dutt (Councillor-at-Large)	Myriam Bernier (Comm Sci & Disorders)	Jennifer Bell (Nursing)	Kerry Rose (Secondary Ed)
Md. Mohib-Ul-Haque Khan (Councillor-at-Large)	Laura Brin (Earth & Atmos Sci)	Lisa Pashniak (Occupational Therapy)	Michael Zajko (Sociology)
Jude Kong (Councillor-at-Large)	Hasriadi Masalam (Ed Policy Studies)	Geetha Venkateswaran (Paediatrics)	Rotem Lavy (Surgery)
Kangyi Lou (Councillor-at-Large)			

GUESTS: Richard Kanyo (nominee for DRO), Sarah Prescott (nominee for Speaker), and Natalie Sharpe (Director, Student Ombudservice).

Deputy Speaker Roy Coulthard in the Chair.

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 16 June, 2014 Consolidated Agenda

Members had before them the 16 June, 2014 Consolidated Agenda, which had been previously distributed on 13 June, 2014.

APPROVED by unanimous consent.

Approval of Minutes**3. Minutes****i. Minutes from the 12 May, 2014 GSA Council meeting**

Members had before them the 12 May, 2014 GSA Council Minutes, which had been previously distributed on 06 June, 2014.

APPROVED by unanimous consent.

Changes in Council Membership**4. Changes in Council Membership****i. Introduction of New Councillors**

This was the first meeting for a number of Councillors: Angela Bently (Resource Economics and Environmental Sociology); Alphonse Ahola Ndem (Anthropology); Manoj Parmar (Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences); and Mike Trites (Biological Sciences).

ii. Farewell to Departing Councillors

This was the last meeting for Curtis Rollins (Resource Economics and Environmental Sociology).

Presentations and Councillor Announcements**5. Councillor Announcements**

None at this time.

Action Items, Elections, Appointments, Special Business

At this time, GSA President Nathan Andrews assumed the Chair, as Deputy Speaker Roy Coulthard was a nominee for one of the positions to be elected in Item 6, and was presenting two of the other elections.

6. Elections

N Andrews introduced the item and stated that Councillors had six ballots to cast. Nominee Q Li had withdrawn his nomination for GSA Speaker; the withdrawal was reflected on the ballot that was distributed to Councillors, but was not changed in the Item 6 materials which had been previously distributed to Council. N Andrews noted that all the elections would be presented, time would be given for presentations and questions for nominees, and then the ballots would be distributed and time would be given to read the bios and resumes of the nominees.

i. Paper Ballot Elections at Council - GSA Council-Elected Officers

Councillors had in front of them the GSA Council-Elected Officers List of Nominees, which had been previously distributed on 13 June, 2014. Lacey Fleming (GSA Nominating Committee Vice-Chair) presented the item and stated that the GSA Nominating Committee (NoC) had advertised for the positions of Chief Returning Officer (CRO), Deputy Returning Officer (DRO), Speaker, and Deputy Speaker. The GSA NoC received two nominations for Speaker but one had since withdrawn, and one each for Deputy Speaker, CRO and DRO. The GSA NoC forwarded all nominations received to Council and they were presented in Item 6. L Fleming then invited each candidate to introduce themselves and answer any questions from Council.

H Samuel (nominee for CRO) stated that he was in the Department of Computing Science, and in his third year. He is standing for the position of CRO and has previously acted as Acting DRO and Interim CRO. He has also spent a year on the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (ERC). He noted he had many things planned for the upcoming elections, and hoped that the GSA President's Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy will provide good ideas to the GSA ERC.

M Bal stated that voter turnout is always an issue in GSA elections, and asked if H Samuel had any plans to increase voter turnout. H Samuel responded that voter turnout could depend on many factors, including the timing of elections. He was thinking about when to have the elections, and how long the voting period should be.

Prepared by M. Caldwell and C. Thomas for the Council Meeting of 16 June 2014

C:\Users\GSA User\Google Drive\320 - Council\Meetings\July 2014\First Mailing\GSA Council 14 July 2014 Item 3 - GSA Council 16 June 2014 MINUTES.docx

There were no further questions for H Samuel.

R Kanyo (nominee for DRO) stated that he had just finished his PhD in Physiology and had served as a member of Council and of the GSA ERC since 2010. A couple of graduate students asked him to run for DRO because of his experience, and he is happy to do so. He enjoyed his experience serving on the GSA ERC, enjoyed the challenges, and hoped to tackle them in the upcoming year.

There were no questions for R Kanyo. L Fleming stated that if R Kanyo is elected, there will be a separate motion to confer on him Associate Membership in the GSA.

S Prescott (nominee for Speaker) stated that she was running for GSA Speaker. She is a graduate student in Resource Economics and Environmental Sociology and was spending her summer talking to all terrain vehicle and dirt bike riders. She thinks Speaker would be an interesting role, balancing having people be heard but also moving the agenda along. She was interested in process, and thought she would do a decent job. She had been attending GSA Council for about a year, and has served as an alternate Councillor since January. She worked as an environmental consultant and had to coordinate fieldwork and lead in a number of roles and thought that experience will serve her well in the role of Speaker.

There were no questions for S Prescott.

R Coulthard (nominee for Deputy Speaker) stated that having served in many other roles in the GSA, he was motivated to seek the Deputy Speakership so that occasionally, as required, he could sit in the Speaker's.

M Bal stated that S Cake wanted to know what R Coulthard's shirt says. R Coulthard responded that it said 'Grad school: It seemed better than getting a real job' and that everyone in the room could identify with it.

C More asked how R Coulthard will limit his own speaking in the role of Deputy Speaker. R Coulthard replied that there is always an opportunity to challenge his rulings in Council, but that he will try to lead the meeting along as quickly as possible, as the Speaker has no formal speaking role other than introducing items on the agenda.

There were no further questions for R Coulthard.

ii. Paper Ballot Elections at Council - Faculty of Engineering Dean Selection Committee

Councillors had in front of them the Faculty of Engineering Dean Selection Committee List of Nominees which had been previously distributed on 13 June, 2014. L Fleming (GSA NoC Vice-Chair) presented the item and stated that the position on the Faculty of Engineering Dean Selection Committee was advertised to engineering graduate students, and nominees were asked to submit bios by 12 June, 2014. The GSA NoC received two nominations, with no nominations being received by Chemical and Materials Engineering or Electrical and Computing Engineering. All candidates were forwarded to GSA Council and listed on the ballots.

iii. Paper Ballot Elections at Council - GSA Board

Councillors had in front of them the GSA Board List of Nominees which had been previously distributed on 13 June, 2014. R Coulthard (GSA Deputy Speaker) presented the item and stated that Speaker D Prins and Executive Director E Schoeck advertised the position as required and received two nominations. A call for additional nominations went out and no additional nominations were received. All nominations received were brought forward to GSA Council for consideration. The nominees were listed in alphabetical order but presented in reverse alphabetical order on the ballot. 'None of the above' was also considered a nominee for the purpose of the ballot. R Coulthard then invited the nominees to introduce themselves and answer questions from Council.

J Kong stated that he was a PhD candidate in Mathematics. He told students during the All-Candidates Forum (when running for Councillor-at-Large) that he would organize a chance for students to come together, to get to know each other, and to learn about how mathematics and statistics can be applied to dance and salsa. He saw the

role of the Council member position on the GSA Board as an opportunity to create a forum to bring students together.

S Prescott asked why salsa dancing, and J Kong replied that math can be applied to everything in life and that he applied it to biology and salsa, and would like to be able to show other graduate students how they can do that.

There were no further questions for J Kong.

H Thaker stated that he did not know how to salsa, but that he thinks being on the GSA Board will provide an opportunity to serve as liaison between Council and the Directly-Elected Officers. He has been serving on the GSA Budget and Finance Committee, the GSA Awards Selection Committee, General Faculties Council, and Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Council. He also sees it as a launching-pad for running for a Directly-Elected Officer position next year.

C More asked if H Thaker wants to learn how to salsa, and H Thaker replied he currently did not.

A Daignault asked where H Thaker learned to time manage, and how this new committee would add to his full plate. H Thaker replied that he has finished most of his research and is currently doing data analysis, which can be done in off hours.

There were no further questions for H Thaker.

J Wohland - Point of Information: The program listed on the Faculty of Engineering Dean Search Committee for J Wohland was incorrect. He is in the MEng program, not the PhD program.

iv. Acclaimed Elections - GSA Nominating Committee

Members had before them the GSA NoC List of Nominees which had been previously distributed on 13 June, 2014. R Coulthard (GSA Deputy Speaker) presented the item and stated that only one nominee was received for the Council Member vacancy on the GSA Nominating Committee, N Mehta from Medical Microbiology and Immunology.

MOTION BEFORE COUNCIL: That the GSA Council, acting on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Speaker and Executive Director, **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the newly-elected GSA Council member for the GSA Nominating Committee.

There were no questions.

MOTION: That the GSA Council, acting on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Speaker and Executive Director, **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the newly-elected GSA Council member for the GSA Nominating Committee. R Lavy **MOVED**. J Bell **Second**.

Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

At this time, ballots for the six elections to be voted on by GSA Council were distributed to voting members. Once all Councillors had cast their votes, the collected ballots were turned over to N Sharpe (Director, Student Ombudservice) and E Schoeck (GSA Executive Director), as neutral individuals, to be counted.

7. GSA Board 2014-2015 Strategic Work Plan

Members had before them an outline of issue, a cover letter from the GSA President, and the GSA Board 2014-2015 Strategic Work Plan, which had been previously distributed on 06 June, 2014. N Andrews presented the item.

MOTION BEFORE COUNCIL: That the GSA Council, on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Board, **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the GSA Board Strategic Work Plan 2014-2015 (pages 9.3 - 9.11 in the attached material).

Prepared by M. Caldwell and C. Thomas for the Council Meeting of 16 June 2014

C:\Users\GSA User\Google Drive\320 - Council\Meetings\July 2014\First Mailing\GSA Council 14 July 2014 Item 3 - GSA Council 16 June 2014 MINUTES.docx

N Andrews raised the following points regarding the GSA Board 2014-2015 Strategic Work Plan (SWP):

The GSA Board 2014-2015 Strategic Work Plan (Plan) was an annual plan created every year, that builds both on the previous year's successes and on issues that did not get completely finished last year. Regarding the Strategic Work Plan category "reputation", it is key as an organization, and should be a concern no matter what state your organization is in. Want to become the best-managed GSA in Canada. At GU15 meetings, the GSA learned that it was leading other GSAs in management and other aspects, and N Andrews hoped to continue that.

Regarding the category "interface and advocacy with university and government", S Cake and N Andrews were working to maintain external relationships including with the new provincial advocacy group called ab-GPAC. Much progress had been made with regards to ab-GPAC's bylaws and fiscal policy and it was hoped the new group will be signed into effect around October/November. The GSA is still part of GU15 and is maintaining observer status in the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations.

Graduate reform, financial support, and compliance with the Collective Agreement (CA) were also major issues in the SWP. The GSA was maintaining traction on the CA including ensuring there was constant communication with the Students' Union, NASA, and AAS:UA. There was also ongoing discussion about graduate reform at the U of A. It was not clear where that conversation is going, several committees have been struck and tasked with various duties, but there had not yet been a single concerted effort yet. The GSA remained committed to ensure that graduate student interests are served. Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees, market modifiers, and potential increases to the International Student Differential were also on the radar. Provost C Amrhein would speak to Council about tuition in September, which would provide an opportunity to discuss these issues.

At the May meeting of GSA Council, N Krogman presented her report on how to improve graduate student supervision. The GSA was committed to moving it forward. Graduate student success was dependent on the support provided, and the GSA was developing an action plan to target Dr. Krogman's recommendations; both those that are feasible in the short term, and those that were longer term.

In terms of student experience, the GSA started the Departmental Liaison Initiative (DLI) and it had been really great at getting out to departments. Councillors are a liaison between departments and the GSA. It is important for the Directly-Elected Officers to listen to graduate students in each department as they may have specific concerns, things they want the GSA to pursue, or questions that might not reach the GSA if the GSA does not reach out to them. The DLI also educates graduate students on their rights and responsibilities. For Orientation, the GSA has received funding to hold a social event in September this year. It is a chance to reach the larger graduate student population, beyond GSA Council and those who volunteer for the GSA.

Professional development (PD) was also a key priority in the SWP. Only 1/3 of graduate students will remain in academia. The FGSR PD program would begin in September, but the GSA was also working on other initiatives to ensure that graduate students were aware of opportunities outside of the university. The GSA will also be conducting a survey relating to its services, sometime in the fall. Councillors are encouraged to complete the survey, as it will help structure and improve the GSA's service offerings.

N Andrews next noted that mental health cannot be overemphasized. The GSA was constantly communicating with the Dean of Students Office and Counselling and Clinical Services to ensure that graduate students' needs are met. GSA Council was reminded of Becky Ponting, the psychologist in Triffo Hall specifically for graduate students.

In terms of social spaces, the PAW Centre agreement was signed two years ago and the building was now under construction. Within the PAW Centre, there would be a lounge specifically for graduate students. Once it was open the graduate student lounge would be a venue for a variety of activities. The GSA was also investigating social space in the North Power Plant.

In closing, N Andrews stated that the GSA was striving to maintain its excellence and long term health. There was a succession plan in place, and there are continuous efforts to attract the best talent for our elected officers, management, and staff.

Following the presentation there were a number of questions:

S Hamman asked if there was a plan to provide dedicated nap spaces like at the University of Michigan. N Andrews responded that naps were only one possible use of social spaces, and that in the future a “napping zone” on campus could be looked into. There was some discussion regarding the impact of napping on sleep cycles and wellness.

K Lou expressed interest in PD opportunities specifically for those graduate students who will not be seeking academic careers, asking if the GSA had any general directions or plans for these PD activities. N Andrews responded that the GSA was in communication with FGSR who does have a plan in place. The GSA will continue working with FGSR but also wants to do things more “on the ground” including working with ABCampus on an industry social mixer and engaging with other groups on campus who are already doing career mixers. The goal is to partner with them so that the GSA is not duplicating what is already available, and to explore other avenues for PD. K Lou asked if there were plans to develop mentorship programs where students volunteer to help other students. M Bajaj answered that the GSA was already working on a mentorship program with Alumni, which would connect graduate students with people already working in their fields.

A Nosrati asked if the GSA had considered making a database that would track graduate students after graduation, and, specifically, levels of job success. N Andrews responded that the GSA relied on FGSR for such information as it already has such a database but is not aware of how long they track graduate students who have completed their programs. It would be difficult for the GSA to keep track of every graduate student. M Bal commented that it was far more useful to have departments track graduates, because it was at the department level where they can actually adjust programs to reflect the needs of the students.

S Fenichel suggested that the GSA consider bringing in people to talk about entrepreneurial enterprise, including what it takes to start your own businesses, rather than fitting students into existing careers. M Bajaj responded that ABCampus already holds sessions like this in collaboration with TEC Edmonton but that the GSA will collaborate and definitely think about this specifically for graduate students. S Cake noted that Alumni Relations was also working on doing this for graduate students.

K Lou asked about GSA services for international graduate students. N Andrews responded that the GSA often discussed international student issues, including at GSA Council, and had considered having a VP International. The conclusion was that the GSA was not ready to introduce another VP. University of Alberta International offered many excellent services for international graduate students already. Further, it is difficult for the GSA to support student groups that have mixed undergraduate/graduate student members. The GSA is trying to find some way to partner with student groups that were not registered as graduate student groups. M Bajaj stated that last year the GSA had begun advocating for Permanent Residency application assistance on campus for international students, and stated she will report on this further in her report to GSA Council.

S Prescott asked how the new provincial lobby group would be an improvement on the previous group (Alberta Graduate Council (AGC)) that was seen to have been non-functional. N Andrews responded that the old lobby group did not have a proper foundation, such as financial control policies, and a lot of things were being done without any structure. Executive Director E Schoeck noted that there was no legal basis for the old lobby group’s existence; they were not registered under the *Societies Act* and they had no basic legal framework for doing what they were doing, including collecting fees. There were also issues regarding accountability back for the fees they were collecting from the GSAs. The GSA Board regarded that as a risk, as did the GSA auditor. The new group has had professional help including looking at bylaws, and a professional facilitator/subject matter expert to help members go through all the new governing documents being developed. The new group had a good solid foundation for representation, and had evolved into a much more cohesive whole. R Coulthard commented that

Prepared by M. Caldwell and C. Thomas for the Council Meeting of 16 June 2014

C:\Users\GSA User\Google Drive\320 - Council\Meetings\July 2014\First Mailing\GSA Council 14 July 2014 Item 3 - GSA Council 16 June 2014 MINUTES.docx

when he was GSA President, Council made a request for the Chair of AGC to speak to Council about AGC activities and financial transactions; the Chair never came. Following on that there was a variety of efforts by the current Directly-Elected Officers and their predecessors to confirm things were being handled properly. AGC was dissolved because they had a difficult time agreeing on what they would and wouldn't be doing, because the group had been doing whatever they wanted for ten plus years with no real guidance. The GSA Board pushed hard to for this group to either reform or shut down, and since the dissolution, the members are getting along much better and agreeing on a legalistic framework to govern them accordingly.

There were no further questions.

MOTION: That the GSA Council, on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Board, **receive for information** the GSA Board Strategic Work Plan 2014-2015 (pages 9.3 - 9.11 in the attached material). N Andrews **MOVED**. M Bajaj **Seconded**.

Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Elections Results

At this time, N Andrews announced the results of the paper ballot votes cast during Item 6 on the Agenda. The results were as follows:

- **2014-2015 GSA CRO:** H Samman received 38 votes; none of the above received 3 votes; 0 ballots were spoiled.
- **2014-2015 GSA DRO:** R Kanyo received 41 votes; none of the above received 0 votes; 0 ballots were spoiled.
- **2014-2015 GSA Speaker:** S Prescott received 41 votes; none of the above received 0 votes; 0 ballots were spoiled.
- **2014-2015 GSA Deputy Speaker:** R Coulthard received 41 votes; none of the above received 0 votes; 0 ballots were spoiled.
- **Faculty of Engineering Dean Selection Committee:** J Wohland received 34 votes, C Jian received 7 votes; 0 ballots were spoiled.
- **Council Position on the GSA Board:** H Thaker received 31 votes; J Kong received 10 votes; none of the above received 0 votes; 0 ballots were spoiled.

Motion before Council: That Council **ELECT** Richard Kanyo as an Associate Member of the GSA for the duration of his term as GSA DRO.

N Andrews stated that because Council had elected as DRO for 2014-2015 R Kanyo, who was no longer a member of the GSA, Council would need to vote to elect R Kanyo as an Associate Member in the GSA per GSA Bylaw, Part II, 1.2, which states that "Council [...] may elect to associate membership of the GSA to any member(s) or class of members of the University community it considers appropriate." Associate Membership for R Kanyo is necessary because GSA Bylaw, Part IV, 3.1.2 states that "unless otherwise specified, Council-Elected Officers shall be GSA Members." The Motion had been previously Moved by M DuVal and Seconded by H Thaker via email on 13 June 2014.

MOTION: That Council **ELECT** Richard Kanyo as an Associate Member of the GSA for the duration of his term as GSA DRO. M DuVal **Moved**. H Thaker **Seconded**.

Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

8. Special Business (none at this time)

Reports

9. President

i. President's Report:

Members had before them a written report from the GSA President, which had been previously distributed on 13 June, 2014. The reports stood as submitted. In addition, N Andrews stated that a document should be forthcoming from administration regarding graduate student funding packages. From informal communications, he had heard that two years of guaranteed funding for Masters students and four years for PhD students was being proposed, but that there was no consensus with moving ahead with the proposal as there were concerns about graduate students not applying for external grants if they had guaranteed funding. N Andrews asked what Councillors thought the GSA should advocate for in regards to guaranteed funding for graduate students.

N Andrews also reported that the President's Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy has met several times and received great feedback from graduate students. The final report of the Task Force will be presented at the next meeting of GSA Council and N Andrews hopes Councillors will read the report so that there can be a lot of discussion around the suggestions.

Following the presentation there were a number of questions and suggestions regarding guaranteed funding:

L Brin stated that there had been a couple of instances in her department where graduate students come thinking they have guaranteed funding, but it turned out they did not. Guaranteed funding is very important for graduate students. N Andrews responded that it was important for there to be consistency in policy between departments and that is part of the reason why the University is looking into it.

M Bajaj stated that some departments currently offer five-year guaranteed TA-ships to PhD students, and wondered if standardized four-year guaranteed funding would mean that five-year funding packages would not be offered. She stated that it would be a big loss for students. N Andrews stated that there was the potential that funding could be reduced to only four years, but that since he has not seen any documents relating to the proposal, he did not know the details.

T Sivananthajothy stated that in her program, Masters students do not even begin their research until their second year, and their programs run longer. They do not currently have guaranteed funding and she asked how funding would work for programs that run longer than two years. N Andrews stated that he cannot speak to individual departments, but that he thought what the President was trying to do was create across the board funding. Differences between departments/programs was definitely something to bring up when the proposal was presented.

V Pimmett stated that in her program graduate students have a guaranteed stipend, and her department puts two years worth of funding in escrow for every graduate student when they start. She questioned the idea that guaranteed funding will stop students from competing for other sources of funding. It is important for CV building and she wonders what the data or rationale was behind that thought. N Andrews replied that he would also like to see the data regarding how many students receive guaranteed funding and then do not apply for other awards. V Pimmett stated that she was unsure of how funding works outside of the sciences, but funding for graduate student stipends was a budget line in grants for CIHR and it seems weird that having guaranteed funding would cause students not to apply for other grants. H Samuel stated that, in regards to productivity related to funding, if graduate students have guaranteed funding they can focus more on research than on rent.

S Prescott asked how situations where there is industry funding will be handled, and if industry will be allowed to fund programs. C More responded that graduate funding is all over the map. An audit of 6,000 graduate students being paid showed that there were differences on order of magnitude, which is unfair. Administration is concerned about completion times, because the U of A has the longest times to completion to Canada, and Canada has the longest times in North America. Guaranteed funding would address this, and the GSA would support it, but it would be a balancing act between what is fair for students and what the government will fund. Based on all

discussions so far, it was about establishing a minimum rate of pay, and does not mean that graduate students won't be able to get paid more.

R Coulthard stated that there were eight people remaining on the Speaker's list and that any further comments after that should be emailed to N Andrews.

S Cake stated that the length of funding seemed random and wanted to know the justification for it. N Andrews responded that he did not know the justification but that it might be about striking a balance, and C More stated that it seems to be out of a standard manual from somewhere else. S Cake asked if there is information on completion times for programs, and stated that maybe the length of funding reflects possible program reforms. SSHRC now provides five years of funding, so why would the U of A accept funding for four years when the government is setting a precedent for four.

G Venkateswaran stated that having guaranteed funding does not prevent students from applying for external funding. Often stipends are reduced if graduate students do receive external funding. It is not a limitation on students, and gives them peace of mind to do their research.

K Lou stated that she does not know the case in other countries, but for students from China it is difficult to get student visas without guaranteed funding.

J Kong asked what is meant by 'guaranteed funding', and stated that it currently varies dependent on faculty whether you get paid to do your research or get paid through TAships. N Andrews replied that it usually means you are working for what you receive and that it would fall under the AEGS Collective Agreement. It would be up to departments and faculties to give money without a TAship or RAship being attached to it. N Andrews noted that was his understanding, but he has not seen anything in writing so cannot say for certain what 'guaranteed' means.

A Daignault referenced the tension between the idea of guaranteed funding and C Amrhein's (Provost and Vice-President Academic) ideas of sovereign revenue schemes discussed at March GSA Council. In her department, all graduate students have been funded up until now, and what that means with the budget cuts is that the incoming cohort is the smallest it has been in over ten years because all the funding is used for existing students. For the Faculty of Arts, one way of cost recovery was through unfunded MA students. There was a conflict between what the President was recommending and what the Provost was recommending.

A Nosrati stated that comparisons of the U of A with European institutions was erroneous because students at those foreign institutions start doing research right at the beginning of their programs, while in Canada there is intensive coursework with high standards (minimum GPA of A-). If funding was reduced to four years, it would be problematic to have the same expectations of coursework and research work as there currently are. There was also the problem that international students cannot work enough off campus. N Andrews responded that guaranteed funding was just one part of the graduate reform thinking that was currently ongoing. The GSA will bring any generated proposals to GSA Council when they are received.

G Beeson stated that in her program there was no funding at all, if you do not have money you do not go to school. N Andrews stated that this spoke to the differences in programs, and the question of if funding will be guaranteed for all graduate students, or only certain departments. This issue required further discussion when a proposal was released to ensure that no graduate student is at a disadvantage.

There were no further questions.

ii. GSA Board

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 13 June, 2014. The report stood as submitted.

iii. Budget and Finance Committee

No meetings this reporting period.

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 13 June, 2014. The report stood as submitted and, in addition, L Fleming thanked Councillors for the important business they conducted in the Elections item.

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 13 June, 2014. The report stood as submitted and, in addition, C More stated that there was some data available regarding graduate degree completion times at the U of A. In the last ten years the length for Masters programs has held steady at 3.1 years, while PhDs have increased from 5.1 to 6.5 years institution wide. The complicating factor was that data was not collected until 2006, after provincial funding for graduate students was introduced in 2005. With only ten years of data, why completion times at the U of A are longer was a complex question. There were many opinions, but no general answer. The conversation was not going away and it would be important.

C More also stated that the administration has been quiet since April, and that it feels like they are working on a lot of things under the surface that will be pushed forward in the fall: GFC reform, budgeting, and U of A's international position, for example. The common element between these initiatives was that there are no documents to review, just rumblings. N Krogman presented her report on graduate supervision to GSA Council last month, and C More is currently working on an action plan for the document. Krogman's report lies at the intersection of many different things: professional development, funding, FGSR reform, etc., and was not just confined to supervision. The landscape is shifting and this was an interesting, exciting and terrifying time for graduate students.

There were no 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 13 June, 2014. The report stood as submitted and, in addition, M Bajaj stated that the GSA has been part of a negotiation with ETS for lower cost U-Pass replacement stickers. A pilot program would start in the fall. Depending on when a student loses their sticker, they will pay a different amount (100% before October 1; 75% October 1 - 31; 50% November 1 - 30; 25% December 1 -31). A Memorandum of Agreement has been drafted between ETS and the different educational institutions involved in the U-Pass and would hopefully be signed off on by the end of June. Data on how the pilot worked would be reviewed in February, and then the final replacement costs moving forward would be decided.

M Bajaj stated that the landscaping design for the PAW Centre and St Joseph's Residence had been approved with construction to begin in July, and future phases dependent on weather. The deadline for completion was Spring 2015. M Bajaj provided an updated on the proposed Permanent Residency application assistance program for international students through the U of A. UAI held focus groups in the winter term, and has prepared a feasibility report that was currently sitting with the Executive Director, Student Programs and Services, UAI. Once he has reviewed it, it would be forwarded to the VP International and then the Provost. A number of different models were proposed, including informal workshops and presentations, subsidized costs for off-campus lawyers, or a cost-recovery advisor program through UAI. M Bajaj intends to speak to the Provost about the program in July and would report back to GSA Council.

Following the presentation there were a number of questions:

H Samuel stated that he read that Canada would be implementing a fast track for PR applications starting next year, but he was not sure if it was at the federal or provincial level.

G Venkateswaran stated that it was good to hear about the reduced replacement cost for lost U-Passes and asked why students have to pay at all for a replacement. M Bajaj replied that the reason students are asked to pay for replacements was because many students are not actually losing their pass, but instead were selling it online. Having to pay for a replacement was meant to discourage this activity.

R Wang suggested having a specific number of times that a U-Pass could be replaced. M Bajaj replied that the ONECard office will be tracking to see if students purchase more than one replacement, and will address the issue if they find students are doing this.

There were no further 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 from the Vice-President External, which had been previously distributed on 13 June, 2014. The report stood as submitted.

S Cake MOVED to go into Closed Session. M Bal Seconded.

Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

S Cake MOVED to go out of Closed Session. C More Seconded.

Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

S Cake stated that the GU15 group had met on a conference call and that the next GU15 meeting would be held in McGill in August. The group will be discussing graduate student funding, federal elections, policy cleanups, and other concerns.

There were no 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 13 June, 2014. The report stood as submitted and, in addition, M Bal stated that he had attended meetings of a task force that was reviewing tuition, fees, and all things related to post-secondary education in Alberta. The group has developed a few principles including transparency, adaptability, and predictability, including using CPI for tuition increases. The group planned to draft consistent definitions regarding fees and how they are used. The group's recommendations would be going to the Minister of Innovation and Advanced Education, who will then let the group know how to proceed with working on implementation.

M Bal also attended a mental health summit in Calgary; the trip was funded by the Dean of Students. Mental health was an important issue in post-secondary education, both to universities and to government. Government representatives have said that student groups advocating for more funding for mental health initiatives would be well received. Generally, the summit discussed the nature of mental health and how to deal with it in the learning

Prepared by M. Caldwell and C. Thomas for the Council Meeting of 16 June 2014

C:\Users\GSA User\Google Drive\320 - Council\Meetings\July 2014\First Mailing\GSA Council 14 July 2014 Item 3 - GSA Council 16 June 2014 MINUTES.docx

environment, the integration of services on campus, and the possibility for integration with professional development. M Bal reported that there was an innovative program at SFU training TAs in mental health, and that it might be interesting to tie something similar into professional development initiatives at the U of A.

M Bal stated that he had heard from students who have had their TA/RA funding cut over the spring and summer terms. If anyone has had that happen to them, or knows of it happening, they should contact M Bal so the GSA can work to resolve it.

M Bal MOVED to go into Closed Session. N Andrews Seconded.

Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

C More MOVED to go out of Closed Session. N Andrews Seconded.

Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

After moving out of Closed Session, there were a number of questions for M Bal:

R Dutt asked what the action plan was for mental health on campus. M Bal replied that the GSA has been working with the Dean of Students' office, for example getting a psychologist in Triffo Hall to see graduate students, but the conference he attended was more about the larger issue of mental health at post-secondary institutions. M Bajaj stated that she had spoken with Triffo Hall's Registered Psychologist B Ponting, about doing workshops specifically for graduate students during the term, and close to exams. There was also thinking happening around having training for TAs in relation to mental health and the GSA would be collaborating with departments for that, but there are no specific plans yet. M Bal added that what SFU was doing was showing faculty and TAs how mental health could be incorporated into the learning environment, and also into the physical environment in the form of more green and better lit spaces.

S Fenichel asked for examples of funding issues in the spring/summer term, and M Bal replied that students have received funding in the past and are no longer receiving it. It was part of the problem of inconsistency in funding. J Kong stated that in some departments in the summer, the supervisor pays for research, so that if they do not undertake it, graduate students do not get paid. M Bal stated that in the past, supervisors would pay for research assistantships in the summer, but that this year many supervisors are claiming they no longer can provide support. It was an issue the GSA is dealing with.

- 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 stated that the Senate Task Force met last Friday and was moving forward in surveying how regular Albertans feel connected to the U of A and whether this connection could be furthered. If Councillors were interested in knowing more they could ask R Coulthard, or the new GSA Senator, G Barron.

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

No report was required at this time.

ii. Elections and Referenda Committee

No report was required at this time.

21. GSA Management

i. Executive Director's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 13 June, 2014. The report stood as submitted and, in addition, Executive Director E Schoeck asked who had read about the GSA's corporate documents and two Councillors had. E Schoeck stated that when she first started at the GSA, these documents could not be found. They searched through piles of documents, and when they found a document they would add them to a desk where they laid them all out. Now there is a system for file retrieval and tracking.

E Schoeck stated that there are a number of agreement renewal deadlines coming up in 2015 so the GSA will be really busy. Studentcare (who now represent almost every GSA in the GU15) and the NASA agreement covering staff were two examples. The GSA was also going to be doing no-risk business with the SU in the PAW Centre; the GSA went bankrupt from business ventures in the past and will only enter into no-risk agreements.

E Schoeck reported that the 2013-2014 audit had been completed, and that the auditor was very happy. In 2010, the GSA was in disarray and E Schoeck promised Council and the auditor that it would get turned around. The auditor said that the GSA was now turned around. The GSA was in very good financial shape. A Budget 101 session will be offered before the next meeting of GSA Council, when it will receive audit and the first set of quarterly reports. Councillors should learn about budget and audit before they vote to receive those reports.

Following Executive Director E Schoeck's report A Radil asked about liability for alcohol use for student groups. Her student group had registered with Student Groups Services (SGS) and through them were supposed to fill out event forms that ask about alcohol. She wondered if that had anything to do with the GSA or did the SGS cover them. E Schoeck responded that student groups registered with the University were covered by University alcohol insurance. The GSA runs a risk because it did not provide coverage to non-SGS registered groups. There would be a change to the forms you fill out that makes it clear that the GSA does not have coverage. The GSA could help groups get PALS insurance. What the GSA's insurers said was that if there was a problem with an event with alcohol, lawyers will go after both the University and the GSA. To reduce the GSA's risk, groups would soon be asked to sign something that stated they knew the GSA does not have alcohol liability.

R Coulthard stated that audit was when Councillors got to scrutinize the GSA operations and management. They work hard to ensure that the GSA stands up to such scrutiny.

There were no further questions.

Question Period

22. Written Questions

No written questions were received prior to the meeting.

23. Oral Questions

There were no questions.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:21 pm.

Outline of Issue: 2013-2014 GSA Audited Financial Statements (GSA COUNCIL)

Suggested Motion for GSA Council:

That the GSA Council, acting on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Board, **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the 2013-2014 GSA Audited Financial Statements.

Note: At the meeting of June 25, 2014, the GSA Budget and Finance Committee (BFC) unanimously **received for information** the 2013-2014 GSA Audited Financial Statements. At the meeting of June 25, 2014, the GSA Board unanimously **approved and forwarded to Council** the 2013-2014 GSA Audited Financial Statements. Members of the GSA BFC have been invited to attend the July 14, 2014 meeting of GSA Council.

Role of the GSA BFC:

GSA Policy, Standing Committees, Budget and Finance Committee, Section 4.2.b.iii:

“Receiving information and advice from the GSA Auditor with respect to any information and recommendations the auditor wishes to present.”

Role of the GSA Board:

GSA Policy, Standing Committees, GSA Board, Section 2.2.a:

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

Background:

The GSA is required by the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* (Section 97(1)) to have its financial statements audited annually. Our approved auditor is the firm Peterson Walker LLP (headed by Tom Gee, MBA, CA).

Jurisdiction:

Post-Secondary Learning Act, Section 97(1)

“Each student organization of a public post-secondary institution shall provide audited financial statements annually to the board of the public post-secondary institution and shall make the audited financial statements available to students of the public post-secondary institution on request.”

GSA Policy, Budget Principles, Practices, and Procedures, Section 2.5.a

“Following the GSA fiscal year end, the GSA Accountant and the GSA Financial Manager, in consultation with the Executive Director, will arrange for an audit of the GSA’s financial records by the approved auditor as required by the Post-Secondary Learning Act. Audited financial statements are normally due ninety (90) days after year-end. Audited financial statements will be submitted by the Auditor to the President and Executive Director; then to BFC for information; then to the GSA Board for approval; then to GSA Council for information and onward transmission to the University of Alberta Board of Governors. The GSA Accountant and the GSA Financial Manager prepare draft financial statements and the year-end working papers.”

Prepared by C Thomas, M Caldwell and E Schoeck for GSA Council July 14, 2014

June 25, 2014

The Graduate Students' Association
 of the University of Alberta
 Room 1-37, Killam Centre for Advanced Studies
 Triffo Hall, University of Alberta
 EDMONTON AB T6G 2E1

Dear Sirs:

Re: Audit of 2014 Financial Statements

The objective of an audit is to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement and it is not designed to identify matters to communicate. Accordingly, our audit would not usually identify all such matters that may be of interest to management in discharging its responsibilities and it is inappropriate to conclude that no such matters exist.

During the course of our audit of the financial statements of the Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta (the GSA) for the year ended March 31, 2014, we identified certain matters which we have set out below. We did not identify any of the following matters: misstatements, other than trivial errors; fraud; misstatements that may cause future financial statements to be materially misstated; illegal or possibly illegal acts, other than ones considered inconsequential; or significant weaknesses in internal control.

REVIEW OF MATTER RAISED DURING 2012 AUDIT

Review of Unitized Endowment Fund

The GSA's share in the University's Unitized Endowment Fund was acquired in 1997 as a result of the GSA transferring its operational assets from the Powerplant restaurant to the University. The share consisted of an initial amount of \$265,000 and has grown to \$294,775 as at March 31, 2012.

A question was raised as to whether the GSA truly owns and can access its share in the Unitized Endowment Fund. We recommended that the GSA obtain clarification on this matter.

2013 Update:

It was noted that the GSA verified that they own their share in the Utilized Endowment Pool. We recommended that the GSA follow-up on the process it needs to undergo if it decides to access its share in the future.

2014 Update:

This process is still in progress and, therefore, this recommendation is carried forward.

REVIEW OF MATTER RAISED DURING 2013 AUDIT

Alberta Graduate Council (AGC)

The GSA is a member association of the Alberta Graduate Council and as a result, pays member fees to the AGC. Upon discussions during the audit fieldwork, it was discovered that the AGC does not have official bylaws in place, which is of concern to the GSA, as bylaws are essential to the governance of the internal management of an organization.

We recommended that as a member organization, the GSA approach the AGC to ensure proper bylaws are put into place on a timely basis.

2014 Update:

The AGC was dissolved in November 2013. Although a new organization is being established, this matter is still relevant and having adequate financial and governance controls are important. Accordingly, we are repeating the above recommendation for the new organization.



Page Two

The Graduate Students' Association
of the University of Alberta
June 25, 2014

MATTER RAISED DURING 2014 AUDIT

Bank Reconciliation

It was noted that even though bank reconciliations are prepared every month, and are reviewed, there is no evidence of the review.

We recommend that the review be evidenced on each bank reconciliation.

Reserve Funds

At year end, there was \$500,000 in the Financial Stabilization Fund and \$80,489 in the Legal Defense Fund. The amount in the Financial Stabilization Fund is equal to approximately 3.6 months' operating costs. Although not-for-profit organizations typically strive to attain a balance from three to six months operating costs, the GSA's balance is at the lower end of this range. As well, the balance in the Legal Defense Fund would likely be insufficient in the event of a lawsuit and appeal.

We recommend that the GSA review the adequacy of its reserves but be mindful not to transfer an amount that would create a short-term cash flow problem.

Over the past three years, the GSA has made significant improvements to internal controls and internal control policies and processes. It should be noted that maintaining internal controls is an on-going process and changes will need to be made as circumstances change. In 2010, the GSA was in dire straits. This was reported to the Executive and to the Board by the GSA's former President and by the current Executive Director. Although the GSA has made significant progress, especially with respect to budget and administration, it is important to consolidate those gains, to retain excellent staff, stay on track with the budget plan and continue risk reduction.

We shall be pleased to discuss with you further any matters mentioned in this report at your convenience. We would like to express our appreciation for the co-operation and assistance which we received during the course of the audit from Ms. Dorte Sheikh, Ms. Shirley Ball and Ms. Ellen Schoeck.

This communication is prepared solely for the information of management and is not intended for any other purpose. We accept no responsibility to a third party who uses this communication.

Very truly yours,



Chartered Accountants

TJG:cm

**THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA**

**REPORT TO THE BOARD
WITH RESPECT TO MATTERS ARISING
FROM THE AUDIT**

YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2014

To the Board
The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta

Re: **Audit of 2014 Financial Statements**

This report is presented in order to assist members of the Board in carrying out their responsibilities with respect to their review and approval of the financial statements of The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta for the year ended March 31, 2014. This report summarizes our significant findings arising from the audit and other matters which we believe should be brought to your attention. This report is a by-product of the audit and would not necessarily identify all matters that may be of interest to the Board in fulfilling its responsibilities. This report has been prepared solely for the use of the Board in discharging its responsibilities and should not be used for any other purposes.

a. **Significant Accounting Principles and Policies**

Significant accounting principles and policies are disclosed in the notes to the financial statements. Within the context of the audit, management has represented to us that there have not been any material changes in the accounting principles and policies during the year, except for the change with respect to the accounting of financial instruments.

We are not aware of any new accounting standards or legislative requirements which affect the financial reporting of your organization.

b. **Illegal Acts**

Our inquiries of management and our testing of financial records did not reveal any illegal or possibly illegal acts. You should realize however, that improper conduct is usually carefully, if not elaborately, concealed and consequently, the probability is not high that our regular audit work, however diligently performed, will bring it to light. Management has also provided us with a written representation that they are not aware of any illegal or possibly illegal acts.

c. **Weaknesses in Internal Controls**

In the course of our audit, certain weaknesses in internal controls came to our attention. We do not believe there are any matters that require the immediate attention of the Board, however, the more serious of the weaknesses will be communicated to the Board once we have had an opportunity to fully discuss the matters with senior management.

d. **Related Party Transactions**

Testing of financial records and discussions with management did not reveal any significant related party transactions not in the normal course of operations and involving significant judgements by management concerning their measurement or disclosure in the financial statements. We are not aware of any transactions with related parties other than as disclosed in the financial statements.

e. **Difficulties or Disagreements**

We did not encounter any serious difficulties in the performance of the audit. We received the full cooperation of management and employees of The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta and, to our knowledge, had complete access to the accounting records and other documents that we needed in order to carry out our audit. We have had no disagreements with management, and have resolved all auditing, accounting and presentation issues to our satisfaction.

All adjustments that we considered necessary, when considering material misstatements, have been recorded.

Page Three

The Board
The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta

f. Current Accounting and Reporting Developments

We regularly monitor the potential impact of new accounting pronouncements on the accounting practices of The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta. No new accounting pronouncements have been issued which would impact the accounting practices of the organization.

This communication is prepared solely for the information of the Board and is not intended for any other purposes. We invite the Board to contact us to discuss our comments.

Edmonton, Alberta
June 25, 2014



Chartered Accountants

**THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA**

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

March 31, 2014

AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Independent Auditors' Report	2
Statement of Financial Position	3
Statement of Operations	4
Statement of Changes in Net Assets	5
Statement of Cash Flows	6
Notes to Financial Statements	7 - 12
Schedule 1--Schedule of Revenue	13
Schedule 2--Schedule of Expenses	14 - 15

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Board of
The Graduate Students' Association of
the University of Alberta

Report on the Financial Statements

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta, which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2014, and the statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditors' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta as at March 31, 2014 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.



Edmonton, Alberta
June 25, 2014

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Statement of Financial Position

March 31, 2014

	2014	2013
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash (Note 3)	\$ 1,504,284	\$ 1,188,321
Accounts receivable	99,479	101,358
Prepaid expenses	<u>4,538</u>	<u>0</u>
	1,608,301	1,289,679
SHARE IN THE UNITIZED ENDOWMENT POOL (Note 4)	353,205	318,279
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT (Note 5)	<u>109,830</u>	<u>137,360</u>
	<u>\$ 2,071,336</u>	<u>\$ 1,745,318</u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 27,943	\$ 56,793
Dental and health plan payable	187,063	188,612
Deferred contributions (Note 6)	<u>229,315</u>	<u>153,383</u>
	444,321	398,788
DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS RELATED TO PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT (Note 7)	39,166	49,167
NET ASSETS		
Invested in property and equipment	70,664	88,193
Internally restricted (Note 8)	898,263	785,922
Unrestricted	<u>618,922</u>	<u>423,248</u>
	<u>1,587,849</u>	<u>1,297,363</u>
	<u>\$ 2,071,336</u>	<u>\$ 1,745,318</u>
LEASE COMMITMENTS (Note 9)		

APPROVED BY THE BOARD

_____ President
 _____ Vice President
 _____ Executive Director

**THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA**

Statement of Operations

Year Ended March 31, 2014

	2014	2013
REVENUE <i>(Schedule 1)</i>		
Academically Employed Graduate Students' Support Fund	\$ 637,844	\$ 534,928
Administration and services	1,162,307	983,866
Commercial activities	8,279	11,677
Dental and health plan--net	112,341	107,114
Unitized Endowment Pool	46,698	35,803
	<u>1,967,469</u>	<u>1,673,388</u>
 EXPENSES <i>(Schedule 2)</i>		
Academically Employed Graduate Students' Support Fund	637,844	534,928
Administration	958,897	887,006
Commercial activities	14,584	15,925
Services	65,658	67,538
	<u>1,676,983</u>	<u>1,505,397</u>
 REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	 <u>\$ 290,486</u>	 <u>\$ 167,991</u>

**THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA**

Statement of Changes in Net Assets

Year Ended March 31, 2014

	<u>Internally Restricted Net Assets (Note 8)</u>					Unrestricted	2014	2013
	Invested In Property and Equipment	Dental and Health Plan Reserve Fund	Legal Defense Fund	Financial Stabilization Fund	Total Internally Restricted Funds			
Balance at beginning of year	\$ 88,193	\$ 205,433	\$ 80,489	\$ 500,000	\$ 785,922	\$ 423,248	\$1,297,363	\$1,129,372
Revenue over (under) expenses	(19,922)	112,341	o	0	112,341	198,067	290,486	167,991
Purchase of property and equipment	2,393	0	0	0	0	(2,393)	0	0
BALANCE AT END OF YEAR	\$ 70,664	\$ 317,774	\$ 80,489	\$ 500,000	\$ 898,263	\$ 618,922	\$1,587,849	\$1,297,363

**THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA**

Statement of Cash Flows

Year Ended March 31, 2014

	2014	2013
OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Revenue over expenses	\$ 290,486	\$ 167,991
Changes not affecting cash:		
Amortization	29,922	32,303
Amortization of deferred contributions related to property and equipment	(10,000)	(10,000)
Net changes in non-cash working capital items (<i>Note 10</i>)	<u>42,874</u>	<u>52,339</u>
	<u>353,282</u>	<u>242,633</u>
INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Increase in Unitized Endowment Pool	(34,926)	(23,504)
Purchase of equipment	<u>(2,393)</u>	<u>(3,747)</u>
	<u>(37,319)</u>	<u>(27,251)</u>
CASH INCREASE	315,963	215,382
Cash at beginning of year	<u>1,188,321</u>	<u>972,939</u>
CASH AT END OF YEAR	<u>\$ 1,504,284</u>	<u>\$ 1,188,321</u>
CASH FLOWS SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION		
Interest received	<u>\$ 4,906</u>	<u>\$ 1,788</u>

**THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA**

Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2014

NOTE 1--NATURE OF OPERATIONS

The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta is a not-for-profit organization incorporated on December 20, 1972 pursuant to Section 94(1) of The Post-Secondary Learning Act. The purpose of the Association is to represent the interests of graduate students before the University administration and the general public. As a not-for-profit organization under the Income Tax Act, the Graduate Students' Association is exempt from income taxes.

NOTE 2--SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of Presentation

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Cash

Cash is defined as cash on hand and cash on deposit, net of cheques issued and outstanding at the reporting date and cashable guaranteed investment certificates.

Share in the Unitized Endowment Pool

The share in the Unitized Endowment Pool is recognized at acquisition cost and subsequently measured at fair value at each reporting date. The Association's share in the Unitized Endowment Pool is increased by its share of investment income earned in the Pool and reduced by payments received from the University.

Revenue Recognition

The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta follows the deferral method of accounting for contributions. Restricted contributions are recognized as revenue in the year in which the related expenses are incurred. Unrestricted contributions are recognized as revenue when received or receivable if the amount to be received can be reasonably estimated and collection is reasonably assured. Student fees cover the academic year from September to August. A portion of fees received for the period from April to August is recorded as unearned fees and recognized as revenue in the following fiscal year. Other revenue is recorded in the period in which it is earned.

Donated Goods and Services

Donated goods and services are recorded at fair value when fair value can be reasonably estimated. During the year, the Association did not record any donated goods and services.

Property and Equipment

Property and equipment are recorded at cost and amortized on the straight-line basis over their estimated useful lives using the following annual rates:

Leasehold improvements	10%
Furniture and fixtures	20%
Computer equipment	30%

(continues)

**THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA**

Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2014

NOTE 2--SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES *(continued)*

Activity Expenses

The Association has chosen to classify their expenses by function. Detailed revenue and expenses for each function are disclosed in the supporting schedules.

Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements, in conformity with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported in the financial statements. Significant estimates include amortization, prepaid expenses, accrued liabilities, deferred contributions, and deferred contributions related to property and equipment. By their nature, these estimates are subject to measurement uncertainty and actual results could differ.

Financial Instruments

Financial instruments are recorded at fair value when acquired or issued. In subsequent periods, financial assets with actively traded markets are reported at fair value, with any unrealized gains and losses reported in income. All other financial instruments are reported at amortized cost and tested for impairment at each reporting date.

NOTE 3--CASH

Cash consists of the following:

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>
Cash	\$ 963,155	\$ 763,147
Cashable Guaranteed Investment Certificates with interest rates of 1.25% maturing in May and June 2016	<u>541,129</u>	<u>425,174</u>
	<u>\$1,504,284</u>	<u>\$1,188,321</u>

Cash includes \$281,678 (2013--\$165,731) held in a separate account for the Dental and Health Plan Reserve Fund and the Legal Defense Fund.

**THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA**

Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2014

NOTE 4--SHARE IN THE UNITIZED ENDOWMENT POOL

The Association's share in the Unitized Endowment Pool consists of an initial amount of \$265,000 which provided for annual payments to the Association by the University, commencing April 1, 1997, in accordance with the Unitized Endowment Pool Principles and Policy. The share in the Unitized Endowment Pool is measured at fair market value. Payments from the Pool may be applied to the Association's programs. The Unitized Endowment Pool was established by the University to facilitate long-term investment management and administration of funds. The University of Alberta has policies and procedures in place governing asset mix, diversification, exposure limits, credit quality and performance measurement, with investments managed by the Board of Governors' Investment Committee. The University's Unitized Endowment Pool investments have no exposure to asset-backed commercial paper.

During the year, investment income of \$11,486 (2013--\$11,577) was earned on the fund.

The share in the unitized endowment pool is restricted for the Financial Stabilization Fund.

NOTE 5--PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

	2014		2013	
	Cost	Accumulated Amortization	Net Book Value	Net Book Value
Leasehold improvements	\$198,000	\$120,285	\$77,715	\$ 97,515
Furniture and fixtures	104,373	80,632	23,741	29,677
Computer equipment	73,622	65,248	8,374	10,168
	<u>\$375,995</u>	<u>\$266,165</u>	<u>\$109,830</u>	<u>\$137,360</u>

NOTE 6--DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS

Deferred contributions represent unspent resources externally restricted for specific purposes as follows:

	2014	2013
Academically Employed Graduate Students' Bursary Program	\$129,973	\$ 89,811
Graduate Student Assistance Program	74,721	55,971
Alberta Graduate Council Fees	23,254	0
Office of the Provost Funding	1,367	7,601
BALANCE AT END OF YEAR	<u>\$229,315</u>	<u>\$153,383</u>

**THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA**

Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2014

NOTE 7--DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS RELATED TO PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

Deferred contributions related to property and equipment represent funds received from the University of Alberta which have been used to fund the renovation of the Killam Centre for Advanced Studies. The deferred contributions related to property and equipment is amortized on the same basis as the related leasehold improvements.

NOTE 8--INTERNALLY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS

Internally restricted net assets are comprised of the following funds:

Legal Defense Fund

The Legal Defense Fund was established to provide resources to enter into legal action where appropriate.

Dental and Health Plan Reserve Fund

The Dental and Health Plan Reserve Fund was established to ensure that adequate funds would be available in the event the Dental and Health Plan costs exceed the amounts collected in fees.

Financial Stabilization Fund

The Fund is intended to safeguard the Association against uncertainty and to provide for unexpected expenditures. The balance will be adjusted annually at the discretion of the Board and will grow until it is equal to at least six months' operating costs.

NOTE 9--LEASE COMMITMENTS

The Association has entered into a five year lease which expires June 2016, to lease a portion of the Killam Centre for Advanced Studies from the University of Alberta at \$1 per year and utilities at no cost.

The Association leases photocopiers under operating leases expiring in 2015. Future minimum annual lease payments under these operating leases will be approximately \$10,069.

**THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA**

Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2014

NOTE 10--NET CHANGES IN NON-CASH WORKING CAPITAL ITEMS

Changes in non-cash working capital items and their effect of increasing (decreasing) cash are as follows:

	<u>2014</u>	<u>2013</u>
Accounts receivable	\$ 1,879	\$ 8,405
Prepaid expenses	(4,538)	702
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	(28,850)	(31,050)
Dental and health plan payable	(1,549)	(637)
Deferred contributions	<u>75,932</u>	<u>74,919</u>
	<u>\$ 42,874</u>	<u>\$ 52,339</u>

NOTE 11--FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

The Association's financial instruments consist of cash, accounts receivable, share in the Unitized Endowment Pool, accounts payable and accrued liabilities and dental and health plan payable. The Association is exposed to the following risks through the financial instruments it holds:

Credit Risk

Credit risk is the risk that one party to a financial instrument will cause a financial loss for the other party by failing to discharge an obligation. The Association does not believe it is subject to any significant concentration of credit risk. Cash is in place with a major financial institution. Accounts receivable are generally amounts receivable from the University of Alberta.

Interest Rate Risk

Interest rate risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market interest rates. The Association is exposed to interest rate risk arising on its interest bearing guaranteed investment certificates. As the guaranteed investment certificates are cashable at any time, the Association is not subject to interest rate risk.

Liquidity Risk

Liquidity risk arises from the possibility that the Association might encounter difficulty in setting its debts or in meeting its obligations related to financial liabilities. It is the Association's opinion that there is no significant liquidity risk as of March 31, 2014.

(continues)

**THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA**

Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2014

NOTE 11--FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS *(continued)*

Market Risk

Market risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. The share in the Unitized Endowment Pool is subject to market risk, which is the possibility that investments in the Endowment Fund will change in value due to future fluctuations in market prices. The Unitized Endowment Pool is managed by the University of Alberta which has policies and procedures in place governing asset mix, diversification, exposure limits, credit quality and performance measurement. The Board of Governor's Investment Committee is responsible for oversight of the University's investments and fulfills their responsibilities by regular meetings to monitor and review the investments and investment manager performance, to ensure compliance with the University's investment policies and to evaluate the appropriateness of the investment policies.

THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

(Schedule 1)

Schedule of Revenue

Year Ended March 31, 2014

	2014	2013
<u>Academically Employed Graduate Students' Fund</u>		
Child care subsidy	\$ 152,500	\$ 107,500
Emergency bursaries	69,031	82,085
Graduate student assistance program	69,006	78,708
Graduate student recognition awards	17,500	13,500
Professional development grants	<u>329,807</u>	<u>253,135</u>
	<u>637,844</u>	<u>534,928</u>
<u>Administration and Services</u>		
Alberta Graduate Council	0	7,419
Awards night	4,000	3,800
CJSR fees	14,825	14,838
Graduate Students' Association fees	1,087,830	908,842
Investment and interest	5,917	4,526
Killam Centre for Advanced Studies	10,000	10,000
Miscellaneous	7,500	7,509
Office of the Provost	26,235	18,432
Orientation	<u>6,000</u>	<u>8,500</u>
	<u>1,162,307</u>	<u>983,866</u>
<u>Commercial Activities</u>		
Handbook	7,995	11,090
Photocopying	<u>284</u>	<u>587</u>
	<u>8,279</u>	<u>11,677</u>
<u>Dental and Health Plan</u>		
Plan fees	1,981,602	2,005,014
Plan expenses	<u>(1,869,261)</u>	<u>(1,897,900)</u>
	<u>112,341</u>	<u>107,114</u>
<u>Unitized Endowment Pool</u>		
Investment income	11,486	11,577
Unrealized gain	<u>35,212</u>	<u>24,226</u>
	<u>46,698</u>	<u>35,803</u>
TOTAL REVENUE	<u>\$ 1,967,469</u>	<u>\$ 1,673,388</u>

THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

(Schedule 2)

Schedule of Expenses

Year Ended March 31, 2014

	2014	2013
<u>Administration</u>		
Alberta Graduate Council membership	\$ 5,147	\$ 14,779
Amortization	29,922	32,303
Audit and accounting	9,634	11,108
Bank charges and interest	178	8,584
Board	3,590	3,158
Chief returning officer	1,532	1,010
Committees	2,453	3,530
Conferences	977	779
Consulting fees	636	465
Council security	0	965
Council speaker	1,800	1,650
Elections expenses	1,453	316
Executive expenses	5,871	4,100
Executive stipends and benefits	165,385	161,967
Executive transition	896	8,397
Government and external relations	9,440	2,426
Hiring costs	0	21
Insurance	2,565	3,261
Legal fees	23,578	1,511
Miscellaneous	2,079	8,520
Office supplies	5,348	4,492
Photocopier lease	6,939	6,713
Photocopier meter	4,549	4,087
Photocopier paper	520	550
Professional development	4,527	2,476
Promotion	873	0
Repairs and maintenance	1,228	415
Salaries	623,435	559,603
Staff benefits	40,897	36,275
Telephone	3,445	3,545
	<u>\$ 958,897</u>	<u>\$ 887,006</u>

(continues)

THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

(Schedule 2)

Schedule of Expenses (continued)

Year Ended March 31, 2014

	2014	2013
<u>Academically Employed Graduate Students' Fund</u>		
Child care subsidy	\$ 152,500	\$ 107,500
Emergency bursaries	69,031	82,085
Graduate student assistance program	69,006	78,708
Graduate student recognition awards	17,500	13,500
Professional development grants	<u>329,807</u>	<u>253,135</u>
	<u>637,844</u>	<u>534,928</u>
<u>Commercial Activities</u>		
Handbook	10,832	12,116
Photocopier leases	3,344	3,357
Photocopier meter	184	216
Photocopier paper	<u>224</u>	<u>236</u>
	<u>14,584</u>	<u>15,925</u>
<u>Services</u>		
Academic events	5,500	7,652
Awards night	7,275	7,761
CJSR fees	14,825	14,838
External grants	2,000	1,200
Food Bank	9,000	9,000
Lecture grants	19,423	24,593
Orientation	823	897
Student groups	<u>6,812</u>	<u>1,597</u>
	<u>65,658</u>	<u>67,538</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$ 1,676,983</u>	<u>\$ 1,505,397</u>

Outline of Issue: GSA 2014-2015 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report (GSA COUNCIL)

Suggested Motion for GSA Council:

That the GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the GSA 2014-2015 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report.

Note: At the meeting of June 25, 2014, the GSA BFC **reviewed and discussed** the GSA 2014-2015 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report. At the meeting of June 25, 2014, the GSA Board unanimously **received for information and forwarded to Council** the GSA 2014-2015 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report. Members of the GSA BFC have been invited to attend the July 14, 2014 meeting of GSA Council.

Role of the GSA BFC:

Policy Manual, Standing Committees, Budget and Finance Committee, 4.1.c:

“BFC shall review and discuss quarterly reports on expenses and revenues; these reports will present comparative information from previous years in a way that shows, in transparent fashion, the percent of the annual budget spent in each quarter, by budget division.”

Role of the GSA Board:

Policy Manual, Standing Committees, GSA Board, 2.3.a:

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

Background:

The last quarterly reports on the GSA budget were presented to the GSA Budget and Finance Committee (BFC), GSAB, and GSA Council in January and February 2014.

The quarterly financial reports have been created to build year-over-year tracking and monitoring into the GSA’s financial systems, and allow greater control over budget. In addition to yearly comparisons, regular quarterly reporting allows for better forward planning and illustrates the GSA yearly financial cycle.

<p>The GSA Financial Team (GSA Director Ellen Schoeck, GSA Accountant Shirley Ball, GSA Financial Manager Dorte Sheikh, Director of Operations Heather Hogg, and Director of Services and Governance Courtney Thomas) agree that the GSA’s budget is on track and there are no issues of concern.</p>
--

Jurisdiction:

Policy Manual, Budget Principles, Practices, and Procedures 2.4.a

“The GSA Accountant and the GSA Financial Manager will prepare a quarterly report which will first be submitted to the Executive Director, then the GSA President and then to the Board, BFC and Council.”

Prepared by C Thomas, M Caldwell and E Schoeck for GSA Council July 14, 2014

C:\Users\GSAIT\Google Drive\320 - Council\Meetings\July 2014\First Mailing\GSA Council 14 July 2014 Item 6 - Outline of Issue Quarterly Financial Report.docx

The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta

2014-2015 GSA Operating Budget (including Capital Budget)

Draft 2

GSA 2014-2015 Budget and Expenditure (Quarter One) Report

CURRENT YEAR
April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015

	2014-2015 Approved Budget	Actual Apr to May 2014	Forecast Jun 2014 to Mar 2015	Total	Over/(Under Budget)*	% Over/(Under Budget)**
REVENUE						
GSA Fees Revenue	1,106,450	442,580	663,870	1,106,450	-	0%
Investment Revenue	18,685	11,565	7,120	18,685	-	0%
Other Revenue	1,212	938	274	1,212	-	0%
Total Revenue	1,126,347	455,083	671,264	1,126,347	-	0%
EXPENSES						
Governance	193,988	30,108	163,880	193,988	-	0%
Advocacy	24,202	2,953	21,249	24,202	-	0%
Human Resources	767,967	104,846	663,121	767,967	-	0%
Office Administration	31,307	3,984	27,323	31,307	-	0%
Professional	32,017	7,522	24,495	32,017	-	0%
Services Expenses	49,563	10,425	39,138	49,563	-	0%
Operating/Contingency Fund	15,000	-	15,000	15,000	-	0%
Sub-total	1,114,044	159,838	954,206	1,114,044	-	0%
(Expenditures Exceed Revenues) /Revenues Exceed Expenditures	12,303	295,245	(282,942)	12,303	-	0%

*Over/Under Budget column: Since only two months of actuals are being reported a balanced budget is presented. As such the budget is neither over spent or under spent

**0% means no variance at this point, budget is on target.

The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta

2014-2015 GSA Restricted and Other Funding

Draft 1

GSA 2014-2015 Budget and Expenditure (Quarter One) Report

CURRENT YEAR
April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015

	2014-2015	Actual	Forecast	Total	Over/(Under Budget)*	% Over/(Under Budget)**
	Approved Budget	Apr to May 2014	Jun 2014 to Mar 2015			
Funding from the Dean of Students and the Dean of FGSR						
Fall, Winter and Departmental Orientation, and Other Funding Priorities	7,500	-	7,500	7,500	-	0%
Temporary Funding from TDIMM (to 2016)	4,000	-	4,000	4,000	-	0%
	11,500	-	11,500	11,500	-	0%
Fundraised Activity						
GSA Handbook	11,000	-	11,000	11,000	-	0%
Graduate Student Support Fund (GSSF) Projects (Restricted Revenue)						
GSA Graduate Student Recognition Awards	17,500	-	17,500	17,500	-	0%
GSA Child Care Grants	131,500	37,000	94,500	131,500	-	0%
GSA Emergency Bursaries	125,000	7,492	117,508	125,000	-	0%
GSA Professional Development Awards	335,000	75,088	259,912	335,000	-	0%
	609,000	119,580	489,420	609,000	-	0%
Other Restricted Funding						
New Provincial Graduate Student Advocacy Fees (formerly Alberta Graduate Council Fees)	7,523	-	7,523	7,523	-	0%
CJSR Fees Collected - \$1.00 per student, per term, goes to the radio operation	14,140	-	14,140	14,140	-	0%
GSAP (Graduate Student Assistance Program) Fees Collected	77,770	-	77,770	77,770	-	0%
Health Plan Revenue	1,094,840	-	1,094,840	1,094,840	-	0%
Dental Plan Revenue	814,060	-	814,060	814,060	-	0%
	2,008,333	-	2,008,333	2,008,333	-	0%
	2,639,833	119,580	2,520,253	2,639,833	-	0%

*Over/Under Budget column: Since only two months of actuals are being reported a balanced budget is presented. As such the budget is neither over spent or under spent.

**0% means no variance at this point, budget is on target.

GSA 2014-2015 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Report (Narrative) **Draft 2**

Account Name and Budget	Brief Description	Narrative and Variance
GSA REVENUE		
GSA Fees (annual membership fee) \$1,106,450 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Graduate Students' Association (GSA) is supported by student annual membership fees which are levied by Council and collected by the university. The fees received are based on the number of full-time and part-time graduate students attending the UA. Following approval of the fee amount by the GSA Council the annual fees are submitted to the UA Board of Governors to provide for collection. • Based on the three-year funding agreement signed between GSA and UA on April 30, 2013, the GSA will receive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 40% advance in May based on the projected fall/winter enrollment ○ 90% (of fall term fees) in October based on the assessed fees for the fall/winter terms, <i>after the Fall term 100% withdrawal deadline in October</i> ○ 90% (of winter term fees) in February based on the assessed fees for the fall/winter terms, <i>after the Winter term 100% withdrawal deadline in February</i> ○ Final payment in April (next fiscal year) after the actual student enrollment is reconciled 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For 2014-2015, the projected GSA revenue is \$1,106,450. This is based on funding 6,031 full-time students (6,031 @ \$154.73 per student) and 1,493 part-time students (1,493 @ \$116.05 per student). • On target. • Actual April to May: \$442,580 • Received May advance. • Forecast June to March: \$663,870
Endowment Fund \$12,120 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Unitized Endowment Pool (UEP) consists of an initial amount of \$265,000 which provides for annual payments to the GSA by the university. The GSA's share in the Pool is increased by its share of investment income in the Pool and decreased by payments from the University. The interest is paid in May of each fiscal year. <i>(In 1997 the GSA could not pay the Power Plant lease so the university bought the hard goods in this facility and the revenue went into the UEP.)</i> • <i>Information: The share in the Unitized Endowment Fund is restricted for the Financial Stabilization Fund. At March 31, 2014 the UEP had a market value of \$353,205.08.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target. • Actual April to May: \$11,565 • Forecast June to March: \$555

GSA 2014-2015 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Report (Narrative) Draft 2

Account Name and Budget	Brief Description	Narrative and Variance
Interest and Investment Income \$6,565 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interest on banking balance and investments. This does not include any interest on the Health and Dental Plan investments, which would be accounted for under Restricted Funding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$0.00 Forecast June to March: \$6,565
Other Revenue \$1,212 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This account is used to record revenue that may arise from other sources or one-time funding opportunities. Received \$938 as a Hiring Credit for Small Business from the Canada Revenue Agency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$938 Forecast June to March: \$274
GSA GOVERNANCE		
Elected Officers Stipends		
Elected Officers Stipends \$155,995 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Elected Officers includes the President, the VP Academic, the VP Student Services, the VP Student Life and the VP Labour. In 2014-2015, the President receives an annual stipend of \$37,142 and the four VP positions each receive \$29,713. Note that the stipends are gross stipends and include tax and CPP. Remittances are made on behalf of elected Officers from their stipend totals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$25,870 Forecast June to March: \$130,125
Elected Officers Benefits		
GSA Health and Dental Plan \$1,985 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2014 rate is \$396.90 per student per annum. This invoice is paid in September. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$0.00 Forecast June to March: \$1,985
U-Pass \$1,906 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The U-Pass is set at \$129.17 each term. This amount is reimbursed in May, September and January. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$0.00 Forecast June to March: \$1,906

GSA 2014-2015 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Report (Narrative) Draft 2

Employer Contributions		
Employer CPP Contributions \$7,067 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is the GSA's contribution for the Canada Pension Plan which is at a rate of 1.0 times the employee's contribution. CPP is calculated at the 2014 rate of 4.95% of salary up to the maximum annual premium. This line shows the employer's contribution only (not the employee contribution). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$1,136 Forecast June to March: \$5,931
Employer EI Contributions \$4,242 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is the GSA's contribution for Employment Insurance which is at a rate of 1.4 times the employee's contribution. EI is calculated at the 2014 rate of 1.88% of salary up to the maximum annual premium. This line shows the employer's contribution only (not the employee contribution). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$681 Forecast June to March: \$3,561
Elected Officers - Other Expenses		
Insurance \$1,950 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directors and Officers Liability Insurance. Paid annually in January. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$0.00 Forecast June to March: \$1,950
Transition/Early Call for Talent \$4,524 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May be used to fund Early Call for Talent in the fall. Transition activity typically occurs in March. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$863 Forecast June to March: \$3,661
Appreciation \$520 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elected Officers recognition in the form of lunches/cards/birthdays. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$0.00 Forecast June to March: \$520
Elected Officers Expenses Discretionary \$1,702 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hosting/food/conferences/special functions. President approves expenses of the VPs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$292 Forecast June to March: \$1,410
Board and Other Committee Expenses \$5,212 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The cost estimate is based on 52 Board meetings per year at \$100 per meeting and occasional meetings of other committees. The primary Board expense is the provision of a lunch. Costs are being contained by the use of more economical frozen foods which are prepared in-house. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$261 Forecast June to March: \$4,951

GSA 2014-2015 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Report (Narrative) Draft 2

Council Expenses		
Council/Food /Other Expense \$3,384 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The estimate is based on 12 meetings per year at \$282 per meeting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$875 Forecast June to March: \$2,509
Council Security \$0.00		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were no expenditures in 2013-2014 for Council Security, and they are not expected in 2014-2015. Budget line retained for possible future use.
Election Expenses \$2,273 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is used to cover expenses associated with elections that take place in March. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$130.00 Forecast June to March: \$2,143
Council Speaker Honorarium \$2,188 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speaker is paid an honorarium for each Council meeting (\$150 per meeting). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$0.00 Forecast June to March: \$2,188
Chief Returning Officer Honorarium \$1,042 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Returning Officer is paid an honorarium for managing the GSA general election in March, and any by-elections, and any referenda. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$0.00 Forecast June to March: \$1,042
GSA ADVOCACY		
Government and External Relations \$15,639 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationship-building between the GSA, government and other organizations, particularly related to advocacy. Usually in the form of hosting, meeting or travel expenses related to advocacy. In its Strategic Work Plan (SWP), the GSA Board identified the need for a strong voice at the table with government (Alberta government in particular) and other decision-making and influential groups at the national level in order to promote the best interests of graduate students. As a strong, stable, rebuilt organization, the GSA and its leaders are now in an excellent position to take on intensive, integrated advocacy for and presentation of graduate student issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$2,676 Forecast June to March: \$12,963

GSA 2014-2015 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Report (Narrative) Draft 2

University Relations \$1,040 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationship-building between the GSA and university units. Usually in the form of hosting/meeting expenses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$277 Forecast June to March: \$763
New Provincial Graduate Student Advocacy Fees (Formerly Alberta Graduate Council Fees) \$7,523 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2013, the Alberta Graduate Council closed its operations. A new Provincial Graduate Student Advocacy group, to lobby with the Alberta government in promoting the interests and concerns of graduate students, is expected to be formed under the Society's Act in October 2014. The AGC, of which the GSA was a member, received \$1.00 per student per term. The intention is two-fold: 1) to use the unspent portion of the "GSA contribution" against expenses associated with setting up the new organization, and 2) to then provide these fees to the new organization. These graduate student advocacy activities are in part covered by a dedicated fee of \$0.50 assessed per student per term that was implemented by a referendum in 2000. The remaining \$0.50 per student per term is paid out of the GSA operating budget as the "GSA contribution." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$0.00 Forecast June to March: \$7,523
GSA Office – Human Resources		
Staff Represented by NASA		
Staff Represented by NASA - Salaries \$247,000 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note that the salaries are gross salaries including tax, employee EI and CPP and union dues – remittances are made on behalf of employees from their salary totals. This is to include approved cost of living increases and one-time payments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$35,964 Forecast June to March: \$211,036
Staff Represented by NASA – Benefits \$19,760 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The GSA is providing lump sum payments in lieu of benefits to supplement salaries for continuing staff. The budget of \$19,760 was calculated on the basis of 8% (as a starting point) of the salaries of continuing staff even though the university's benefit package is 20% of salary (including health and dental). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$0.00 Forecast June to March: \$19,760

GSA 2014-2015 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Report (Narrative) Draft 2

<p>Staff Represented by NASA – GSA Health and Dental Plan and GSAP</p> <p>\$2,090 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2014 rate is \$396.90 per annum per staff. The Graduate Student Assistance Plan is \$21 per annum per staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$0.00 Forecast June to March: \$2,090
<p>Staff Represented by NASA – Employer CPP Contributions</p> <p>\$10,495 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is the GSA’s contribution for the Canada Pension Plan which is at a rate of 1.0 times the employee’s contribution. CPP is calculated at the 2014 rate of 4.95% of salary up to the maximum annual premium. This line shows the employer’s contribution only (not the employee contribution). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$1,651 Forecast June to March: \$8,844
<p>Staff Represented by NASA – Employer EI Contributions</p> <p>\$5,850 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is the GSA’s contribution for Employment Insurance which is at a rate of 1.4 times the employee’s contribution. EI is calculated at the 2014 rate of 1.88% of salary up to the maximum annual premium. This line shows the employer’s contribution only (not the employee contribution). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$947 Forecast June to March: \$4,903
Management		
<p>Management - Salaries</p> <p>\$362,000 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management positions were reorganized into two key positions of Executive Director and Director of Operations/Financial Manager (DO/FM) in 2010-2011. These were externally benchmarked and approved unanimously by the Council. These positions are still evolving as the GSA finishes a rebuilding which began in 2010. The Executive Director salary and other employment related expenses are established in a contractual agreement. The salary was benchmarked in 2010 by Human Resources and compared to a similar position at the University of Calgary. The DO/FM left in 2011. A part-time Chartered Accountant and a part-time Financial Manager were hired. The DO position was combined with the Labour Professional position. The Director of Operations/ Labour Professional works three days a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$51,504 Forecast June to March: \$310,496

GSA 2014-2015 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Report (Narrative) Draft 2

	<p>week (reduced in 2013 from four days).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A half-time position approved in the 2012-2013 budget at \$35,000 is now the full-time Director of Services and Governance position. Position was augmented to \$50,000 later in 2012 through under expenditure in other areas. This position has now been benchmarked and is equivalent to a U of A departmental APO with a starting salary of \$62,000. 	
<p>Management - Merit Pay/Contractual for Management</p> <p>\$28,952 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In accordance with the Executive Director contract, the Executive Director has the opportunity to receive merit pay and other contractual expenses (being paid monthly). Executive Director declined to have merit pay built into her salary. The ED uses this fund primarily to provide merit pay to managers. Unspent funds from this line may be used to augment RRSP payments or other management benefits to take into account the realities of the competitive market (e.g. the GSA does not have a pension plan). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$1,994 Forecast June to March: \$26,958
<p>Management - Benefits</p> <p>\$26,160 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2013 the GSA began to provide benefit compensation for management. The budget of \$26,160 was calculated on the basis of 8% (as a starting point) of salary even though the university's benefit package is 20% of salary (including health and dental). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$3,951 Forecast June to March: \$22,209
<p>Management - RRSP</p> <p>\$16,350 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In accordance with the contract, the Executive Director is entitled to an RRSP payment of \$5,000 (made in monthly increments). Other management also receive RRSP payments. The budget of \$16,350 was calculated on the basis of 5% of salary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$2,386 Forecast June to March: \$13,964
<p>Management - GSA Health and Dental Plan and GSAP</p> <p>\$2,507 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2014 rate is \$396.90 per annum per staff. The Graduate Student Assistance Plan is \$21 per annum per staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$0.00 Forecast June to March: \$2,507
<p>Management - Employer CPP Contributions</p> <p>\$10,600 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is the GSA's contribution for the Canada Pension Plan which is at a rate of 1.0 times the employee's contribution. CPP is calculated at the 2014 rate of 4.95% of salary up to the maximum annual premium. This line shows the employer's contribution only (not the employee contribution). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$2,598 Forecast June to March: \$8,002

GSA 2014-2015 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Report (Narrative) Draft 2

<p>Management - Employer EI Contributions</p> <p>\$6,140 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is the GSA's contribution for Employment Insurance which is at a rate of 1.4 times the employee's contribution. EI is calculated at the 2014 rate of 1.88% of salary up to the maximum annual premium. This line shows the employer's contribution only (not the employee contribution). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$1,418 Forecast June to March: \$4,722
Other HR Expenses		
<p>Parental/Other Discretionary Leave</p> <p>\$9,595 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This funding is for parental leave. This is contractual as per the GSA staff agreement with NASA. To date there has been one parental leave. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$0.00 Forecast June to March: \$9,595
<p>Staff Appreciation</p> <p>\$2,222 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This pool of money is used for recognition of GSA staff members. (E.g. when staff leave or reaches significant benchmarks). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$83 Forecast June to March: \$2,139
<p>Vacation Payout</p> <p>\$5,050 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractual arrangement with the Executive Director for vacation payout, for vacation payout for NASA-represented staff in accord with their Collective Agreement, and for managers at the Executive Director's discretion. Unspent funds from this line may be used to augment RRSP payments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$0.00 Forecast June to March: \$5,050
<p>Professional Expense Allowance</p> <p>\$6,060 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractual arrangement with the Executive Director. Budget will also be set aside for other management positions and professional development. Unspent funds may be used for other management benefits at the discretion of the Executive Director. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$1,625 Forecast June to March: \$4,435
<p>Workers' Compensation</p> <p>\$5,050 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WCB-Alberta is disability insurance for workers against the impact of workplace injuries. Our insurance providers have strongly recommended that the GSA enrol in the Workers' Compensation plan. WCB has just been acquired, effective April 7, 2014. WCB requires an annual return be filed by the last day of February each year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$575 Forecast June to March: \$4,475

GSA 2014-2015 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Report (Narrative) Draft 2

Parking \$2,086 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contractual arrangement for Executive Director. • Other occasional parking for elected Officers, staff and management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target. • Actual April to May: \$150 • Forecast June to March: \$1,936
GSA Office Administration and Operational Costs		
Capital items \$6,060 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This budget line refers to purchases of major assets that the GSA will need and is part of a five-year plan established in 2010. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target. • Actual April to May: \$1,418 • Forecast June to March: \$4,642
Telephone & Cable \$4,040 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Billed monthly. • The number of phones was reduced from 15 to 7 in 2011. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target. • Actual April to May: \$688 • Forecast June to March: \$3,352
Office Supplies \$5,287 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General office expenses including office supplies, postage, swag purchases, printing and miscellaneous office expenses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target. • Actual April to May: \$199 • Forecast June to March: \$5,088
Repair and Maintenance \$1,929 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contingency fund for repair and maintenance of office furniture, appliances and equipment. • Contingency fund for computer repair and maintenance, but is minimal as in-house IT can do most of this. • Includes monthly fee for WIKI database and Google storage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target. • Actual April to May: \$4 • Forecast June to March: \$1,925
Payroll and Banking Service Charges \$1,616 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The payroll processing charges to CERIDIAN (payroll service provider). • Business banking plan fees and Corporate MasterCard annual fees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target. • Actual April to May: \$249 • Forecast June to March: \$1,367
Photocopier Lease (Office) \$6,940 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The GSA leases two photocopiers for office use. Billing occurs quarterly along with the lounge (student) copier lease. The lease term ends April 2015 and options are being explored. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target. • Actual April to May: \$0.00 • Forecast June to March: \$6,940
Photocopier Meter (Office) \$4,000 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Billed monthly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target. • Actual April to May: \$752 • Forecast June to March: \$3,248

GSA 2014-2015 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Report (Narrative) Draft 2

Photocopier Paper (Office) \$808 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purchased monthly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$59 Forecast June to March: \$760
Insurance (Office) \$626 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General liability insurance, which was doubled in 2013. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$615 Forecast June to March: \$0.00
GSA Professional		
Financial Auditing \$9,797 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GSA has an annual audit performed by Peterson Walker. Required by <i>Post-Secondary Learning Act</i> and submitted to the Board of Governors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$0.00 Forecast June to March: \$9,797
Consultants \$2,020 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduced considerably in 2014-15 due to increased professional qualifications of management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$244 Forecast June to March: \$1,776
Legal Fees - General \$20,200 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal advice on major initiatives such as PAW, operational issues such as bylaw changes, and human resource issues. If there are monies remaining at year-end these funds are added to continue build-up of a healthy Legal Defense Fund. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$7,278 Forecast June to March: \$12,922
GSA Service Expenses		
Grants and Subsidies Expenses		
Academic Workshop Subsidies \$5,500 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Director and Director of Operations recommended to GSAB and BFC to continue providing these subsidies as students' reviews of the workshops are outstanding. Two grants will be paid in 2014-2015 totalling \$5,500. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$5,500 Forecast June to March: \$0.00
External Grants \$2,238 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget re-introduced in 2014-15 as external grant requests are being received. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$500.00 Forecast June to March: \$1,738

GSA 2014-2015 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Report (Narrative) Draft 2

<p>Council Remuneration Student Groups</p> <p>\$5,000 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GSA funding program for eligible departmental graduate student groups based on the attendance of their department councillor over the Council year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$0.00 Forecast June to March: \$5,000
<p>Academically-Related Student Group Awards</p> <p>\$15,000 budget approved, plus carryover of \$1,366.20 from prior year</p> <p>\$16,366.20 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The GSA provides a grant program for departmental academically-related graduate student groups to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring in special guest lecturers or host academic-style events. Support the academic activities of graduate students at the departmental level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$4,317 Forecast June to March: \$12,049
Other Expenses		
<p>AMICCUS-C Membership</p> <p>\$975 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership to AMICCUS (Association of Managers in Canadian Colleges and University Student Centers). Review membership renewal in 2014. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$0.00 Forecast June to March: \$975
<p>Food Bank Memorandum of Understanding</p> <p>\$9,000 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contractual (MOU) contribution will be made to the Campus Food Bank (which was founded by the GSA). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$0.00 Forecast June to March: \$9,000
<p>Photocopier Lease (Lounge)</p> <p>\$3,400 budget</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The GSA leases one photocopier for its (student) photocopy service use. Billing occurs quarterly along with the Office copier lease. The lease term ends April 2015. Approximately \$3,400 in 2015-16 will be saved as lease will not be renewed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$0.00 Forecast June to March: \$3,400

GSA 2014-2015 Operating Budget (including Capital Budget) Report (Narrative) Draft 2

Photocopier Meter (Lounge) \$700 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Billed monthly. • The photocopier lease will not be renewed in 2015-2016. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target. • Actual April to May: \$0.00 • Forecast June to March: \$700
Photocopier Paper (Lounge) \$750 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchased monthly. • The photocopier lease will not be renewed in 2015-2016. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target. • Actual April to May: \$25 • Forecast June to March: \$725
Awards Night \$7,000 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expenses for the annual GSA Awards Night (normally in March). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target. • Actual April to May: \$83 • Forecast June to March: \$6,917
GSA Operating/Contingency Fund		
Operating /Contingency Fund \$15,000 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A contingency fund is a fund set aside to handle unexpected and unanticipated expenses that are outside the range of the operating budget. Use of contingency is upon recommendation of the President to the Board. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target. • Actual April to May: \$0.00 • Forecast June to March: \$15,000

GSA 2014-2015 Restricted and Other Funding Budget and Expenditure Report (Narrative)

Draft 2

Account Name and Budget	Brief Description	Narrative
Restricted and Other Funding		
Funding from the Dean of Students and the Dean of FGSR		
Fall, Winter and Departmental Orientation, and Other Funding Priorities \$7,500 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This funding is described in letters from the Dean of FGSR and Dean of Students and covers, for instance, the expenses of the GSA-hosted fall and winter orientation events for new graduate students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$0.00 Forecast June to March: \$7,500
Temporary Funding from TDIMM (to 2016) \$4,000 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TD Insurance Meloche Monnex provides this funding for various events and initiatives organized by the GSA, such as Awards Night and Orientation. See MOU for details. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$0.00 Forecast June to March: \$4,000
Fundraised Activity		
GSA Handbook \$11,000 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The GSA sells advertising space in the yearly graduate student agenda/handbook to subsidize printing costs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$0.00 Forecast June to March: \$11,000
Graduate Student Support Fund (GSSF) Projects (Restricted Revenue)		
GSA Graduate Student Recognition Awards \$17,500 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funds provide for various awards presented at the annual Awards Night. Revenue is received in the form of GSSF funds when the Collective Agreement is approved in the spring/summer. Expenses for the Awards Night are processed in the following March. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$0.00 Forecast June to March: \$17,500
GSA Child Care Grant \$131,500 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graduate students can apply for this Grant to offset the cost of child care. Revenue is received in the form of GSSF funds when the Collective Agreement is approved in the spring/summer. Expenses are processed throughout the year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On target. Actual April to May: \$37,000 Forecast June to March: \$94,500

GSA 2014-2015 Restricted and Other Funding Budget and Expenditure Report (Narrative)

Draft 2

Account Name and Budget	Brief Description	Narrative
GSA Emergency Bursaries \$125,000 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Bursaries are a non-repayable bursary for graduate students who need assistance due to an unanticipated emergency. • Revenue is received in the form of GSSF funds when the Collective Agreement is approved in the spring/summer. • Expenses are processed throughout the year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target. • Actual April to May: \$7,492 • Forecast June to March: \$117,508
GSA Professional Development Awards \$335,000 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduate students can apply for this award to participate in professional development activities such as conferences. • Revenue is received in the form of GSSF funds when the Collective Agreement is approved in the spring/summer. • Expenses are processed throughout the year. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target. • Actual April to May: \$75,088 • Forecast June to March: \$259,912
New Provincial Graduate Student Advocacy Fees (formerly Alberta Graduate Council Fees) \$7,523 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2013, the Alberta Graduate Council closed its operations. A new Provincial Graduate Student Advocacy group, to lobby with the Alberta government in promoting the interests and concerns of graduate students, is expected to be formed under the Society's Act in October 2014. • The AGC, of which the GSA was a member, received \$1.00 per student per term. The intention is to provide these fees to the new organization, subject to the approval of the new organization and GSA Council. • These graduate student advocacy activities are in part covered by a dedicated fee of \$0.50 assessed per student per term that was implemented by a referendum in 2000. • The remaining \$0.50 per student per term is paid out of the GSA operating budget as the "GSA contribution." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target. • Actual April to May: \$0.00 • Forecast June to March: \$7,523
CJSR Fees \$14,140 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The U of A campus radio station (CJSR) receives \$1.00 per student per term. This is a dedicated fee that was implemented by a referendum in 1999. • Revenue and the related expenses are processed in October and February. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target. • Actual April to May: \$0.00 • Forecast June to March: \$14,140
GSAP (Graduate Students Assistance Program) \$77,770 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Graduate Students Assistance Plan began in September 2009, and is funded in part by a \$12 per student per year dedicated fee that was implemented by a referendum in 2009. The \$12 is split up as \$4 per fall term, and \$8 per winter term. • Revenue and the related expenses are processed in October and February. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target. • Actual April to May: \$0.00 • Forecast June to March: \$77,770

GSA 2014-2015 Restricted and Other Funding Budget and Expenditure Report (Narrative)

Draft 2

Account Name and Budget	Brief Description	Narrative
Health Plan \$1,094,840 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the fee that is charged to students for the Health part of the Health and Dental plan. The fee for 2014-2015 is \$226.01. • Revenue and the related expenses are processed in October, February and March. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target. • Actual April to May: \$0.00 • Forecast June to March: \$1,094,840
Dental Plan \$814,060 budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the fee that is charged to students for the Dental part of the Health and Dental plan. The fee for 2014-2015 is \$170.89. • Revenue and the related expenses are processed in October, February and March. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On target. • Actual April to May: \$0.00 • Forecast June to March: \$814,060

Outline of Issue: GSA Health and Dental Plan: Proposed Increase to Vision Coverage (GSA COUNCIL)

Suggested Motion for GSA Council:

That the GSA Council **APPROVE** the proposed increase in vision coverage, as outlined below ("Recommendation").

Background:

In June, 2014, the GSA Board learned that an analysis of claims associated with the GSA Health and Dental Plan through May 2014 by Kristin Foster (Studentcare.net/works Pacific and Western Director) showed that they were **lower than projected and that \$8.13 per plan member, per year could be re-directed to an increase in coverage.**

Subsequently, **Vice-President Student Services Megha Bajaj, Executive Director Ellen Schoeck, Consultant Roy Coulthard, and Assistant Director Megan Caldwell met with K Foster on June 19, 2014, to further discuss this issue. This led to the generation of a recommendation to the GSA Board to increase vision coverage.**

Recommendation:

At its meeting of June 25, 2015, the GSA Board unanimously recommended that GSA Council approve a proposed increase in vision coverage as follows:

It is proposed that the drawdown of the GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund (HDPFRF) proceed as approved by GSA Council on April 14, 2014, and that coverage for 'Vision Care' and 'Vision Care: Eye Exams' be increased by a total cost of \$7.33 per graduate student, per year as follows:

Table 1: Proposed Increase to Vision Coverage

Increase Vision Care from \$75 to \$100 per 24 months	\$4.17
Increase Vision Care: Eye Exams from \$50 to \$70 per 2 policy years	\$3.16
Total Cost of Coverage Increase	\$7.33
Available Amount for Coverage Increase (based on estimated contribution from the HDPFRF)	\$8.13

Should GSA Council approve this proposal, it will result in a reduction to the estimated amount to be paid from the HDPFRF of \$0.80 per graduate student (approximately \$4,339 less than the estimated cost of \$93,162 presented to GSA Council on April 14, 2014; the current balance of the HDPFRF is \$317,774).

An increase to vision coverage is recommended because, in the 2013 survey conducted by Studentcare, Question 27 asked "What area of coverage would you most like to see increased?" and **29.9% of University of Alberta graduate students responded that they would most like to see an increase to their vision coverage** (see Table 2 below). In addition, vision care was most often identified as an additional service desired by graduate students (Question 24). Although an increase in dental coverage was the most desired increase indicated in the responses to Question 27, **K Foster advised that with a new dental clinic soon to open in PAW in 2015, it is likely that dental claims will rise as much as 30%** as observed at other institutions when dental clinics were opened on campus. Therefore an increase to dental coverage at this time is a risky proposition. If an increase in dental coverage is desired, this should only be considered after the new Dental clinic has been open for at least a full year of claims.

Table 2: Responses to Question 27 on the 2013 Studentcare survey of University of Alberta graduate students

	Response Percent	Response Count
Prescription Drugs	13.6%	20
Health Practitioners	8.8%	13
Vision Care	29.9%	44
Dental	46.3%	68
Other	1.4%	2

Additional Background:

Based on earlier analyses conducted by Studentcare, which suggested a steep increase in claims and, therefore, a need to increase the fee contribution collected from graduate students, on March 26, 2014 the GSA Board unanimously proposed to the GSA Budget and Finance Committee (BFC) to recommend to GSA Council 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). On April 2, 2014, the GSA BFC unanimously recommended the use of the HDPRF to Council. Finally, at its meeting of April 14, 2014, **GSA Council approved “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 HDPRF”** (GSA Council Motion, April 14, 2014). The 2014-2015 HDP fee was approved by GSA Council on February 24, 2014, and the University of Alberta Board of Governors approved the collection of that fee at its meeting of May 9, 2014.

Role of the GSA Board:**Bylaw Part XII Health and Dental Plan, Section 7, Oversight by GSA Board, 7.1**

“The GSAB is mandated to oversee the implementation, administration, and performance of the Health and Dental Plan, and to make recommendations to Council regarding the Plan (quoted in GSA Policy, Standing Committees, Section 2, GSA Board, 2.2.c).”

Jurisdiction:**Bylaw Part XII Health and Dental Plan, Section 8, Increases in Premiums, 8.1**

“Any increase in premium or modification of coverage must be approved by Council as per the recommendation of the GSA Board.”

Outline of Issue: Final Report of the GSA President's Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy (GSA COUNCIL)

For Review and Discussion by GSA Council:

GSA Council is asked to **REVIEW AND DISCUSS** the attached Final Report of the GSA President's Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy.

Background:

Following the 2013 GSA General Election, the GSA CRO submitted a report with 47 recommendations for improving GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy to the Elections and Referenda Committee (ERC). In October and November 2013, after extensive work on the part of ERC to review and revise these election regulations, GSA Council approved substantial revisions to the GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy.

During the 2014 GSA General Election, the GSA experienced its first ever appeal of a CRO decision. As a result of the appeal decision, an election for one of the Directly-Elected Officer positions was re-run. Some students expressed concern regarding the elections processes. As a result, at the April 14, 2014 meeting of GSA Council, then 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 had suggestions for improving GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy.

Following on this, **at the May 12, 2014 meeting of GSA Council, newly elected GSA President Nathan Andrews announced the organization of a GSA President's Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy.** The Task Force invited all graduate students to bring forward suggestions through a series of sessions, and invited contributions directly from former GSA Presidents, and current and former CROs, DROs, Speakers, and Deputy Speakers. **The mandate of the Task Force, as it was presented to GSA Council in May, was to "hear from any graduate student who has suggestions for improving GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy in person or in writing," to consider all suggestions, and generate a report to ERC concerning GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy for ERC to consider in its annual review of GSA Elections and Referenda Bylaw and Policy.**

Further background can be found on pages 10.2 - 10.3 in the attached final report. The final report will be reviewed by the GSA Board at its meeting of July 9, 2014 and has been previously reviewed by members of the Task Force and circulated to participants in the consultation sessions held by the Task Force.

Jurisdiction:

GSA Bylaw, Part III, Council, Section 1.1

"The mandate of the Council is to fulfill all responsibilities listed in Section 95 of the Post-Secondary Learning Act."

Post-Secondary Learning Act, Section 95(1)

"The business and affairs of a student organization of a public post-secondary institution must be managed by a council..."

GSA Policy, Standing Committees, Section 9, Elections and Referenda Committee, Section 3.c

"The ERC will review Elections and Referenda Bylaws and Policies annually and make any recommendations to Council through the Board."

Prepared by C Thomas, M Caldwell and E Schoeck for GSA Council July 14, 2014

GSA President's Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy
Report on Feedback from Students and Suggestions to the GSA Elections and
Referenda Committee (ERC)

July 2014

Background and Overview

Following the 2013 GSA General Election, the GSA CRO submitted a report with 47 recommendations for improving GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy to the Elections and Referenda Committee (ERC). In October and November 2013, after extensive work on the part of ERC to review and revise these election regulations, GSA Council approved substantial revisions to the GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy.

During the 2014 GSA General Election, the GSA experienced its first ever appeal of a CRO decision. As a result of the appeal decision, an election for one of the Directly-Elected Officer positions was re-run. Some students expressed concern regarding the elections processes. As a result, at the April 14, 2014 meeting of GSA Council, then 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 had suggestions for improving GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy. Following on this, at the May 12, 2014 meeting of GSA Council, newly elected GSA President Nathan Andrews announced the organization of a GSA President’s Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy. The Task Force invited all graduate students to bring forward suggestions through a series of sessions, and invited contributions directly from former GSA Presidents, and current and former CROs, DROs, Speakers, and Deputy Speakers. The mandate of the Task Force, as it was presented to GSA Council in May, was to “hear from any graduate student who has suggestions for improving GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy in person or in writing,” to consider all suggestions, and generate a report to ERC concerning GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy.

The suggestions contained in this report will be considered by the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (ERC) during their annual review of Elections and Referenda Bylaws and Policies. Any changes to GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy arising from ERC’s review will be brought before GSA Council for consideration in the fall for implementation in the 2015 GSA General Elections.

The Task Force held six consultation sessions during June 2014. Three meetings were open to all graduate students; recent former GSA Presidents, Speakers, Deputy Speakers, Chief Returning Officers, and Deputy Returning Officers were invited to a separate meeting. Graduate students were also invited to set up alternate meeting times with members of the Task Force, and the final two meetings were set up to accommodate such requests. The Task Force also welcomed written feedback via email or anonymously through the drop box at the GSA Office. The GSA President also had separate conversations with some students in the first few weeks of May. Feedback from these meetings with students was presented to Task Force members and is also incorporated in this report. All feedback provided, whether orally or in writing, was anonymized.

The Task Force included 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 who were invited to speak directly with the Task Force). Both the GSA NoC and the GSA ERC consist of representatives elected by GSA Council (indeed, many of the members are current GSA Councillors).

These individuals are required by GSA Policy to be neutral and impartial and were selected so that graduate students who had suggestions would feel they were 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.

Members of the Task Force were:

- **Nathan Andrews** (as Chair of the Task Force; GSA President)
- **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, former NoC and GSAB member, and former GSA Councillor for Chemistry)
- **Jennifer Bell** (ERC member and GSA Councillor for Nursing)
- **Michele DuVal** (NoC and GSAB member and GSA Councillor for Biological Sciences)
- **Micaela Santiago** (Former ERC member and former GSA Councillor for Nursing)

Although most of the feedback received by the Task Force focused on improving GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy, some participants provided historical information on GSA elections. As well, some contextual comments about student elections in Canada more broadly were provided.

Contextual Comments and Historical Information Contained in Task Force Submissions

In the past, GSA Bylaw stipulated that if there were no nominees for a position at the end of the regular nomination period, elections would take place at the Annual General Meeting. Annual General Meeting elections were relatively frequent. One participant indicated that this was perceived as unfair because graduate students had to physically attend the AGM to vote, and elections were often not the only item on the Agenda at these meetings – meaning AGMs could be lengthy and attendance difficult considering all of the other time commitments that graduate students have. Further, candidates could attend with a suite of supporters to vote for them, which was also seen as unfair. For these reasons, GSA elections ceased to be held at an AGM. In addition to this feedback which addressed the format of past GSA elections, Task Force members also received feedback regarding past disputes related to elections and, in particular, past instances of complaints with respect to campaign violations which resulted in the then CRO striking a committee to investigate alleged campaign violations. The GSA has had electronic voting since at least 2008, which only allowed one election to be hosted at any one time, and required specialized knowledge of SQL coding to create and run an online election. In 2012 electronic voting software supported through the University of Alberta was created for the GSA.

Voter Turnout and Number of Candidates

Regarding the numbers of candidates running in GSA elections and perceived low voter turnout, Task Force members heard that, historically, GSA elections have been “mostly uncontested”. This was neither a new nor particularly unusual problem faced by the GSA and was, in fact, relatively common in graduate student elections across Canada. In 2012, two positions out of the five positions were contested by two candidates and in 2013 four out of the five Directly-Elected Officer positions were contested. The 2013 election also saw voter turnout double though it dropped down again in 2014. Many participants who spoke to the Task Force were concerned with the low numbers of candidates and general low voter turnout. Several participants in Task Force consultation sessions expressed concern that perceived ‘cliques’ within the GSA discouraged potential candidates from running and that this, in turn, stifled ‘healthy competition’. A related issue raised by some participants was that potential candidates were not willing to run against an incumbent or even to run in a contested race due to the perception that races could take on the characteristics of a ‘popularity contest’. These forms of feedback and related suggestions for change are dealt with more fully later in this report.

For both of these issues, low numbers of candidates and low voter turnout, there is no easy solution. The GSA cannot make voting compulsory, nor can it force more individuals to run for office. For voter turnout to increase (and for the numbers of those interested in running for elected positions to grow), there needs to be a culture shift amongst graduate students to encourage increased engagement (this has been identified as a key initiative in the GSA Board Strategic Work Plan 2014-2015). The GSA delivers dozens of Departmental Orientations each year to increase graduate student awareness of the GSA and two years ago launched the Departmental Liaison Initiative to better engage with graduate students in their departments. Issues of relatively low numbers of candidates and low voter turnout are important for the GSA to consider but outside the scope of the current project of the Task Force and will be addressed in other ways.

GSA President's Task Force on Elections Bylaw and Policy: Summary of Suggestions and Feedback

The following summary of suggestions reflects the oral and written feedback Task Force members received AS SUBMITTED. In many instances, participants provided opposing opinions on the same topic. The Task Force's suggestions for ERC to consider in the upcoming ERC review of Elections Bylaw and Policy, based on the feedback received during the consultation sessions, can be found starting on page TEN (10) of this report in table format.

Guiding Principles of Elections

- In addition to having a statement that elections are to be fair and to respect the wishes of voters and the positive reputation of the GSA, the perception of fairness should also be added as a guiding principle.
- Bylaws should highlight the supremacy and sanctity of votes as the 'voice of the people' (ie if election results are ever to be overturned, would need solid reasons for saying that actions during an election led to discrepancy in the results).

Definitions

- There should be clear definitions of terms in elections bylaw and policy for key works like 'discretion'. The SU offers an excellent example of this practice.

CRO Decisions

- CRO decisions should not just be made public on the website, but that all related issues regarding elections should be posted as well, including the relevant bylaw and policy. Graduate students need to be a part of the process by being more aware of relevant bylaws and policies.
- CRO decisions should be posted on the GSA website to ensure transparency.

Election Appeals

1. Process and Timelines

- Need to balance fairness and expedience in election appeals.
- The appeals process needs to be able to deal with a situation in which an appeal comes forward after voting is completed.
- Clarify when representatives can recuse themselves from hearing an appeal due to conflict of interest.
- Who is responsible for interpreting bylaw and policy? Lawyers, the CRO, etc? The way the appeals process is written should be examined (ie there are a series of steps detailing what the Speaker has to do in hearing an appeal, but then the policy states the Speaker has discretion in all matters – this seems contradictory).
- CRO has the option to re-examine a decision if new information comes to light once it goes to the Speaker for an appeal (and the Speaker refers back to the CRO), but policy does not say how the CRO hears that case with any new information.
- Timelines are currently very strict, hard to follow, unrealistic (eg leads to deadlines of 3 or 4 AM).
- Appeals timelines in policy do not specify whether the time periods mean day-time or night-time hours. Need more guidelines in setting these timelines as right now they can require candidates to have to work through the night to respond or provide evidence for an appeal case.
- There is no specified timeline in policy for a situation in which an appeal is issued and the Speaker decides to refer the case back to the CRO in the event that additional information is brought forward that the CRO did not know at the time.
- Section 9.3.b stating that "Any concerns with bias on the part of the NoC Vice-Chair in making such decisions on penalties, remedial actions, and/or referrals concerning disrespectful behaviour towards the CRO, or the Speaker in making such decisions on appeals, shall be filed with nomination forms" does not indicate what happens if a candidate feels that the Speaker might be biased in making a decision.
- Instead of having the Speaker's decision as final and binding in an appeal, should be tabled in Council for a vote, so that the decision of Council on the Speaker's decision is final and binding.

- There needs to be a better way of maintaining records in an appeals process and during the election process. In terms of compliance, having a full and complete record is crucial. Should add to bylaw or policy that the CRO is not permitted to link personal emails to the CRO account to ensure a full record is kept in one email account.

2. Creation of an Appeals Board

- Look at the SU model of the Discipline, Interpretation, and Enforcement Board (DIE Board). Appeals board could be made up of graduate students who are respected, but who do not get involved politically to remain as neutral as possible. There were several suggestions as to which body could act as an appeals board: 1) the GSA Judicial Committee, 2) ERC, 3) a completely separate appeals board, made up of multiple graduate students. An appeal should never be heard by only one person.
- Appeal hearings should be made public and take place in-person, like the SU model, and never reside with one person but should go to a committee where members have a fair knowledge of bylaws and policies.
- Consider the following model: a committee such as ERC should supervise the whole election (this would involve changing role and mandate of ERC), the CRO would chair the committee and the DRO would not be a member. The DRO could make a final appeal decision, rather than the Speaker or Acting Speaker. The CRO and ERC could be provided with a history of CRO rulings and penalties to help them make decisions during an election.

3. Role of the Judicial Committee

- The Judicial Committee could act as the body to hear election appeals.
- If the Judicial Committee is to hear election appeals there would need to be short-term and long-term changes to this committee. The Judicial Committee would need to be made up of neutral individuals like ERC and NoC members. Members should not be selected at random, which speaks to the idea of ensuring competencies. Have a panel of eight from which three members would be chosen for a hearing. Five members not from Council, three from Council, all from different departments who haven't run for a GSA election before, have them on 1-3 year terms. Judicial Committee members would need training, and could train 2-3 members to serve as Chair of the Judicial Committee. Need a professional at these meetings with experience in procedural fairness and access to the lawyers for advice.
- Judicial Committee members are currently selected at random at the outset of every term (4 times a year). If they were to hear appeals the structure of the committee would need to be rethought (ie could members be replenished every year or have rolling timelines so that not all members leave the committee at the same time, leading to a loss of institutional memory and training; move away from random replenishment four times a year).
- It is concerning that in policy graduate students must contact the Speaker and President if they want to get in contact with the Judicial Committee, but this does not consider a situation in which a graduate student may have an issue to report about the Speaker or President; a graduate student with a grievance against Council members or Elected Officers should not be required to email the President or Speaker regarding their concerns.

Role of the CRO, Election Rules, and Campaign Expenses

- Bylaws say one thing, policy another (CRO 'runs' elections and CRO 'administers' elections).
- Need very clear job descriptions for the CRO and DRO including a clear set of skills, attributes, and competencies needed to hold these positions. Attributes could include humbleness to ask questions when something is out of scope and to actively seek out professional opinions.
- There should be a training program implemented for the CRO and DROs which addresses procedural fairness and conflict resolution.
- Election rules are too 'loose'. Increase regulations for campaigning by introducing a system of fines or 'points' (similar to the SU model); could develop a set fine or deduction of 'points' from a total for particular violations. Once a candidate goes

over their limit of fines or demerit points, bylaw and policy could require that they be disqualified. Would make any decision to disqualify clearer and allow less discretion for the CRO in interpreting bylaw and policy when issuing penalties.

- There are a lot of Election policies that are currently unenforceable and difficult to police, such as no campaigning behind locked doors, and no campaigning during polling.
- There are a lot of silences in the current policy which can create spaces for subjective opinions (examples provided include processes for what happens if a candidate files concerns of bias for the GSA Speaker in hearing an appeal and regulating timelines for the CRO when the Speaker has brought a decision back to the CRO upon receiving additional information).
- Candidates need to be held to account for small infractions. Policy doesn't specifically outline how the CRO needs to respond to an infraction. In practice, result has been constant verbal reprimands so candidates do not feel that there are consequences beyond verbal reprimands for campaign infractions.
- The GSA should cover the cost of campaign budgets for General Elections so that fines could be issued to candidates for violations.
- It is difficult for the CRO to monitor election violations and GSA policy only says candidates should not tolerate or encourage others to break election rules. SU candidates must show they have distanced themselves from any election violations and are required to inform the CRO of any violations.
- CRO as Chair of ERC: should the CRO continue as Chair of ERC if ERC is the committee determining elections bylaw and policy, which the CRO is subject to (ie in the current system the CRO gets to create the election rules and regulations that they then must follow)? Need to separate the legislative from the judicial functions. CRO should not make the election rules as Chair of ERC and then apply the decision.
- Ensuring the CRO understands that any decision they make can be challenged and that a CRO decision can be overturned by the Speaker.
- Ensuring candidates understand that CRO decisions can be overturned; candidates should be cautious if they don't agree with a CRO ruling, or are worried about a CRO decision being overturned in an appeal.
- It is unclear in Bylaw and Policy how a CRO as a Council-Elected Officer can be removed from office.

Role of ERC

- ERC should be ready during the election period to advise the CRO and DRO, which distributes the responsibility and acts as a check on the CRO.
- What is missing with ERC is the actual experience and realities of those who are campaigning. Could have ERC sit down every year with whoever wants to come and discuss their experience of campaigning during an election.

Hiring of the CRO

- The CRO/DRO should continue to be an appointment by the GSA Council after a nomination from the GSA Executive or NoC, with a preference for the latter. Those impartially not selected to be presented to voters should receive feedback regarding their status. Rationale for this is that the CRO position seems to carry with it certain preconceived inaccurate notions regarding its purpose and function. There are years when there are not highly suitable candidates. The process of open nomination submissions for Council to elect from a pool of candidates is sometimes in a misinformed manner based on lack of suitable candidates and/or the lack of knowledge by Councillors of the specific CRO duties/responsibilities.
- CRO should be hired with a contract; the CRO needs to be held accountable.
- Hire a CRO for the duration of an election rather than having them elected by Council for a yearly term. As CRO is elected by Council, only recourse if CRO does not do their job is the judicial process or going through the impeachment process. Two models were proposed:
 - Model 1: CRO would be hired by and responsible to ERC. ERC is in turn responsible to Council. ERC would advertise, accept CVs, and ideally hire someone with some form of CRO training or experience seeing elections at the municipal, provincial, or federal level. If the CRO lost the confidence of ERC, committee would have in its discretion

to fire the CRO and perhaps take up management of the election. DRO could also either be hired, or the Chair of ERC could be the *de facto* DRO with the Election of the Chair of ERC occurring through the established Nominating Committee processes.

- Model 2: CRO would be hired with oversight from ERC or management; CRO should not be a graduate student. It is difficult to find a graduate student who is interested enough in campus politics and student advocacy to get involved who simultaneously does not have any opinion about the outcomes of an election and is qualified and competent.

Role of Slates and Endorsement from Directly-Elected Officers

- Slates encourage elitism and are too much like cliques. They can discourage graduate students from running for positions, and can also lead to voter apathy if the same 'slate' continues to be re-elected over a long period of time.
- Perception that endorsement from current Directly-Elected Officers creates an unfair advantage for the candidates being endorsed and that endorsement is an abuse of the power by incumbents. In the SU model current Directly-Elected Officers do not endorse candidates.
- Alternately, other participants indicated that slates should remain as an option, as slates encourage people interested enough in running for office to sit down and form teams, in turn thinking about long-term issues and their platform, and which candidates are good matches for which positions. "Slates force students to think about what the jobs are". Both the Early Call and slates professionalize elections.
- There is currently not much in policy regarding slates. Slates can pool their campaign funds which can be seen as an unfair advantage as opposed to those running as individual candidates. Think about limiting the number of candidates that can participate on a slate.
- Need to look at what it means to run as a slate and campaign together; candidates in slates should not be able to pool their money.

Restriction of Campaigning During Voting

- Remove the restriction on campaigning during voting. In practice this has been a common point of contention in elections. It is difficult to enforce (friends of candidates might send out messages) and difficult to prove a candidate is responsible for any campaigning past a 4 PM deadline before voting starts.
- For comparison, the Students' Union allows campaigning during voting (though they cannot have posters within a certain distance of physical polling stations).
- It has been difficult to enforce restriction of campaigning during voting. Realities of campaigning: normally posters around the University are removed every Friday, however, if campaign posters are up, the University will leave these up. Therefore GSA candidates have to go around campus and take all of their posters down themselves, if these posters are not taken down, candidates can be accused of campaigning past the deadline.
- Could disallow email communications through U of A emails during voting but could keep other campaign materials up (Facebook, posters, etc).
- Election policies for other universities deal with this issue in different capacities. For example, some places candidates can continue to campaign electronically during voting, but are not allowed to do in-person campaigning. However, it is very difficult to tell if someone is campaigning on a candidate's behalf.
- If this restriction is kept, should think about how much campaigning during voting affects voting and whether campaigning during voting should be considered a major or minor infraction.

Restrictions of Places to Campaign on Campus

- 'Restricted' areas for campaigning on campus are a contentious issue. Might be easier if it were outlined where candidates can campaign on campus and provide a map where it is fair ground, so that this is made clear at the beginning of the

campaign and is not a subjective decision from the CRO. 'None of the above' could be disqualified as a candidate on the ballot if the campaign had enough infractions like any other candidate.

- The past two years campaigning has occurred in chemistry labs, this remains a significant safety issue.

Distinction between Official and Unofficial Results

- Unofficial results were removed because the voting system is electronic, and that a delay in the release of unofficial and official results could be seen as an opportunity for results to be tampered with. However, this distinction could be re-introduced to deal with appeals that come forward after voting has closed; in 2014 both the SU and the GSA experienced appeals that were initiated during voting.
- Distinction between unofficial and official results should be re-introduced; official results should not be released if the CRO knows an appeal is pending.

All-Candidates Meeting

- Need to emphasize to candidates the value of the process and the rules of an election (these are in place for specific reasons, and are not just 'bureaucracy'). Make clear to candidates the full value of these processes.
- Having definitions would be a good idea, but emphasizing the rules and definitions to candidates is necessary. Recognition that students come from different backgrounds and their sense of what an election is might be very different from what it is at the GSA.

Role of Early Call

- On the one hand, Task Force members heard suggestions to make the Early Call for Talent and Training a mandatory requirement for running for Directly-Elected Officer positions in order to ensure all candidates are aware of the time commitment and responsibilities of each position. Restructure the Early Call so it also focuses on election rules and regulations, so candidates are not just exposed to these regulations during the All-Candidates Meeting in the General Election.
- Another view was that programs such as the Early Call discourage graduate students from running for positions and made elections less competitive by restricting the pool of candidates. Perception that Early Call resulted in GSA management and current Directly-Elected Officers making judgments that one individual is more qualified than another.
- Early Call is a great time to start talking about election rules. Difficulties arise if candidates just learn about the rules at the All-Candidates Meeting, since campaigning opens 4 hours after this meeting. Candidates had questions at the All-Candidates meeting and the CRO said they would have to get back to the candidates with answers.

'None of the Above'

- Policy states that 'none of the above' is a candidate for the purpose of a ballot, but no one knows what this means. A 'none of the above' campaign could run and no one could be penalized or held accountable for campaign violations since there are no rules around 'none of the above' campaigns.

Students' Union Election as a Model

- Look to the SU Elections and Appeals process as models when revising GSA bylaw and policy as they have very established practices.

Election Videos

- Videos should continue to be filmed for the General Election and Council-Elected Officer positions (President, VPS, CALs, Speaker, CRO/DRO, and Senator). This allows voters to ascertain facts about candidates prior to the election, beyond simply

C:\Users\GSAIT\Google Drive\320 - Council\Meetings\July 2014\First Mailing\GSA Council 14 July 2014 Item 10a - Final Report of the GSA President's Task Force.docx

a written profile. Videos eliminate misinformed decisions, popularity contests, and unfair available disadvantages to certain candidates. In the past, scheduling of public appearances of candidates was found to be difficult. Can be less intimidating to first-time participants rather than speaking publicly.

- Video questions should be reviewed as they do not provide space for candidates to discuss their platforms.

Other Anonymous Written Feedback Submitted

- Having “uncontested candidates” for a position was perceived as unfair.
- There were a number of interested candidates but majority were discouraged to run by elected officials because they did not have any experience with the Graduate Students’ Association.
- One student thought that “democracy had been killed.”
- Voter turnout was too low to represent graduate students.
- During the recent appeal, in which the results which indicated that one candidate had “clearly won the elections” were overturned, graduate students should have been informed periodically on how the situation was handled regarding the re-election.

Additional Feedback Outside the Scope of the Task Force

Task Force members also received feedback regarding several other issues. While it was beyond the scope of the Task Force to make suggestions regarding this feedback (as per the mandate of the Task Force), the feedback has been included here.

Reporting of Election Results and Election Software

- Election results should show the vote totals for every candidate (eg if a candidate lost to ‘none of the above’, making clear how much they lost by). When graduate students log into the election software after an election, this information is not accessible to students (the software just writes an (X) for the candidate eliminated from a round and does not indicate how many votes they received before being eliminated). Altering this would make clear how many votes each candidate received for each round and improve transparency.
- Elections software should be managed locally so that any issues can be solved quickly (ie not having to contact the programmer in California).
- Need to decide who will have oversight of the election software, whether it will be the CRO or CRO in consultation with ERC to provide a check and balance.

Separate Website for GSA Elections

- More information needs to be provided on the GSA website regarding elections to better educate graduate students. Perhaps a separate GSA website just for elections could be created. This might improve graduate student knowledge of election bylaw and policy and help more graduate students becomes stakeholders in the process.

GSA President’s Task Force on Elections Bylaw and Policy: Suggestions to ERC, Rationales, and Implications

Below is a table detailing the suggestions the Task Force received, along with the Task Force’s suggestions for ERC to consider in their upcoming review of Bylaw and Policy, the rationale for the suggestions brought forward to the Task Force, and the implications that ERC could consider if moving forward with any of these suggestions.

<u>Suggestion to ERC</u>	<u>Rationale</u>	<u>Implications/Considerations</u>
<p><u>CRO should be a hired position</u> for the duration of an election. Suggestion is something to consider long-term rather than for the 2015 General Election. <u>The Task Force is suggesting ERC examine three possible models:</u></p> <p>1) CRO hired by and responsible to ERC. ERC is in turn responsible to Council. DRO could also either be hired, or the Chair of ERC could be the <i>de facto</i> DRO with the Election of the Chair of ERC occurring through the established Nominating Committee processes.</p> <p>2) CRO would be hired with oversight from ERC or management; CRO should not be a graduate student. It is difficult to find a graduate student who is interested enough in campus politics and student advocacy to get involved who simultaneously does not have any opinion about the outcomes of an election and is qualified and competent.</p> <p>3) Advertise position for CRO, ED or ERC to receive applications and CVs and screen them, then select the best three names and recommend those names to Council. Invite three applicants to present at Council, Council to then elect the CRO¹</p>	<p>Members heard the following rationales: increases accountability of the CRO; qualified individuals might not run in an election for the CRO position; difficulty in finding a qualified graduate student who is simultaneously active and engaged but does not care about the outcome of an election.</p> <p>Position requires significant time and may deter qualified individuals from serving if there is not enough compensation.</p> <p>CRO position for the last few years has been uncontested. The process of hiring might bring forward more qualified applicants.</p> <p>Hiring a CRO could allow for the creation of a job description to ensure a CRO has a specific set of skills, attributes, and competencies.</p>	<p>If ERC chooses to further explore this suggestion, the committee could consider which body would be responsible for hiring and firing (one suggestion was ERC, which reports to Council).</p> <p>If ERC chooses to further explore this suggestion, the committee should also examine who would Chair ERC and whether the DRO should also be hired or remain an elected position.</p> <p>If ERC chooses to further explore this suggestion, ERC could examine whether the term of a CRO could be renewable to ensure institutional memory.</p>
<p>Task Force members heard divergent feedback regarding the <u>Early Call for Talent</u>; a) that it excludes students from participating and b) that it ensures students understand the positions and should be ramped up or made mandatory, and used as an opportunity to teach potential candidates early on about election rules and regulations.</p> <p><u>While recognizing this divergent feedback, the Task Force suggests that ERC consider making the Early Call for Talent program a requirement for running in the election.</u></p>	<p>Participation in the Early Call shows commitment, professionalization, and puts everyone interested in the elected official positions on equal footing.</p>	<p>If ERC chooses to further explore this suggestion, the committee would need to revise current nomination forms to include a check-list for training sessions attended and would have to monitor participation in the program.</p> <p>Early Call for Talent program would likely have to be restructured (potentially start as early as October), two sessions held for each topic, ability to re-schedule sessions if necessary; creation and addition of an Elections 101 session.</p> <p>Task Force members agreed with the</p>

¹ The Task Force suggestion for this third model came out of research as to how other GU15 Graduate Students’ Associations select their CRO.

<u>Suggestion to ERC</u>	<u>Rationale</u>	<u>Implications/Considerations</u>
		<p>suggestions received that efforts need to be made to ensure that more work needs to be done to educate graduate students and potential candidates about election rules well in advance of the All-Candidates Meeting.</p>
<p>Campaign Expenses Task Force members received a suggestion that the GSA cover campaign expenses for candidates.</p> <p><u>The Task Force is suggesting that ERC examine the pros and cons of reimbursing campaign expenses and make a recommendation to GSA Council</u></p>	<p>Task Force members felt that reimbursing campaign expenses could help put candidates on an equal footing and help monitor expenditures. It could encourage candidates to run for office who might otherwise be deterred by the financial constraints of covering their own campaign expenses.</p>	<p>Implications would be whether this suggestion is feasible in the GSA budget and the fact that it could be difficult to budget for (with number of candidates for each election fluctuating).</p> <p>If ERC decides to suggest that the GSA examine whether it can reimburse campaign expenses, this could be used as an avenue for a demerit or fine system like the SU has for campaign violations.</p>
<p><u>Review Election Appeals Process in Detail</u> Specific suggestions heard by the Task Force:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not have appeals heard by one person, shift to a committee (Judicial Committee or a different committee) • Create a new appeals board or use the Judicial Committee and restructure this committee • Have appeals heard in a public and in-person meeting (ie do not conduct appeals electronically) • Re-think appeals timelines as they are strict, hard to follow, and unrealistic • Have the DRO hear appeals (and not serve as a member of ERC) • Clarify when representatives can recuse themselves from hearing an appeal due to conflict of interest • Consider who interprets bylaw and policy • Process for how CRO re-examines a decision if new information come to light following a decision • Appeals process needs to be able to deal with situations when appeals come forward after voting is completed • Have Council make the final decision during an appeal instead of the Speaker • Clarify what happens if a candidate feels bias on the part of the Speaker in hearing an appeal • Clarify the timelines for appeals (ie whether they refer to day-time or night-time hours) 	<p>Based on the feedback received, Task Force members agreed an appeal should not be heard by one person and the appeals process must be re-examined in extensive detail.</p>	<p>If ERC decides to have appeals go through the Judicial Committee, Council will need to consider the restructuring of this committee (currently replenished 4 times randomly throughout the year at the outset of each term).</p>

<u>Suggestion to ERC</u>	<u>Rationale</u>	<u>Implications/Considerations</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify the timeline required for hearing an appeal when the Speaker refers it back to the CRO upon receipt of new information not known at the time of the CRO ruling <p><u>The Task Force suggests that ERC examine having the Judicial Committee act as the body that hears election appeals with the Judicial Committee having the final authority in deciding upon an appeal. The Task Force is also suggesting ERC re-examine the appeals timelines and process, and consider introducing public appeals hearings.</u></p>		
<p><u>Role of the Judicial Committee</u> In addition to the above suggestion that the Judicial Committee serve as the body to hear election appeals, Task Force members also heard that graduate students with grievances against Council members or Elected Officials should not be required to email the President or Speaker regarding their concerns.</p> <p><u>If ERC decides to move forward with the suggestion to have the Judicial Committee hear election appeals, the Task Force is suggesting that the Judicial Committee be restructured.</u></p>	Task Force members recognized that the Judicial Committee has not met in some time and needs restructuring, but is a good candidate for ERC to consider as a neutral appeals body involving multiple people to hear an appeal.	<p>If ERC considers using Judicial Committee members to hear appeals, Council would need to revise the Judicial Committee's composition. Replenishment of the Judicial Committee members could be once a year instead of each term, or on different rolling timelines (1-3 years or 15 – 18 months) to minimize the risk of all members leaving at once. Could maintain 8 members in case there are members absent, or who have to declare a conflict of interest, but an 'appeal board' would not need to be made up of all 8 members at a time (approximately 3 members with 1 chair).</p> <p>Would need to think through training and support (basic training in procedural fairness) for the Judicial Committee and any Judicial Committee members who would act as Chair.</p>
<p><u>Guiding Principles of Elections</u> <u>Task Force members are suggesting ERC consider adding statements to the guiding principles of elections</u> regarding the sanctity of votes and perception of fairness.</p>	Fairness and the perception of fairness are essential for elections.	ERC could consider developing a code of conduct for elections.
<p><u>Create clear definitions</u> of key terms (eg discretion).</p> <p><u>Task Force members are suggesting ERC consider creating a list of clear definitions that can be included at the beginning of Election Bylaw and Policy.</u></p>	The lack of definitions for certain terms allows for varying interpretations.	
<p><u>Introduce a System of 'Deducted Points' or Fines for Election Campaign Violations</u> Model proposed is that specific values of fines or 'points' would correspond directly with particular campaign violations. If a candidate were to spend beyond the allotted budget or point format, they would be disqualified. Rules</p>	Introducing a system of fines or demerits could ensure less discretion from the CRO with a more rigid system; could act as a deterrent to candidates violating campaign rules if they see clearly what the penalties will be (fines or points deducted from their total);	If ERC considers introducing set fines for specific campaign violations, would need to consider how would fining be done (currently candidates are responsible for own campaign budgets, and any fines issued, need a way of collecting them).

<u>Suggestion to ERC</u>	<u>Rationale</u>	<u>Implications/Considerations</u>
<p>are too 'loose'; there should be increased regulations for campaigning and that the GSA should cover the cost of campaign budgets for General Elections.</p> <p><u>The Task Force is suggesting ERC consider whether or not it is feasible to introduce a system of demerits or fines for election campaign violations.</u></p>	<p>could make CRO decisions more clear and less arbitrary); would simplify decisions to disqualify (ie not open to discretion, if a candidate uses up their budget or points through various campaign violations, they are automatically disqualified). Candidates are held to account for campaign violations instead of just receiving verbal reprimands, and would make clear that there are consequences for campaign violations. Could help make campaign rules more enforceable.</p>	<p>ERC could look to the SU as a model (they have a set 'fine' schedule).</p>
<p><u>Role of the CRO and ERC</u> Conflicting and unclear role in bylaw and policy; bylaw says 'runs' elections, policy says 'administers' elections.</p> <p><u>The Task Force is suggesting that ERC consider requiring the CRO to consult with ERC in making election decisions (so not just one person is making decisions).</u></p> <p>It is currently difficult for the CRO to monitor or enforce campaign violations. ERC could consider replicating SU requirement that candidates must prove they have actively distanced themselves, and be required to report to the CRO any campaign violations they become aware of.</p> <p><u>The Task Force suggests that the role of the CRO and ERC be further considered by ERC based upon ERC's decision when it comes to reviewing the selection of the CRO, and whether or not the CRO will remain an elected position. The Task Force is also suggesting ERC consider making it mandatory for the CRO to consult with ERC when making decisions regarding alleged violations of campaign rules and review whether the CRO can remain as Chair of ERC. Currently in Bylaw and Policy the CRO both makes elections rules but then also must enforce them.</u></p>	<p>Having the CRO consult with ERC when making decisions regarding campaign violations could help ensure balanced and clear decisions are made and could add to the transparency of the decision making process.</p>	<p>If ERC considers the suggestion to change the role of the CRO and ERC in assisting the CRO, the committee would have to consider whether ERC could continue to create the election rules if they would be subject to following them in issuing decisions.</p> <p>Should the CRO remain an elected position, if the CRO performs poorly, how should this be dealt with (removal from office of a Council-Elected Officer is unclear in current bylaw and policy)?</p>
<p><u>Restriction of Campaigning During Voting</u> <u>Task Force members are suggesting that ERC remove the restriction on campaigning during voting.</u></p>	<p>In practice this has been a common point of contention in previous elections and in most elections throughout the world, campaigning is allowed during voting. Appears difficult to enforce and difficult to prove a candidate is responsible for any campaigning past a deadline before voting starts.</p>	<p>If ERC decides to remove the restriction on campaigning during voting, the committee could consider adding a provision that, in the event that paper ballots must be used in an election, campaigning cannot happen within a certain distance of polling stations during voting. ERC would also need to consider what happens if campaigning continues and there are campaign violations during voting.</p>

<u>Suggestion to ERC</u>	<u>Rationale</u>	<u>Implications/Considerations</u>
<p><u>Restriction of Places on Campus for Campaigning</u> Task Force members heard that it is difficult for candidates to know where they can campaign, and there are continued safety issues such as candidates continue to campaign in chemistry labs.</p> <p><u>Task Force members are suggesting ERC consider removing restrictions for campaigning in certain spaces on campus, except for key places where safety is an issue (eg chemistry labs).</u></p>	<p>This rule has been difficult for the CRO to enforce in practice and it allows for the potential for candidates to sabotage each other (eg taking another candidate’s campaign materials and placing them intentionally in an ‘off-limit’ area of campus).</p>	<p>If ERC decides to remove the restriction on campaigning behind locked doors, could consider making Triffo Hall and the GSA Offices an off-limit area for campaign posters, since there is nothing in policy currently restricting this right now.</p>
<p><u>Remove the ability of the current Directly-Elected Officers and Council-Elected Officers to endorse, or be perceived as endorsing candidates</u> The Task Force heard that endorsements from current Directly-Elected Officers create an unfair advantage for the candidates being endorsed and that endorsement is an abuse of the power of incumbents.</p>	<p>Would enhance the perception of the process as fair and present bias in any appeals or processes, and reduce any perceived or real abuse of incumbency.</p>	<p>If ERC considers removing the ability to endorse, the committee should consider that if the slate system is also maintained, incumbents running in an election as part of a slate could be viewed as a form of endorsement of others on the slate.</p>
<p><u>Definition and Roles of Slates</u> The Task Force members heard two opposing perspectives: 1) slates encourage elitism and are too much like cliques, and discourage graduate students from running for positions and can lead to voter apathy; and 2) slates should be required as they make students think about long-term issues and their platform, and which candidates are good matches for which positions, and ultimately professionalize elections.</p> <p>There is currently little in policy regarding slates; slates can pool their campaign funds which can be seen as an unfair advantage; realization that slates may still emerge in practice and could be difficult to police.</p> <p><u>Based on this divergent feedback, the Task Force suggests that ERC more closely examine what is happening with the issue of slates in student association elections across Canada, do more background analysis, and debate the pros and cons of both views as this is an important and complex issue. The Task Force suggests that if slates are maintained, that ERC consider reviewing ability of slates to pool campaign funds.</u></p>	<p>The Task Force members recognize that the issue of whether or not to allow slates is a complex issue that requires more discussion and careful consideration.</p>	

<u>Suggestion to ERC</u>	<u>Rationale</u>	<u>Implications/Considerations</u>
<p><u>'None of the Above' Campaigns</u> Task Force members heard that while 'none of the above' in policy is considered a candidate for the purposes of the ballot, there are no policies around any 'none of the above' campaigning that might take place, and that regulations should be introduced.</p> <p><u>Task Force members are suggesting that ERC discuss the issue of 'none of the above' campaigns at length in the long-term.</u></p>	<p>Task Force members recognize that it is difficult to police 'none of the above' campaigns and there are currently no regulations for such campaigns in GSA Bylaw and Policy.</p>	
<p><u>Campaign Videos</u> Task Force members heard that the campaign videos for candidates should be kept.</p> <p><u>The Task Force is suggesting to ERC that they maintain the practice of filming campaign videos, but consider re-examining the questions so that candidates can speak to their platforms, if any.</u></p>	<p>Task Force members discussed that the current video interview questions for candidates do not allow for space for them to address their platform and what they want to do in the position they are running for.</p>	

ADVISORY REVIEW COMMITTEE FOR VICE-PRESIDENT (UNIVERSITY RELATIONS) NOMINEE

**List of Nominees and Call for Additional Nominations Previously Distributed to Council on July 8, 2014;
Advertisements for Position on the Advisory Review Committee for Vice-President (University Relations)
Distributed through the GSA Newsletter on June 27, 2014**

Recommended Motion for GSA Council:

That the GSA Council **receive for information** the newly-appointed member of the Graduate Students' Association on the Advisory Review Committee for the Vice-President (University Relations).

Newly-appointed member of the Graduate Students' Association on the Advisory Review Committee for the Vice-President (University Relations):

- 1. Monty Bal (GSA Vice-President Labour and PhD Program, Political Science)**

Background:

GSA Policy outlines that "the NoC acts for the GSA in electing representatives to serve on search/review committees of the Provost, VPs, or equivalents." (GSA Policy, Nominating, 6.2). There is a vacancy for one (1) member of the Graduate Students' Association appointed by the GSA on the **Advisory Review Committee for Vice-President (University Relations)**. The position was advertised in the GSA Newsletter on June 27 and **ONE nomination was received for this position by the deadline of July 4 at 12:00 PM (noon)**. As the one nomination received was from a Directly-Elected Officer, the Nominating Committee has chosen to ask Council to finalize this vote. **The GSA Nominating Committee requested that GSA Council be invited to submit additional nominations.** A call for additional nominations was circulated to Council on July 8, 2014, and **no additional nominations were received by the deadline provided to Council of 12 (noon) on Friday July 11, 2014.** The nominee presented on this report is therefore declared **elected**.

Jurisdiction:

Policy Manual, Nominating, 6.2 and 6.6

"The NoC acts for the GSA in electing representatives to serve on search/review committees of the Provost, VPs, or equivalents" [...]. "Additional nominations may be made by Councillors, **in writing**, in advance of the Council meeting where elections will take place."

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.**"

**GSA President
Report to Council for July 14, 2014 GSA Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Nathan Andrews
Date: July 11, 2014

Dear Council Colleagues,

I think the 2014 World Cup has been a great distraction for some of us – a well-deserved one perhaps. Well, now that it's rounding up I guess we should get back to being the full-time students our supervisors think we are. Not so fast, because here comes K-Days and the many other summer festivals in Edmonton!

Now to some serious stuff: the final report of the **GSA President's Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy** is ready. We had a number of sessions and heard many great suggestions, which I am presenting to Council on Monday (Item 10). I appreciate the time of the Task Force members, and the fabulous work of GSA Nominating Coordinator Lisa Hareuther who helped to consolidate all the feedback received and our discussions into this fine report. I am curious about what the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee will decide to take out of the report as part of its annual review of Elections Bylaw and Policy.

I raised the issue of **graduate student funding** with Council last month, and there was a great deal of discussion on the idea of 'guaranteed funding'. As of now, we still have not received the concrete plan promised by the President over a month ago, although it is being advertised on her blog. **One thing we know from my informal discussions with members of administration is that funding would only be guaranteed for thesis-based graduate students.** This helps clarify one of the questions that came up last month regarding who gets the guarantee. In terms of what it means, the dollar amounts are about \$24,000 for Master's students and \$26,000 for doctoral students. Again, **we are still awaiting a concrete document in order to have an informed discussion on this matter.**

As part of the **Peter Lougheed Initiative**, I wish to announce that the **Peter Lougheed College (PLC) has been established.** There was a great deal of debate about the usage of the term 'college', but this is an initiative President Samarasekera is passionate about and it was approved by the Board of Governors (BoG). In her remarks at the June 20, 2014 BoG meeting, she said the **pioneer cohort of students for the PLC would begin in September 2015 with the first pot of money from the government flowing through in the summer.** This is pretty much an undergrad initiative but **there is the potential for graduate students to be research assistants** – about 10-15 students to start. Also, **graduate students will be offered the opportunity to act as mentors in the future.** I believe the GSA will be involved in further discussions of what graduate students' involvement in the college might look like.

I am happy to answer any questions about any of the meetings I attended since my last report to Council.

Cheers,
Nathan Andrews
GSA President

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between June 16, 2014 to July 11, 2014.

June 16	GSA Auditor
June 17	Coalition Meeting
June 17	SU President and Board of Governors' Representative
June 17	Facilitated Coaching and Learning
June 19	U of A President's Staff Appreciation Picnic
June 19	Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy
June 20	Board of Governors
June 25	GSA Budget and Finance Committee
June 25	GFC APC
June 27	U of A Vice-President University Relations
July 3	Dean of FGSR
July 3	Dean of Students
July 8	ABCampus
July 8	Provost and Deputy Provost
July 9	U of A President
July 9	Dean of FGSR

**GSA Board
Report to Council for July 14, 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: July 11, 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.

18 June, 2014 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Health and Dental Update; External Relations Travel Expenses: Actual Expenses for Attendance at the CASA Foundations Conference, from May 9-13, in Ottawa, ON

Motions and Agreements:

Board Members **AGREED** to post the summary of actual expenses incurred through attendance at the CASA Foundations Conference, from May 9-13, 2014 in Ottawa, ON, on the GSA website.

25 June, 2014 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

2013-2014 GSA Audited Financial Statements; GSA 2014-2015 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report; GSA Health and Dental Plan: Proposed Increase to Vision Coverage; Estimated Budget for Travel Expenses with Attendance at the GU15 Conference in Montreal, QC, from August 5-9, 2014

Motions and Agreements:

That the GSA Board **APPROVE** the 2013-2014 GSA Audited Financial Statements and **FORWARD** the GSA 2013-2014 Audited Financial Statements to GSA Council for information. NA **MOVED**. MeB Seconded. **CARRIED**. That the GSA Board **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION AND FORWARD TO GSA COUNCIL** the GSA 2014-2015 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report. NA **MOVED**. MoB Seconded. **CARRIED**. That the GSA Board **RECOMMEND THAT GSA COUNCIL APPROVE** the proposed increase in vision coverage, using options 1 and 4 as outlined on page 5.3 of the attached material. NA **MOVED**. MeB Seconded. **CARRIED**. Board Members **AGREED TO APPROVE** the estimated expenses for two representatives of the GSA to attend the GU15 Conference in Montreal, QC, from August 5-9, 2014, as shown in the attached proposed budget.

02 July, 2014 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

2013 Alumni Association Graduate Alumni Survey Results; Graduate Supervision Report Action Plan; Departmental GSAs: Funding from the GSA Based on Councillor Attendance: Proposed Revisions to Existing Board Policy

Motions and Agreements:

That the GSA Board **APPROVE** the attached proposed revision to the GSA Board Policy 'Departmental GSAs: Funding from the GSA Based on Councillor Attendance', for immediate inclusion in the Board Policy Manual (as reflected in the triple column on pages 4.1 to 4.3 and the revised policy if approved on page 4.4 before members). NA **MOVED**. MoB Seconded. **CARRIED**.

09 July, 2014 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC): Review of Governing Documents; Final Report of the GSA President's Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy; Alexander Sodiqov, University of Toronto Graduate Student Detained in Tajikistan: Potential Statement from the GSA

Motions and Agreements:

Board Members **AGREED** that cash collected by ab-GPAC should be handed over to the Treasurer or designate within 24 hours. Board Members **AGREED** that ab-GPAC funds should not be used to purchase alcohol under any circumstance. Board Members **AGREED** that ab-GPAC should adopt the strictest travel policy of the four GSAs. Board Members **AGREED** that there should be no pre-approval expenditure limit. Board Members **AGREED** to discuss removing sporting events from the *Societies Act* application with the other GSAs. Board Members **AGREED** to draft a statement regarding academic freedom and the detainment of A Sodiqov. Board Members **AGREED** to email departmental GSAs on behalf of ABCampus.

**GSA Budget and Finance Committee (BFC)
Report to Council for July 14, 2014 GSA Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Nathan Andrews
Date: July 11, 2014

Dear Council Colleagues,

The GSA BFC met on June 25, 2014 to receive for information the 2013-2014 GSA Audited Financial Statements. GSA Auditor Tom Gee attended the meeting, and discussed the audit materials with BFC members. **The GSA BFC also reviewed and discussed the GSA 2014-2015 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report.** Subsequently, some members of BFC also attended the June 25, 2014 meeting of the GSA Board where the 2013-2014 GSA Audited Financial Statements were approved by the GSA Board and forwarded to Council, and the GSA 2014-2015 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report was received by the GSA Board and forwarded to Council. **Both of these items will be before Council to be received for information at the July 14 meeting. GSA Auditor Tom Gee, members of the GSA BFC, and the GSA Financial Team (GSA Director Ellen Schoeck, GSA Accountant Shirley Ball, GSA Financial Manager Dorte Sheikh, Director of Operations Heather Hogg, and Director of Services and Governance Courtney Thomas) will be in attendance.**

I would be happy to report further orally.

Respectfully,
Nathan Andrews, GSA President and Chair of GSA Budget and Finance Committee

GSA Governance Committee (GC)
Report to Council for July 14, 2014 GSA Council Meeting

To: GSA Council
From: Nathan Andrews
Date: July 11, 2014

Dear Council Colleagues,

As stated in GSA Policy, “the Governance Committee will...make any routine or editorial changes to the governance documents as deemed necessary by the Committee” (GSA Policy Manual, Standing Committees, Section 3, Governance Committee, 3.2.ii). In August 2013 the Governance Committee passed a motion approving **the delegation to the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governance Committee of future approval of “purely editorial” changes.** “Purely editorial” was deemed to include punctuation, italicization of Latin terms, capitalization, spelling, factual errors, font adjustment, and re-numbering.

In consultation with the GSA VP Labour, as Vice-Chair of the Governance Committee (and on the authority delegated by the Governance Committee, as noted above), we approved purely editorial changes to GSA Policy on Emergency Bursaries (GSA Policy, Grant Application Policy and Information, Section 4 Emergency Bursaries) on June 26, 2014 to **update the name of the unit that administers GSA Emergency Bursaries.** This office was formerly known as the University Bursaries and Emergency Funding (UBEF) office and is now the Office of Student Financial Support (SFS), Office of the Registrar). Additionally, graduate students applying for a GSA Emergency Bursary are now directed to make an appointment with an advisor through Student Connect rather than through the Financial Aid Office.

I would be happy to report further orally.

Sincerely,

Nathan Andrews, GSA President and Chair of the GSA Governance Committee

**GSA Nominating Committee (NoC)
Report to Council for July 14, 2014 GSA Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Lacey Fleming
Date: July 11, 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.

Sincerely,

Lacey Fleming, Vice-Chair of the GSA Nominating Committee

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) Advisory Review Committee for U of A Vice-President University Relations (1 position):

Dr. Deborah Pozega Osburn's term as Vice-President (University Relations) ends on June 30, 2015. Vice-President Pozega Osburn advised President Indira Samarasekera that she would like to stand for a second term of office. In consultation with the Chair of the Board of Governors, Mr. Douglas Goss, President Samarasekera asked that an **Advisory Review Committee for Vice-President (University Relations)** be struck. The committee requires one member of the Graduate Students' Association appointed by the GSA. **SEE ITEM 11.**

2) Green and Gold Professional Development Grant Adjudication Committee (1 position)

This committee has a position for one graduate student designated by the GSA. The position was advertised through the GSA Newsletter on June 16, 2014. Two strong applications were received and **Amin Ghazanfari, PhD student Electrical and Computer Engineering, was elected to serve on this committee.**

3) Protective Services Commission (1 position)

This committee has a position for one representative from the GSA. The position was advertised through the GSA Newsletter on June 20, 2014 and one application was received. **Jean-Philippe Crete (PhD program, Sociology) was elected to serve on the Protective Services Commission.**

4) Alcohol Policy Review Committee (1 position)

This committee has a position for one representative from the GSA. Due to urgency to fill the position, advertising in the GSA Newsletter was waived (GSA Policy, Nominating, 5.2). This position was advertised to all GSA Councillors-at-Large and one application was received. **Sandra Gawad Gad (CAL and MSc program, Physiology) was elected to serve as the GSA's representative on this committee.**

5) Student Group Services (SGS) Granting Committee (1 position)

In consultation with the GSA Nominating Committee, Student Group Services (SGS) added a second graduate student representative to the SGS Granting Committee. The position for a second graduate student representative on the Student Group Services Granting Committee was advertised through the GSA Newsletter on June 20, 2014 and **one** application was received. **Qendresa Beka (CAL and MSc program, Epidemiology) was elected to serve on this committee.**

6) Residence Halls Association (RHA) Council (1 position)

The Residence Halls Association Constitution requires that "the Graduate Students' Association shall be represented by one non-voting member" on the RHA Council. This position was advertised through the GSA Newsletter on June 13, 2014 and **two** strong applications were received prior to the deadline. **Md Omar Reza (MSc program, Chemical and Materials Engineering) was elected to serve on the RHA Council until April 30, 2015.**

**GSA Vice-President Academic
Report to Council for July 14, 2014 GSA Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Colin More
Date: July 11, 2014

Hello everyone!

The summer continues to display typically amazing weather -- I hope you've been able to take advantage of it!

In what is quickly becoming a repeating recording, the **university administration remains very quiet**. The President's review of General Faculties Council hasn't been mentioned in months, and discussion of Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees has been nonexistent. However, whispers of their proposal for graduate reform are increasing in volume, and we expect to see some sort of documentation on the issue soon.

On the GSA side of things, the two areas I'm most interested in continue to be **professional development** and **graduate supervision**. On the former, we eagerly **await a report from the FGSR outlining a new training program somewhat similar to the existing one for teaching**. In addition, we are pursuing partnerships with various organizations to have events throughout the upcoming year, and have received **assurances from both the Provost and the President that professional development for graduate students is an area they are eager to invest in**. If you have suggestions on what to spend their money on, please do let either Vice-President External Susan Cake or myself know! On the supervision side, we are **nearing completion of an action plan based on Dr. Naomi Krogman's report**, and are working with a research associate (kindly hired by the FGSR) to determine which practices and policies work best at other institutions worldwide. I hope to present something rather more concrete at our September meeting.

Until then, get out of the lab at least once a month and enjoy the summer. It's pretty glorious! 'Till next time,

Colin More, Vice-President Academic

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between June 16, 2014 to July 11, 2014.

June 16	GFC Executive
June 23	SU VP Academic
June 30	SU VP Academic
July 7	SU VP Academic
July 8	ABCampus
July 8	Provost and Deputy Provost
July 9	U of A President
July 9	Dean of FGSR

**GSA Vice-President Student Services
Report to Council for July 14, 2014 GSA Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Megha Bajaj
Date: July 11, 2014

Dear Council Colleagues,

Hope you are well and enjoying the beautiful weather!

Below are the highlights from some of the meetings I attended since last Council.

GFC FDC:

'Gathering Place' schematic design report – **A schematic design for a new building for Aboriginal Student Services was presented at the meeting.** The proposed location for this building is north of the existing Education Building. This building will have programming for improving support and retention of aboriginal students on campus. Once in place, Aboriginal Student Services, which is currently housed in the Student's Union Building, will be moving to this new building. In addition, anyone from the campus community who is interested in understanding aboriginal history and culture will be welcome here.

URPC:

Falling Walls Lab event: The U of A was recently invited to host the **first Canadian Falling Walls Lab event** (1 of only 20 international participating universities). **The forum is designed to showcase the quality and creativity of the next generation of top researchers and entrepreneurs and to promote interdisciplinary research and the exchange of knowledge and ideas among different fields of study.** The focus is on graduate students, post-docs, young academics and entrepreneurs. Participants will pitch their idea or project in a 3-minute presentation to a panel of judges. The best idea and pitch at the U of A event will win a trip to Berlin, Germany to participate in the international grand finale of Falling Walls Lab. **More details are available at www.research.ualberta.ca/FWLab.** The application deadline is August 25, 2014. The Falling Walls event is Thursday, September 25, 2014 (6-8:30 pm)

Health and Dental meeting with Studentcare:

I, along with GSA Consultant Roy Coulthard and the GSA management team met with a representative from Studentcare to discuss a **potential increase in coverage in the GSA Health and Dental Plan.** I will report to you on this while presenting Item 9 on the Council Agenda.

Sincerely,

Megha Bajaj, GSA Vice-President Student Services

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between June 16, 2014 to July 11, 2014.

June 17	PAW Fee Meeting
June 19	StudentCare Meeting
June 19	U-Pass Admin
June 19	Anthony Cornish RE: Automated External Defibrillators
June 19	GFC FDC
July 4	TRAM Project Stakeholder Meeting
July 8	ABCampus
July 8	Provost and Deputy Provost
July 9	U of A President

**GSA Vice-President External
Report to Council for July 14, 2014 GSA Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Susan Cake
Date: July 11, 2014

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope that everyone is able to take some time and enjoy the nice weather we have been having recently.

For the past month I have continued working on various tasks and goals. I have continued to attend **meetings with the provincial government on tuition for the Post-Secondary Sector in Alberta**. The Vice-President Labour has also been attending some of these meetings and additional information can be found in his report to Council. I'm happy to report that the government recently had a call for representatives on a **mandatory non-instruction fee (MNIFs) definition working group**. There are a few graduate student leaders who have put their names forward and we should hear back regarding this group in August.

The GSA has also **met with other constituent groups in the university** (Post-Doctoral Fellow's Association, Students' Union, Association of Academic Staff etc.). It's productive for all groups to share information and anticipate future opportunities for coordination. Together we make up a sizable population in the university and we have several interests that align. I look forward to more of these meetings in the future and working together with different groups.

I've also continued working with FGSR as a representative on one of their **professional development** working groups. **The GSA is looking forward to the final report and hearing about the vision the university has for graduate student professional development that is supposed to come out in September**. I believe that GSA representation on this working group is indicative of the great relationship the FGSR and GSA have and I look forward to continuing this kind of relationship in the future.

If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me as needed.

Take care,

Susan Cake, GSA Vice-President External

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between June 16, 2014 to July 11, 2014. I was on vacation from June 24, 2014 to July 3, 2014.

June 16	Flexible Leases Meeting
June 17	Coalition Meeting
June 19	U of A President's Staff Appreciation Picnic
June 23	Tuition Working Group with Ministry of Innovation and Advanced Education
July 8	Provost and Deputy Provost
July 9	U of A President
July 11	Meeting with FGSR Professional Development Working Group Research Assistant

**GSA Vice-President Labour
Report to Council for July 14, 2014 GSA Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Monty Bal
Date: July 11, 2014

Dear Council Colleagues,

Below are some of the highlights of what I've been up to since we last met.

Ministry of Innovation and Advanced Education/Future Directions for the Access to the Future Fund:

Over the past few weeks, I've attended a couple of meetings with representatives from the IAE. The Vice-President External has also attended some of these meetings and more information can be found in her report to Council. Notably, these meetings discussed progress on some of the **different projects the IAE has initiated, in consultation with various stakeholders, to review key issues in Alberta Post-Secondary Education (ABPSE)**. With respect to the Tuition and Fees Task Force, there is positive movement on creating greater transparency across institutions around the province by **developing more consistent definitions of fees that universities charge students**. Furthermore, there is a shared belief that with regards to tuition, **stability** is absolutely necessary for students. This includes the desire to maintain the CPI formula for tuition increases and potentially working out a method to bring this type of stability to international students' tuition as well. Additionally, there is a review being undertaken by the Student Aid division, which seeks to **develop stronger incentives to encourage students from underrepresented populations to go into higher education**. This will potentially include increasing the size of certain scholarships to attract those populations. There may also be an investigation into the issue of **graduate student debt** and whether this can be linked to post-graduation income. Finally, with respect to the Access to the Future Fund, the Ministry is seeking input from various stakeholders regarding **how the model for making funds available should be reformed**. Specifically, in regards to student concerns, in addition to using the funds for scholarships, student groups have urged the Ministry to **alter governance processes for the funds to increase student voice and potentially open up access to the funds to students and student groups** (the funds currently are only available to institutions). All these issues will be discussed at a meeting on July 14, 2014 with the Presidents of student associations and following this, there will be processes to determine how to implement these changes.

Wellness Summit Feedback/TRAM:

I was able to meet as a part of a panel to discuss what the next steps for mental health advocacy in Alberta will be. It was decided at this panel that the groups involved would request that the leadership of the University call for the launching of an **effort to institute a provincial policy for Mental Health** which would be developed by various stakeholders from not only the campus community, but also those off campus. This process will **bring together representatives from campuses across Alberta, to create an institution which will allow for a single voice to engage with the government and other relevant actors regarding mental health concerns throughout ABPSE**. An effort will be made to address the diversity of campuses and a diversity of needs by maintaining local governance processes with respect to representation from each individual institution. Moving forward, there will be a world cafe, where interested parties will be invited to discuss how to discuss more details regarding specific goals and implementation processes. Finally, there is a **long-term study being conducted regarding mental health across Canada and the U of A was one of the two universities selected as participant members**.

Although this study seeks to concentrate on first year undergrads and services offered to them, the study also includes a **number of avenues for graduate student involvement**. To this end, the Dean of Students has asked for representatives from the GSA and other stakeholders on campus to participate in the executive committee. **This may afford the graduate student population an excellent mechanism to increase mental health capacities in their role as TAs and may provide benefits in regards to professional development.**

CA Negotiations Meeting:

Members of the GSA team and the University Administration team will be meeting soon to discuss how to move negotiations forward after a stall due to differences regarding the GSSF.

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

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between June 16, 2014 to July 11, 2014.

June 17	Coalition Meeting
June 17	Labour Case
June 20	Wellness Summit Feedback
June 25	Meeting with Ministry of Innovation and Advanced Education
June 26	GFC Campus Law Review Committee
July 4	TRAM Project Stakeholder Meeting
July 8	Meeting with Ministry (Access to the Future Fund)
July 8	Provost and Deputy Provost
July 9	U of A President

**GSA Executive Director
Report to Council for July 14, 2014 GSA Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Ellen Schoeck, GSA Executive Director
Date: July 11, 2014

Dear Council,

Big thanks to the Councillors who participated in the two Budget/ Audit 101 sessions on June 23 and July 11. We discussed how budget and its component of human resource dollars should drive the Strategic Plan developed by your elected officials and received by Council. Numbers are just numbers unless they relate to what an organization wishes to achieve. Thus my focus in this report on the financial and advocacy health of the GSA, as reported last year at this time.

Our financial health is excellent. Our ratio of assets to liabilities is excellent, as you will year from our auditor. We have a positive balance.

The 2014 audit and the quarterly financial reports show that the GSA has evolved in 3.5 years from an organization with no infrastructure (as our Auditor, Tom Gee, phrased it in 2009, “a house without plumbing and wiring”) into one with a **realistic budget/financial plan, modernized systems and stable, productive staff**. Your fiduciary duty is to partner with the elected officials and management to ensure that the GSA remains this robust over time. The table below provides just five measures of success since 2009-10:

2010	2014
Recurring cash flow problems related to the timing of collection of student fees (the GSA is a fees-driven organization).	U of A Financial Services now has faith in us and is <i>advancing</i> our fees (instead of collecting in arrears). We now have no cash flow issues and operations can continue uninterrupted – this is indicative of the GSA’s reputation for excellent fiscal management.
No CA.	A CA, Shirley Ball, and Financial Manager, Dorte Sheikh, were hired in 2011. Our finances are state-of-the-art.
Continuous staff turnover; lack of professional management. In 2010, no staff had stayed at the GSA longer than one year; GM quit. Three VPs on leave.	Staff positions are now benchmarked and the GSA retains a talented, dedicated and cross-trained staff. Management positions are benchmarked; a succession plan is in place. Early call for talent instituted.
High legal fees.	Now reduced from c \$80K to c\$20 K.
Few requests for external grants and sponsorships.	The GSA now regularly receives requests from an array of groups across campus to sponsor events – this is an indicator of the rising reputation of the GSA.

As usual, the detailed weekly Management reports to the GSA Board are attached for your review.

I am happy to answer any questions.

Best,

Ellen Schoeck, GSA Executive Director

Management Report to the GSA Board, June 18, 2014

Dear All,

The following issues have dominated management's attention in the week since the last GSA Board meeting on June 11, 2014:

Strategic

- **Main Issues Dealt With in the Past Week:** Audit (meeting with the Auditor, preparing for BFC and GSAB meetings), Facilitated Coaching and Learning process and meetings, GSA President's Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy, post-Council release of the Board Strategic Work Plan 2014-2015, ramping up planning for Fall Orientation and DLI (eg, hiring a coordinator for the Chili Social, designing GSA posters, etc), GSA Agenda/Handbook, collection of PAW fees, PAW business agreement with the SU (maintaining a no-risk stance for the GSA), Health and Dental bylaw review and early thinking on renewal with Studentcare (current agreement expires August 31, 2015), CJSR, report from CAPS with respect to the use of the subsidy for programming provided by the GSA.
- **Collective Agreement negotiations and GSSF funding.**
- **Bylaw and Policy Review** – hiring a graduate student to focus on bylaw and policy review for July-August (**Editorial:** integrating bylaw and policy into one document (a draft has been prepared and is being reviewed), a review of all bylaws and policies for inconsistencies and errors, and creating a “definitions” section and **Substantive:** thinking regarding a review of the Board Policy Manual is underway. Revisions to the policy and process surrounding councillor remuneration have been drafted, and proposed changes to the Board Policy on vacation and academic leave for Directly-Elected Officers are being considered).
- **Graduate Student Groups:** renewing the MOU with the Dean of Student and Student Group Services, template constitution, alcohol liability waiver, ability for the GSA to assist groups experiencing governance issues, **the next stage of the Department Liaison Initiative** and **connecting effectively with constituents, assisting groups experiencing registration difficulties with SGS.** Planning for Fall Orientation and departmental orientations has begun and thinking on next steps related to the DLI is ongoing. Examining sources of funding for graduate student groups from across campus with an aim to providing a comprehensive list to graduate student groups.

Grants and Operations

- **Council preparation.**
- **Social Media:** Facebook = 374 likes (up 4 from June 11), Twitter = 224 followers (up 0 from June 11) and a **review of the GSA website.**
- **Grants review and processing: Professional Development Awards closed (all funds expended – period opened with \$81,970 and \$44,000 was added on May 22 and \$9,440 was transferred to EBs to ensure they remained open when PDAs, CCGs, and ASGAs were closed)** and 267 applications submitted this period, **Childcare Grants closed (all funds expended – period opened with \$38,000 and \$6,000 was added on May 22)** and 29 applications submitted this period, **Academically-Related Student Group Awards closed (all funds expended – period opened with \$4,090)** and 5 applications submitted this period, **\$6,600 remaining in Emergency Bursaries (period opened with \$10,000 and \$9,440 was transferred from PDA's to ensure EBs could remain open when PDAs, CCGs, and ASGAs were closed)** and 7 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 AND AN ADVANCE OF \$50,000 OFFERED BY THE UNIVERSITY ON MAY 22, 2014)

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- Compiling the **GSA Media Tracker**; assisting with **gathering information on various sources of funding from graduate student groups from across campus**; assisting with **ongoing thought on connecting to constituents via events like a “BBQ” or the production of posters featuring GSA services.**
- **Scribing for the GSA President's Task Force on Elections Bylaw and Policy.**
- Developing a **master list of all delegates** on various committees, working groups, etc and assisting the Nominating Committee with **filling vacancies on several committees** (including SGS Granting Committee, Academic Policy and Process Review Task Force, ARFAC, Protective Services Commission). Assisting with **listing GSA committee members on the GSA website.**

Management Report to the GSA Board, June 25, 2014

Dear All,

The following issues have dominated management's attention in the week since the last GSA Board meeting on June 18, 2014:

Strategic

- **Main Issues Dealt With in the Past Week:** Budget 101 training session, Facilitated Coaching and Learning process and meetings, GSA President's Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy, forward thinking on professional development activities/events, ramping up planning for Fall Orientation and DLI (eg, hiring a coordinator for the Chili Social, designing GSA posters, etc), GSA Agenda/Handbook, collection of PAW fees, PAW business agreement with the SU (maintaining a no-risk stance for the GSA), meeting with Studentcare to discuss benefit changes and forward thinking on Health and Dental (current agreement expires August 31, 2015), CJSR, report from CAPS with respect to the use of the subsidy for programming provided by the GSA.
- **Collective Agreement negotiations and GSSF funding.**
- **Bylaw and Policy Review** – hiring a graduate student to focus on bylaw and policy review for July-August (**Editorial:** integrating bylaw and policy into one document (a draft has been prepared and is being reviewed), a review of all bylaws and policies for inconsistencies and errors, and creating a “definitions” section and **Substantive:** thinking regarding a review of the Board Policy Manual is underway. Revisions to the policy and process surrounding councillor remuneration have been drafted, and proposed changes to the Board Policy on vacation and academic leave for Directly-Elected Officers are being considered).
- **Graduate Student Groups:** renewing the MOU with the Dean of Student and Student Group Services, template constitution, alcohol liability waiver, ability for the GSA to assist groups experiencing governance issues, **the next stage of the Department Liaison Initiative** and **connecting effectively with constituents, assisting groups experiencing registration difficulties with SGS.** Planning for Fall Orientation and departmental orientations has begun and thinking on next steps related to the DLI is ongoing. Examining sources of funding for graduate student groups from across campus with an aim to providing a comprehensive list to graduate student groups.

Grants and Operations

- **Social Media:** Facebook = 381 likes (up 7 from June 18), Twitter = 224 followers (up 0 from June 18) and a **review of the GSA website.**
- **Grants review and processing:** Professional Development Awards closed (all funds expended – period opened with \$81,970 and \$44,000 was added on May 22 and \$9,440 was transferred to EBs to ensure they remained open when PDAs, CCGs, and ASGAs were closed) and 267 applications submitted this period, **Childcare Grants closed (all funds expended – period opened with \$38,000 and \$6,000 was added on May 22)** and 29 applications submitted this period, **Academically-Related Student Group Awards closed (all funds expended – period opened with \$4,090)** and 7 applications submitted this period, **\$3,773 remaining in Emergency Bursaries (period opened with \$10,000 and \$9,440 was transferred from PDA's to ensure EBs could remain open when PDAs, CCGs, and ASGAs were closed)** and 7 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 AND AN ADVANCE OF \$50,000 OFFERED BY THE UNIVERSITY ON MAY 22, 2014)

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- Compiling the **GSA Media Tracker**; preparing **Council Minutes**; assisting with **ongoing thought on connecting to constituents via events like a “BBQ” or the production of posters featuring GSA services.**
- **Scribing for the GSA President's Task Force on Elections Bylaw and Policy.**
- **Job shadowing on IT and EA tasks for vacation coverage.**
- Developing a **master list of all delegates** on various committees, working groups, etc and assisting the Nominating Committee with **filling vacancies on several committees** (including SGS Granting Committee, Academic Policy and Process Review Task Force, ARFAC, Protective Services Commission). Assisting with **listing GSA committee members on the GSA website.**

Management Report to the GSA Board, July 2, 2014

Dear All,

The following issues have dominated management's attention in the week since the last GSA Board meeting on June 25, 2014:

Strategic

- **Main Issues Dealt With in the Past Week:** Replenishment of the GSSF, consultation process (wrap up and finalizing the handbook), audit, quarterly financial statements, meeting with R Coulthard about next steps for Health and Dental, NPP, PAW, Dewey's, etc., thinking on a GSA communications strategy and consistent messaging, Budget 101 training session, Health and Dental 101, GSA President's Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy (final report), ramping up planning for Fall Orientation and DLI (eg, hiring a coordinator for the Chili Social, designing GSA posters, etc), PAW business agreement with the SU (maintaining a no-risk stance for the GSA), GSA Health and Dental Plan benefit changes and forward thinking on Health and Dental (current agreement expires August 31, 2015).
- **Collective Agreement negotiations and GSSF funding.**
- **Bylaw and Policy Review** – hiring a graduate student to focus on bylaw and policy review for August (**Editorial:** integrating bylaw and policy into one document (a draft has been prepared and is being reviewed), a review of all bylaws and policies for inconsistencies and errors, and creating a "definitions" section and **Substantive:** thinking regarding a review of the Board Policy Manual is underway. Proposed changes to the Board Policy on vacation and academic leave for Directly-Elected Officers are being considered).
- **Graduate Student Groups:** renewing the MOU with the Dean of Student and Student Group Services, template constitution, alcohol liability waiver, ability for the GSA to assist groups experiencing governance issues, **the next stage of the Department Liaison Initiative** and **connecting effectively with constituents (getting into departments), assisting groups experiencing registration difficulties with SGS.** Planning for Fall Orientation and departmental orientations has begun and thinking on next steps related to the DLI is ongoing. Examining sources of funding for graduate student groups from across campus with an aim to providing a comprehensive list to graduate student groups.

Grants and Operations

- **Social Media:** Facebook = 383 likes (up 2 from June 25), Twitter = 226 followers (up 2 from June 25) and a **review of the GSA website (suggested changes are being integrated into a shadow site for future review by DEOs, Speaker, and select Councillors).**
- **Grants review and processing:** (**NOTE:** THE CURRENT GRANTING PERIOD OPENED ON JULY 1 BUT, AS COLLECTIVE BARGAINING HAS NOT BEEN CONCLUDED, FUNDS HAVE NOT BEEN REPLENISHED FOR PDAs, CCGs, and EBs (ASGAs ARE FUNDED FROM THE GSA'S OPERATING BUDGET). APPLICATIONS ARE BEING ACCEPTED BUT INFORMATION IS PROVIDED, PROMINENTLY, ON THE WEBSITE NOTIFYING GRADUATE STUDENTS THAT THEY WILL NOT RECEIVE FUNDS UNTIL THE GSSF IS REPLENISHED. ALL APPLICANTS WILL BE ALSO BE INFORMED BY EMAIL WHEN THEY SUBMIT AN APPLICATION AND WILL BE NOTIFIED WHEN THEIR APPLICATION IS PROCESSED) **Professional Development Awards (no funds – period opened with \$0, should have been approx. \$95,126 available for the period)** and 0 applications submitted this period, **Childcare Grants (no funds – period opened with \$0, should have been approx. \$39, 741 available for the period)** and 0 applications submitted this period, **Academically-Related Student Group Awards closed (period opened with \$3,886)** and 0 applications submitted this period, **Emergency Bursaries (no funds – no periods but there should have been approx. \$109,820 available for the fiscal year)** and 9 applications submitted since April 1, 2014, which were processed using funds carried over from 2013-2014 and the \$50,000 advance on the GSSF provided by the University on May 22, 2014.

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- Compiling the **GSA Media Tracker** and assisting with **ongoing thought on GSA communications and connecting to constituents via events like a "BBQ" or the production of posters featuring GSA services.**
- **Assisting with the final report of the GSA President's Task Force on Elections Bylaw and Policy** and research on elections bylaws and policies at GU15 institutions.
- **IT vacation coverage and job shadowing the EA tasks for upcoming vacation coverage.**
- Developing a **master list of all delegates** on various committees, working groups, etc and assisting the Nominating Committee with **filling vacancies on several committees** (including Green and Gold Grant, RHA Council, Advisory Review Committee for Vice-President University Relations, Protective Services Commission). Assisting with **listing GSA committee members on the GSA website.**

Management Report to the GSA Board, July 9, 2014

Dear All,

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

Strategic

- **Main Issues Dealt With in the Past Week:** Consistent messaging on key issues, preparing for meetings with the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and the President, thinking on a GSA communications strategy, preparing for Budget 101 and Health and Dental 101 training sessions, ramping up planning for Fall Orientation and DLI (eg, hiring a coordinator for the Chili Social, designing GSA posters, etc), PAW fee, forward thinking on Health and Dental agreement renewal (current agreement expires August 31, 2015), Council preparations, drafting feedback sought by the Provincial government's Tuition Working Group, preparing for meetings with Russ Farmer, Iva Spence, and Melanie Goroniuk (HR), thinking and discussion on the creation of a common reporting form for the GSA, Ombuds, Office of Safe Disclosure, etc.
- **Collective Agreement negotiations and GSSF funding.**
- **Bylaw and Policy Review** – hiring a graduate student to focus on bylaw and policy review for August (**Editorial:** integrating bylaw and policy into one document (a draft has been prepared and is being reviewed), a review of all bylaws and policies for inconsistencies and errors, and creating a “definitions” section and **Substantive:** thinking regarding a review of the Board Policy Manual is underway. Proposed changes to Board Policy on vacation and academic leave for Directly-Elected Officers are being considered. Changes to simplify Bylaw on the Health and Dental Plan are being developed).
- **Graduate Student Groups:** renewing the MOU with the Dean of Student and Student Group Services, template constitution, alcohol liability waiver, ability for the GSA to assist groups experiencing governance issues, **the next stage of the Department Liaison Initiative** and **connecting effectively with constituents (getting into departments), assisting groups experiencing registration difficulties with SGS.** Planning for Fall Orientation and departmental orientations has begun and thinking on next steps related to the DLI is ongoing. Examining sources of funding for graduate student groups from across campus with an aim to providing a comprehensive list to graduate student groups.

Grants and Operations

- **Social Media:** Facebook = 387 likes (up 4 from July 2), Twitter = 225 followers (down 1 from July 2) and a **review of the GSA website (suggested changes are being integrated into a shadow site for future review by DEOs, Speaker, and select Councillors).**
- **Grants review and processing: (NOTE: THE CURRENT GRANTING PERIOD OPENED ON JULY 1 BUT, AS COLLECTIVE BARGAINING HAS NOT BEEN CONCLUDED, FUNDS HAVE NOT BEEN REPLENISHED FOR PDAs, CCGs, and EBs (ASGAs ARE FUNDED FROM THE GSA'S OPERATING BUDGET). APPLICATIONS ARE BEING ACCEPTED BUT INFORMATION IS PROVIDED, PROMINENTLY, ON THE WEBSITE NOTIFYING GRADUATE STUDENTS THAT THEY WILL NOT RECEIVE FUNDS UNTIL THE GSSF IS REPLENISHED. ALL APPLICANTS WILL BE ALSO BE INFORMED BY EMAIL WHEN THEY SUBMIT AN APPLICATION AND WILL BE NOTIFIED WHEN THEIR APPLICATION IS PROCESSED) Professional Development Awards (no funds – period opened with \$0, should have been approx. \$95,126 available for the period of which \$69,466 remains) and 54 applications submitted this period, Childcare Grants – APPLICATIONS CLOSED (no funds – period opened with \$0, should have been approx. \$39,741 available for the period, on which \$2,741 remains) and 26 applications submitted this period, Academically-Related Student Group Awards closed (period opened with \$3,886) and 0 applications submitted this period, Emergency Bursaries (no funds – no periods but there should have been approx. \$109,820 available for the fiscal year) and 9 applications submitted since April 1, 2014, which were processed using funds carried over from 2013-2014 and the \$50,000 advance on the GSSF provided by the University on May 22, 2014.**

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- Compiling the **GSA Media Tracker** and assisting with **ongoing thought on GSA communications and connecting to constituents via events like a “BBQ” or the production of posters featuring GSA services.**
- **Research on elections bylaws and policies** at GU15 institutions and **IT and EA vacation coverage.**
- Developing a **master list of all delegates** on various committees, working groups, etc and a **list of GSA committee members on the GSA website**, and assisting the Nominating Committee with **filling vacancies on several committees** (including VP University Relations Review Committee, Alcohol Policy Review Committee, Protective Services Commission). Working on a review of Dean Selection Committee positions and replenishment processes.