

GSA Council Meeting - List of Reports Circulated
Monday, December 14, 2015
Cancelled

	Attached Numbered Pages
1. Minutes from the 20 July 2015 GSA Council Meeting <i>Attachments:</i>	
• Minutes from the 20 July 2015 GSA Council Meeting	1.0 - 1.10
2. President (Colin More, GSA President)	
i. President's Report	2.0 – 2.1
ii. GSA Board	2.2
iii. GSA Budget and Finance Committee (no meetings this reporting period)	
iv. GSA Governance Committee (no meetings this reporting period)	
3. GSA Nominating Committee	
i. GSA Nominating Committee Report (Michele DuVal, GSA Nominating Committee Administrative Chair)	3.0 - 3.1
4. Vice-President Academic (Harsh Thaker, GSA Vice-President Academic)	
i. Vice-President Academic's Report	4.0 - 4.1
5. Vice-President External (Alphonse Ndem Ahola, GSA Vice-President External)	
i. Vice-President External's Report	5.0 - 5.1
ii. GSA Awards Selection Committee	5.2
6. Vice-President Labour (Sarah Ficko, GSA Vice-President Labour)	
i. Vice-President Labour's Report	6.0 - 6.1
ii. GSA Negotiating Committee	6.2
iii. GSA Labour Relations Committee (no meetings this reporting period)	
7. Vice-President Student Services (Alireza Talaei, GSA Vice-President Student Services)	
i. Vice-President Student Services' Report	7.0 - 7.1
ii. GSA Student Affairs Advisory Committee (Joint Chair: Vice-President External) (no meetings this reporting period)	
8. Senator (Leigh Spanner, GSA Senator)	
i. Senator's Report	8.0
9. Speaker (Sulya Fenichel, GSA Speaker)	
i. Speaker's Report (no written report at this time)	
10. Chief Returning Officer (Virginia Pimmett, GSA Chief Returning Officer)	
i. Chief Returning Officer's Report	10.0
11. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (Leigh Spanner, GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Chair)	
i. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Report	11.0
12. GSA Management (Ellen Schoeck, GSA Executive Director)	
i. Executive Director's Report	12.0 - 12.3

**Meeting Minutes
23 November 2015
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:

Colin More (President) [arrived at 7:35 pm]	Graham Little (Biomedical Engineering)	Eve Robidoux (Faculté Saint Jean)	Radim Barta (Oncology)
Harsh Thaker (VP Academic)	Dasha Smirnow (Business PhD)	Neil Prather (History & Classics)	Ashley Bahry (Paediatrics)
Sarah Ficko (VP Labour)	Beth Richardson (Cell Bio)	Sumit Mandal (Human Ecology)	Ines Zuna (Pharmacology)
Alphonse Ndem Ahola (VP External)	Sahar Saadat (Chemical & Materials Engineering)	Muhammad Usama Arif (Internetworking)	Kathy Tang (Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences)
Ali Talaei (VP Student Services)	Joseph Cheramy (Chemistry)	Mahalakshmi Kumaran (Laboratory Medicine & Pathology)	Sarah (Physical Ed & Recreation)
Sulya Fenichel (Speaker)	Firouz Khodayari (Civil & Environmental Engineering)	Graham Feeny (Linguistics)	Ruijia Wang (Physics)
Virginia Pimmett (CRO)	Darian Brennekamp (Communication Science & Disorders)	Amir Nosrati (Mathematical & Statistical Sciences)	Braydon Whitlock (Physiology)
Monty Bal (Councillor-at-Large)	Candy Pang (Computing Science)	Michele (Mathematical & Statistical Sciences)	Joshua Yong (Psychology)
Susan Cake (Councillor-at-Large)	Samira Diar-Bakirly (Dentistry)	Hirad Soltani (Mechanical Engineering)	Colin Reynolds (Public Health)
Sarang Gumfekar (Councillor-at-Large)	Nicole Meyer (Earth & Atmospheric Sciences)	Vanessa Carias (Medical Genetics)	Michael Gillingham (Religious Studies)
Jude Kong (Councillor-at-Large)	Jane Traynor (East Asian Studies)	Melissa Silva (Medicine)	Alison Murata (Renewable Resources)
Robert Recklaw (Councillor-at-Large)	Marcia East (Educational Policy Studies)	Alexandra Dittrich (Medicine)	Ryan Stanfield (Renewable Resources)
Heather Leier (Art & Design)	Amanda Radil (Educational Psychology)	Elli Dehnavi (Modern Language & Cultural Studies)	Stephen Bruce (Resource Economics & Environmental Sociology)
Cameron Smithers (Biochemistry)	Joanne Farmer (Elementary Education)	Mary Obstfeld (Nursing)	Sarah Solvey (Secondary Ed)
Michele DuVal (Biological Sciences)	Sarah McRae (English & Film Studies)	Sheena Moodie (Occupational Therapy)	Antonio Bruni (Surgery)

GUEST: Gerald Beasley, Chief Librarian [left at 6:45 pm]
Sarah Prescott, Vice-Chair of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee

Speaker Sulya Fenichel in the Chair.

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

Prepared by J Tanguay, L Hanon, and C Thomas for the GSA Council Meeting of 23 November 2015

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Roll Call

1. Roll Call of Council Members in Attendance

Approval of the Agenda

2. Approval of the 23 November 2015 Consolidated Agenda

Members had before them the 23 November 2015 Consolidated Agenda, which had been previously distributed on 20 November 2015.

S Fenichel **MOVED**; R Barta **SECONDED**.

Agenda approved by UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Approval of the Minutes

3. Minutes

i. Minutes from the 21 September 2015 GSA Council Meeting

Members had before them the 21 September 2015 GSA Council Minutes, which had been previously distributed on 9 October 2015.

S Fenichel **MOVED**; K Barkway and N Prather **SECONDED**.

Minutes approved by UNANIMOUS CONSENT.

Changes in GSA Council Membership

4. Changes in GSA Council Membership

i. Introduction of New Councillors

This was the first meeting for a number of Councillors: E Robidoux (Faculté Saint Jean); G Feeny (Linguistics); S Saadat (Chem & Materials Engineering)

ii. Farewell to Departing Councillors

They were no Councillors for whom this was a last meeting.

Presentations and Councillor Announcements

5. University of Alberta Chief Librarian

Harsh Thaker introduced the guest, Gerald Beasley (University of Alberta Chief Librarian).

G Beasley (Chief Librarian since 2013) explained that there were nine libraries and increases in annual usage. He informed members that library staff came up with the mission statement, “inspiring exploration, connection and discovery” and he felt that most important words to describe the library system were “open, sustainable and responsive.”

G Beasley commented on the libraries’ limited resources and spoke about how he was invested in systemic changes. He then described Open Access and noted that although it was still an unknown entity, there were a certain number of resources free to all users and that allowing Open Access resources was a responsibility that the University bore to the global economy. G Beasley then spoke of the Digital Assets Management System (DAMS) and the Education Research Archive (ERA), which was recently redesigned around open sources. The ERA is an electronic depository for resources and data that can be utilized by all academic disciplines; students access the ERA with their CCID. G Beasley also pointed out that thesis and dissertations are available in the ERA.

G Beasley commented that the most frequent criticism he hears is that once students graduate they can no longer access library resources – this is the product of costly licensing agreements. He then noted that, while attending the University, students are in a privileged position and should use the library system to its fullest potential.

N Prather (History and Classics) asked about the cost benefits of accessing the World Catalogue (WorldCat) and G Beasley noted that he did not know the hidden costs but advised students to use WorldCat if that is was their catalogue of choice.

D Smirnow (Business PhD) asked how publishers felt about Open Access and G Beasley responded that material available is usually five years old and outdated, especially in the sciences. He explained that the five big publishers, including Blackwell and Springer have enormous profit margins. The University pays by the bundle or package and it sometimes costs over a

Prepared by J Tanguay, L Hanon, and C Thomas for the GSA Council Meeting of 23 November 2015

million dollars. The publishers' rates of inflation are extremely high. G Beasley encouraged graduate students to deposit post-peer reviewed material, such as a thesis and dissertations, in the ERA for Open Access this material would have at least the same degree of access as material published in peer-reviewed journals, although not the same status. He then discussed the "symbolic value" of the material compared to the material being published in a high-name journal and noted that his long-term goals was to shift "symbolic value" to "value."

B Richardson (Cell Bio) asked about the author's rights once work was deposited to the ERA, specifically if a graduate student was depositing a thesis and expressed concerns about others being able to alter the author's work after a specified time. G Beasley clarified that the licensing stipulated that material could be used after a specified time as long as it was "credited" to the author but not as "non-credited." G Beasley also commented on the distinction between "for profit" and "not-for-profit" and the issue of whether the open access nature of the license entailed that content could be altered.

C Pang asked about the ePLGO branch that was in operation in 2014 on campus and G Beasley responded that since there had been a 7% budget cut the U of A Libraries could no longer subsidize the program in 2015 and it had been cut.

V Pimmett (CRO) mentioned that she sat on the John W. Scott Library Committee and spoke about bundled journal subscriptions being purchased in US dollars. She asked if there were any strategies for mitigating the US costs other than waiting for oil prices to change? G Beasley responded that the Library submitted a fiscal estimate to ask for more money because 80% of the Library's purchases are in US dollars. The Library asked for money equaling the loss due to the exchange rate and the University responded favourably to the request. He then stated that the Library was not currently in a sustainable situation and that academic research resources continue to increase annually. He elaborated that the Library must become more selective and will be forced to cut journals if funds are not found. G Beasley said that monographs and journals in the humanities were in the most danger.

6. Councillor Announcements: None at this time

Information Items

7. GSA 2015-2016 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report

Sarah Ficko (GSA Vice-President Labour and Vice-Chair of GSA BFC presented the item.

MOTION BEFORE GSA COUNCIL: That the GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the GSA 2015-2016 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report.

S Ficko introduced the item and turned the discussion over to E Schoeck, Financial Team lead, who introduced S Ball, D Sheikh, H Hogg, and C Thomas as members of the Financial Team. E Schoeck directed Councillors to page 7.0 of the GSA 2015-2016 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report and informed them that instead of the estimated \$49,000 loss due to projected declining enrollment, the loss totalled approximately \$35,000. E Schoeck explained that money previously invested by the University on the GSA's behalf in the Unitized Endowment Fund (after the sale of the equipment due to the bankruptcy of Dewey's) has been returned to the GSA and an investment group had been chosen to invest these funds. In addition, E Schoeck explained that the GSA is now in business with the SU and receives money from the lease of space to Chopped Leaf in the PAW Centre. The GSA has yet to finalize the sub-lease. E Schoeck discussed a number of organizations that have given money to the GSA this year such as FGSR, Alumni, Studentcare and Unwind your Mind, and explained that the fees for the new provincial group ab-GPAC has already been collected over the previous few years. She further explained that the GSA had hired R Sawh as a consultant to complete some IT work.

S Cake asked about the budget line for "Council Security" and E Schoeck responded that the GSA used to have to hire Campus Security to open the building for GSA Council Meetings and, since that was no longer the case, this line would not appear in future budgets.

MOTION: That the GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the GSA 2015-2016 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report. S Fenichel **MOVED**. A Ndem Ahola **SECONDED**.

Motion PASSED unanimously.

Elections, Appointments, Special Business, Updates

Prepared by J Tanguay, L Hanon, and C Thomas for the GSA Council Meeting of 23 November 2015

8. GSA Standing Committee Elections

Michele DuVal (Administrative Chair of the GSA Nominating Committee) presented the item.

a) Vote for the Chair and Vice-Chair of the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board

M Duval presented the election for the Chair and Vice-Chair of the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (GSA ACB). She specified that both nominees are already members of the GSA ACB, their bios and resumes were included in the GSA Council package.

J Kong asked how the GSA Nominating Committee (GSA NoC) determined to recommend these nominees to GSA Council for the position of Chair and Vice-Chair and M Duval explained that the GSA NoC approached two people with the most experience for GSA ACB, with one candidate having extensive experience in general elections, and they performed very well in their interviews. She noted that the process was detailed in GSA Policy but the GSA NoC was open to discussions with respect to how these seats were filled in the future.

R Barta noted that if the intention was for GSA Council to delegate authority to the GSA NoC to make recommendations with regard to Chair and Vice-Chair of the GSA ACB, then it was a courtesy to GSA Council to present the nominees that the GSA NoC thinks are appropriate to fill these positions. M DuVal added that the issues that the GSA ACB would deal with were complaints against a Directly-Elected-Officers and appeals of a CRO decision; these are important issues and the GSA NoC took it very seriously that the people who serve on the GSA ACB be neutral and independent thinkers.

A Talaei asked if there was a second interview before making the recommendation for the Chair and Vice-Chair and M DuVal answered that nominees were interviewed once and top candidates were then approached to see if they would be willing to serve as Chair and Vice-Chair the GSA ACB.

J Traynor suggested it could be easier to vote if GSA Council had the minutes of the interview or the criteria on which GSA NoC based their decision instead of just bios.

D Smirnow asked if it was safe to assume that these two people stood out as superior. M DuVal replied in the affirmative and stated that they stood out because of experience. She also specified that GSA Council was electing the Chair and Vice-Chair of GSA ACB not the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Hearing Committees.

S Fenichel noted that the GSA ACB Policy was accessible on the GSA website.

b) GSA Elections and Referenda Committee

MOTION BEFORE GSA COUNCIL: That GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the newly-elected members of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee.

M DuVal presented the item and noted that the GSA NoC received two (2) nominations before the deadline and approached two (2) graduate students to fill the four (4) vacancies on the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee.

The four graduate students elected to serve on GSA Elections and Referenda Committee were:

1. Jennifer Bertrand (Physical Education and Recreation)
2. Kurtis Broda (Mechanical Engineering)
3. Maison Elchames (Dentistry)
4. Carolyn Gibson (Renewable Resources)

MOTION: That GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the newly-elected members of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee. M Duval **MOVED**. J Yong **SECONDED**.

Motion PASSED unanimously

c) Vote for the GSA Awards Selection Committee

M Duval presented the item and specified that the GSA NoC received three (3) nominations and bios and resumes were included in the GSA Council package.

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Discussion Items

9. University of Alberta Next Institutional Strategic Plan

Harsh Thaker (GSA Vice-President Academic) presented the item and explained that he wanted feedback from GSA Council on the University of Alberta's Institutional Strategic Work Plan Discussion Paper. H Thaker listed the major themes of the discussion paper and their sub-themes (in brackets): The Public Good (Leadership and Service; Excellence; Creativity, Entrepreneurship and Economic Diversification; Reputation and Advocacy), Empowering the Whole Person (Students; Faculty; Academic and Non-Academic Staff; Campus Cohesion), and Engaging the Whole People (Diversity; Community Engagement; National and International Leadership). H Thaker added that he participated in a retreat with the Board of Governors, the Senate, and General Faculties Council members. He invited GSA Council to also share their thoughts about the Discussion Paper either on the University of Alberta website, or via email to the University or himself.

R Barta asked what kind of feedback or suggestions were relevant and H Thaker replied that, at this stage, the University was looking for comments from a variety of individuals for a draft that will be sent out to the University community in February or March of 2016.

S Fenichel asked H Thaker if he had more information to help GSA Council in their comments. H Thaker replied that there were three things to consider: (1) What are our shared values? (2) How do we want to measure engagement?; and (3) What are we most concerned about?

R Barta noted that, for him, Open Access should be a priority; we need to focus on things that can have a direct impact rather than on world rankings.

H Thaker closed the discussion by informing GSA Council that Steven Dew, University of Alberta Provost and Vice-President (Academic) would be coming to GSA Council early in 2016 to further discuss the topic.

Action Items

10. GSA Recognition Awards and Adjudication Criteria: Proposed Changes to GSA Policy

Alphonse Ndem Ahola (Chair of the GSA Awards Selection Committee) presented the item.

MOTION BEFORE GSA COUNCIL: That GSA Council **APPROVE**, on the recommendation of the GSA Board and effective immediately, proposed changes to GSA Policy, GSA Recognition Awards and Adjudication Criteria, as shown in the attached double column document.

A Ndem Ahola presented the item and noted that the Awards Selection Committee made suggestions for changes to this policy based on their 2015 adjudication of GSA Awards and the GSA Board also recommended the changes to GSA Council.

There was no questions or further comments.

MOTION: That GSA Council **APPROVE**, on the recommendation of the GSA Board and effective immediately, proposed changes to GSA Policy, GSA Recognition Awards and Adjudication Criteria, as shown in the attached double column document. S Fenichel **MOVED**. J Yong **SECONDED**.

Motion PASSED unanimously.

GSA Appeals and Complaints Chair Election Results: Christopher Chen received 39 "Yes" votes, 11 "No" votes, and there was 1 spoiled ballot. Christopher Chen was elected as the GSA ACB Chair.

GSA Appeals and Complaints Vice-Chair Election Results: Justin Leifso received 42 "Yes" votes, 8 "No" votes, and there was 1 spoiled ballot. Justin Leifso was elected as the GSA ACB Vice-Chair

GSA Awards Selection Committee Election Results: Krista McFadyen received 26 votes, Stephanie Le received 14 votes, Sarang Gumfekar received 8 votes, "None of the Candidates" received 1 vote, and there was 2 spoiled ballots. Krista McFadyen was elected to serve on this committee.

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- 11. Councillor-at-Large Positions - Proposed Changes to the to GSA Bylaw (Parts III and VII) (First Reading) AND GSA Policy (Elections, Sections 2, 8, and 11) AND the Standing Orders of GSA Council (For information)**

MOTION BEFORE GSA COUNCIL: That GSA Council **APPROVE**, on the recommendation of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Governance Committee and effective upon the second reading, proposed changes to GSA Bylaw, as shown in the attached double column document.

NOTE #1: If approved, the proposed changes would be in effect for the next General Election. No current Councillor-at-Large (CAL) would be affected.

NOTE #2: The proposed changes and current GSA Bylaw and GSA Policy are in the first column of the attached double column document. Changes to GSA Policy and the Standing Orders of GSA Council are presented here for information and will be considered for approval, along with the second reading of GSA Bylaw, at the GSA Council meeting of January 18, 2016.

Colin More (GSA President and GSA GC Chair) and Sarah Prescott (GSA ERC Vice-Chair) presented the item. S Prescott noted that the GSA Governance Committee (GSA GC) and the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC) were both involved in the discussion and the formulation of this proposal. She noted that seats on GSA Council were originally determined by representation by population and then the GSA decided to move GSA Council composition to one seat per department. Councillors-at-Large (CAL) positions were added at that time so that big departments who used to have more than one representative could maintain that. S Prescott pointed out that, in practice, this was not how CAL positions were used. She added that former CRO, Hamman Samuel, recommended that CALs should not be elected during the General Election and this initiated a series of discussions regarding CAL positions that eventually resulted in the present proposal.

C More highlighted the four main changes of the proposal:

- 1. Reducing the number from 10 CALs to 5:** C More noted that no one was sure why there were 10 originally and that historically 10 CALs do not run. C More added that the turnout at GSA Council meetings for CALs is lower than for Departmental Councillors (CALs come to 5.5 out of 11 meetings per year). C More also indicated that if all 10 CALs showed up, it meant that GSA Council was composed 10% of CALs, which may not be fair representation. C More noted that GSA GC and GSA ERC members reached a compromise of 5 CAL positions, which still provide ample opportunity for graduate students to be involved this way with the GSA.
- 2. Decision to elect in May and/or October instead of in the General Election:** S Prescott noted that graduate students have more incentive to be invested in Directly-Elected Officer elections, and the GSA General Election is advertised as being an election for those positions and not for CALS. She added that this situation usually resulted in elections by GSA Council for the CAL positions (CALs were noted as having all graduate students as their constituents but, in practice, the majority of CALs have often been elected by GSA Council in By-Elections). Lastly she specified that this proposal allowed a refocusing of the GSA General Election on the Directly-Elected Officer positions. S Prescott indicated that CALs would be elected at the May GSA Council meeting, and there would be a second election at the October Council meeting if the 5 positions were not filled in May.
- 3. Historically CALs have not had a mandate:** S Prescott noted that both committees talked extensively about the mandate (and current lack thereof) of CALs. Discussions included the idea of giving CALs specific portfolios (eg international students) and also gave consideration to the idea of having CALs serve as Faculty Councillors,.S Prescott added that the first idea was discarded because portfolios could vary too much from year to year and there was a lack of resources to support such positions, the second idea was discarded because it would create a tiered system of Councillors. C More noted that members had also discussed removing the positions altogether but felt that CALs provide a valuable voice to GSA Council.
- 4. Make CALs non-voting:** C More indicated that Departmental Councillors are accountable to graduates students in their department and they vote on GSA Council to represent their voices, in comparison CALs are currently accountable to all graduate students and are supposed to represent the voices of all graduate students on GSA Council which is impractical. C More added that a vote was often not as important as being able to make one's voice heard; CALs would still have a voice on GSA Council. S Prescott noted that the proposal introduced a recall mechanism for misconduct. Finally C More thanked

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everyone that worked to put this proposal together and everyone who shared their thoughts on these changes; all these voices helped make the proposal stronger.

B Whitlock asked why GSA Council composition was not proportional representation and C More answered that proportional representation is a great idea but it is not how GSA Council is composed at the moment. B Whitlock then commented that, in his opinion, it was redundant to have GSA Councillors vote for someone else to have a seat on GSA Council.

M Bal stated that he appreciated the transition from 10 to 5 CALs but that, if the question was one of attendance, why not see if the introduction of the GSA Council Attendance policy would change things. C More replied that it was a valid point but attendance was just one part of the problem.

S Cake asked how the proposal proposed to hold CALs accountable; eg would CALs be removed from GSA Council if they did not speak at meetings. She added that it was easier to hold people accountable if they were voting. C More answered that the way it was currently made it impossible to hold anyone accountable; the entire student body (practically speaking) cannot hold a CAL accountable and often has no idea what CALs are actually doing as there was no reporting mechanism comparable to that for Directly-Elected Officers. He added the proposal ensured that CALs would be held accountable by the people who elected them, GSA Council, which was much more significant than being held accountable to the entire student body. S Cake also asked – in terms of accountability – how it would be possible to make sure that CALs “provide additional voices on GSA Council”.

C Reynolds stated that if the aim was to increase accountability for CALs, the proposed changes in front of GSA Council did not achieve this. He also added that being non-voting was a concern as possessing a vote enhanced accountability. C More answered the points made by C Reynolds and S Cake by stating that it was nice in theory to have someone representing the general voice of all graduate students but in reality it was meaningless; the mandate had to change. C More added that if CALs were voted in by GSA Council, there was a possibility for conflict of interest if they maintained a voting presence. C Reynolds noted that he disagreed that a mandate was meaningless simply because it was difficult to uphold; the same argument could be made for Directly-Elected Officer positions. He further added that CALs were beneficial positions and problems of accountability should be tackled in a different way.

M Silva asked if, in the past, the 10 CAL positions were filled. S Prescott replied that in 2015 4 CALs were elected in the GSA General Election (10 people ran), in 2014 10 were elected (11 people ran), in 2013, 5 were elected (5 people ran), in 2012, 2 were elected (2 people ran). For clarification, S Cake asked if that was during the General Election or an ensuing by-election or GSA Council election and S Prescott replied that those were statistics of CALs elected in the General Election. C More added that what the proposal was trying to do was redesign CAL positions to make the best use of their knowledge and voices on GSA Council.

S Cake mentioned that a short time ago GSA Council voted to approve the GSA Council Attendance policy and made changes to the way GSA members vote (vote-for-one instead of preferential voting). S Cake added that she would like to see how these new policies would play out before making any further changes. She also indicated that she would like to see a GSA report on accountability, representation, and good governance models before making substantial decisions. She further noted that it would be interesting to compare the composition of GSA Council with that of other GSAs in Canada. C More replied that GSAs function very differently from each other which makes meaningful comparisons difficult. S Prescott also noted that GSA policy on GSA Council attendance was directed to all Councilors and not specifically at CALs.

M Bal asked if the GSA Council Attendance policy came because the attendance for CALs was so low. C More replied that it was not a single event, that CAL attendance was low but so was Departmental Councillors’ attendance. E Schoeck specified that the GSA Council Attendance policy came from the discussion surrounding the creation of the GSA ACB and the removal of the GSA Judicial Committee from GSA Policy. S Prescott reaffirmed that the GSA Council Attendance policy did not solve all the other issues addressed in the proposal regarding CAL positions.

R Barta asked if this proposal was a gateway to eliminating CAL positions completely and added that, in his opinion, these positions added value to GSA Council and he would not want to get rid of them. C More replied that when the discussions surrounding CALs started he was of the opinion that CALs should be removed from the composition of GSA Council but now he was happy the positions were maintained as the proposal struck a nice balance between having Departmental Councillors make decisions but not without different point of views being heard.

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H Thaker asked if the GSA had acted upon other CRO recommendations and it was noted that GSA Council had acted upon other recommendations.

J Traynor asked how CALs represented the whole graduate student body, or advocated for all graduate students and C More noted that functionally they did not but that their personal experiences as graduate students were of value in GSA Council.

I Zuna asked if it would be possible to expand the roles of CALs by having them participate to committees in order to facilitate accountability. S Prescott specified that any graduate students can participate in a wide range of committees and it was not desirable to limit such participation solely to CALs.

D Smirnow thanked members of the GSA GC and the GSA ERC for the proposal and noted that she felt having a vote was important and encouraged enhanced participation. She then asked if there was a recall mechanism for Departmental Councillors and S Prescott responded that it was the responsibility of Departments to recall their Councillors. C More added that it was usually the same people that elected in the first place who then recall the people they elected.

V Pimmitt indicated that, as CRO, she was a non-voting member of GSA Council and it did not affect her participation. M Bal specified that the CRO position was a paid position. V Pimmitt expressed surprise at this and mentioned that she did not know she was receiving an honorarium. E Schoeck clarified that the CRO received a one-time honorarium of \$1000 solely for their work on the GSA General Election and not for participating in GSA Council. She further noted that an honorarium for the CRO for running elections was a component of past GSA Council approved budgets and was made part of GSA Policy, Officers Portfolio, Chief Returning Officer, following approval by GSA Council in December 2014.

M Bal indicated that many CALs want to get involved but may not have the departmental apparatus to do so as departmental representatives and that he would not show up if he could not vote. S Prescott replied that he had a strong voice on GSA Council regardless of his ability to vote.

H Thaker asked if, by removing CALs from the GSA General Election, there were any concerns about voter turnout. C More asked H Thaker to clarify his question; turnout in terms of voters or candidates. H Thaker replied voter turnout. C More replied that very few CALs go out and campaign so he would not expect a significant impact on voter turnout.

C Smithers mentioned that there was no way of enforcing accountability. He asked what happened if a polarizing topic was discussed and some CALs stated a point of view that was not accepted by the majority, what would happen to that CAL? C More replied that any complaints about behavior (not simply speaking an opinion but doing do in an inflammatory way) would be addressed to the Speaker. S Fenichel emphasized that her role was to make sure that there were no racist remarks or other forms of inappropriate behaviour; that it is Speaker's job to make sure the environment stays collegial. C More added that, in the event of a complaint about behavior, Speaker would initiate a discussion with GSA Council as the body that had elected CALs.

B Rusk noted that if CAL positions were originally created to facilitate bigger departments having more representation, and asked if there was any discussion to return to that intent and C More explained that it could become unfair very quickly, hard to determine where to draw the line in terms of which groups deserved more representation.

D Smirnow asked if it would be possible to, instead of voting on the whole proposal, vote on the individual elements. S Fenichel replied that it would mean breaking the proposal apart and the proposal was not built thematically. S Prescott explained that it was possible to bring a Motion to that effect. S. Fenichel offered some explanation of how this additional motion would work and the motion proceeded:

MOTION: That GSA Council break the existing document into four sections as outlined in p.11.0 and vote individually on each section. D Smirnow **MOVED**. H Thaker **SECONDED**.

S Cake asked if it was possible to specify what was GSA Bylaw and what was GSA Policy. C More replied that some elements were both. J Traynor expressed her concern of ending up with a really broken proposal.

In Favor: 7; Opposed: 25; Abstentions: 1 (M DuVal). **MOTION NOT CARRIED.**

MOTION BEFORE GSA COUNCIL: That GSA Council **APPROVE**, on the recommendation of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and the GSA Governance Committee and effective upon the second reading, proposed changes to GSA Bylaw, as shown in the attached double column document.

S Prescott **MOVED**. S Ficko **SECONDED**. 14 in favour; 18 against; 3 abstentions (J Farmer (Elem Education); M DuVal (Bio Sciences); D Brennekamp (Communication Sci & Disorders). **MOTION NOT CARRIED**.

Reports

12. President

i. President's Report:

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 20 November 2015. The report stood as submitted. In addition, C More stated that, at the Canadian Association for Graduate Studies meeting, there was some professional development discussion, and compared to other universities the U of A was doing well. He also noted that the Conference Board of Canada was an opportunity to influence those who make policies. At the ab-GPAC Annual General Assembly, there was discussion about strategic planning. C More also indicated that he had taken part in a discussion with the government concerning the right to strike for university employees, including academically-employed graduate students.

ii. GSA Board

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 20 November 2015. The report stood as submitted.

iii. GSA Budget and Finance Committee

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 20 November 2015. The report stood as submitted.

iv. GSA Governance Committee

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 20 November 2015. The report stood as submitted.

13. GSA Nominating Committee

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 20 November 2015. The report stood as submitted. In addition, M DuVal thanked Councillors for voting and specified that there would be a follow-up on the questions asked with respect to the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the GSA ACB.

14. Vice-President Academic

i. Vice-President Academic's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 20 November 2015. The report stood as submitted. In addition, H Thaker stated that the Students' Union asked the GSA to support a proposal to use gender-neutral pronouns in University official documents and asked if GSA Council had any concerns. S Cake asked what language was proposed to be used. H Thaker answered "they, the individual, the student"

15. Vice-President External

i. Vice-President External's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 20 November 2015. The report stood as submitted. In addition, A Ndem Ahola stated that last summer there was a tuition freeze, and that freeze excluded international students for whom tuition will increase by CPI. ab-GPAC was working on a document to government that would include a suggestion that international tuition fees be regulated.

ii. GSA Awards Selection Committee

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 20 November 2015. The report stood as submitted. In addition, A Ndem Ahola stated 123 applications for the Alberta Graduate Citizenship Award were received and 20 applications were forwarded to government for final approval. Names of recipients would be reported following confirmation from government.

16. Vice-President Labour

Prepared by J Tanguay, L Hanon, and C Thomas for the GSA Council Meeting of 23 November 2015

i. Vice-President Labour's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 20 November 2015. The report stood as submitted. In addition, S Ficko stated negotiations for the Collective Agreement will begin soon; C More and she made a presentation to the Board Human Resources and Compensation Committee, which is the committee that set the mandate for the University's negotiating team. In January, there will be another *Let's Talk* mental health event. She specified that she was sitting on the planning committee. S Ficko then responded to a question from the October GSA Council meeting concerning counselling services in languages other than English and noted that services offered by the University were not offered in a languages other than English but they can get translation services. She further noted that GSAP offers services in languages others than English.

ii. GSA Negotiating Committee

No meetings this reporting period.

iii. GSA Labour Relations Committee

No meetings this reporting period.

17. Vice-President Student Services

i. Vice-President Student Services' Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 20 November 2015. The report stood as submitted. In addition, A Talaei stated that some students living in Michener Park complained that it takes too long to get to the University and that they would like a more direct route. Different options are available, including targeting the City to change some of the bus routes or advocating for a shuttle to be provided by the University. He also reported that he is involved in discussions related to the upcoming renegotiation of the U-Pass.

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

No meetings this reporting period.

18. Senator

i. Senator's Report

No written report at this time.

19. Speaker

i. Speaker's Report

No written report at this time.

20. Chief Returning Officer

i. Chief Returning Officer's Report

No written report at this time.

21. Elections and Referenda Committee

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 20 November, 2015.. The report stood as submitted.

22. GSA Management

i. Executive Director's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 20 November 2015. The report stood as submitted. In addition, E Schoeck stated that 12 students came forward for the Early Call Training and that training for GSA ACB members will start soon. She also asked if GSA Departmental Councillors have access to a mailing list to all the graduate students in their department.

Question Period

23. Written Questions

None at this time.

24. Oral Questions

Prepared by J Tanguay, L Hanon, and C Thomas for the GSA Council Meeting of 23 November 2015

None at this time.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:14 pm.

**GSA President
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled December 14, 2015 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Colin More
Date: December 10, 2015

Hello everyone,

Woo, winter solstice is nearly here! I'm so excited!!

In marked contrast to last month, there is little to report this time. Probably the most important item is a presentation the VP Labour, Sarah Ficko, and I made to the Board Human Resources and Compensation Committee (BHRCC) on November 24. As part of the collective bargaining process, BHRCC invites the GSA to present to them on areas of concern to graduate students. While the outcome, whether positive or negative, of these presentations are difficult to measure, I believe we made a positive impression on the committee. They instructed the Provost to see what could be done in the rather complicated sphere of student/supervisor relationships, and gave the University's negotiators their mandate for collective bargaining. The latter is significant, since in previous rounds of collective bargaining the mandate has not come until well into the winter semester, significantly delaying the overall process.

Another item of some note is the ongoing chancellor search. I sit on the search committee, and while I am unable to provide any real detail, I must say I'm rather satisfied with the process so far. While the current chancellor, Ralph Young, will be incredibly hard to replace, I am very confident the University will continue its tradition of excellence in the role.

Right, I think that's it for now! As ever, feel free to contact me with any questions you may have. Otherwise, enjoy the solstice!

Colin More, GSA President

2.1

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between November 23, 2015 to December 14, 2015. The meetings were accurate at the time of the mailing. I am away from December 14, 2015 to December 18, 2015 on academic leave.

November 24	Board Human Resources and Compensation Committee (BHRCC) Presentation
November 24	Chancellor Search
November 24	Board Finance and Property Committee (BFPC)
November 25	Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Council
November 25	Early Call: External Advocacy 101
November 26	Dean of FGSR (Heather Zwicker)
November 26	Chancellor Search
November 27	Board Learning and Discovery Committee (BLDC)
November 27	Early Call: SWP; Hot Topics
November 30	Early Call: SWP; Hot Topics
December 3	Early Call: SWP; Hot Topics
December 7	GSA Negotiating Committee
December 7	GSA Coffee Break
December 7	President's Holiday Party
December 8	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC)
December 9	Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Open House
December 9	General Faculties Council Academic Planning Committee (GFC APC)
December 10	Meeting with the Students' Union
December 10	Board of Governors Holiday Dinner
December 11	Board of Governors

**GSA Board
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled December 14, 2015 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: 10 December, 2015

The GSA Board reports regularly to GSA 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 GSA Council meeting. Also see the weekly Management Reports in Item 12 (Executive Director's Report to Council) on pages 12.1 – 12.3.

25 November 2015 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Studentcare Change of Coverage Report (Fall 2015) and Annual Claims Report (2014-2015)

Motions and Agreements:

Action by the GSA Board: That the GSA Board **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION**, the attached Studentcare Change of Coverage Report (Fall 2015) and Studentcare Annual Claims Report (2014-2015), as submitted by Kristin Foster, Director of Development and Partnerships, Studentcare. CM **MOVED**. HT seconded. **CARRIED**.

2 December 2015 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Students' Union's Proposal to Incorporate Gender-Neutral Pronouns in University of Alberta Official Documents, Faculty of Native Studies' Proposal for a Master of Arts in Native Studies

Motions and Agreements:

Motion: That the GSA Board **SUPPORT** the document entitled "Proposal to Incorporate Gender-Neutral Pronouns in University of Alberta Official Documents," as provided by Cody Bondarchuk, Students' Union Vice-President Operations and Finance. CM **MOVED**. HT seconded. **CARRIED**.

Members **AGREED** to write to the Faculty of Native Studies for clarification on the proposal.

9 December 2015 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

GSA Professional Development Awards: Proposed Changes to GSA Policy, Grant Application Policy and Information, University of Alberta Next Institutional Strategic Plan

Motions and Agreements:

Motion: That the GSA Board **RECOMMEND** that GSA Council approve changes to GSA Policy, GSA Grant Application Policy and Information, as shown in the attached double column document. AT **MOVED**. ANA Seconded. **CARRIED**.

**GSA Nominating Committee (GSA NoC)
Report to GSA Council for the December 14, 2015 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Michele DuVal
Date: December 11, 2015

Dear Council Colleagues,

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

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

Sincerely,

Michele DuVal, Administrative Chair, GSA Nominating Committee

Early Call

GSA management and Elected Officers have held a total of sixteen (16) training sessions to accommodate the eight (8) graduate students who have expressed a strong interest in learning about the GSA in advance of the 2016 GSA General Election. Most of the students have attended all five (5) different training sessions.

GSA Standing Committees

1) GSA Board and Nominating Committee (1 GSA Councillor position)

Syed Daniyal Israr has stepped down from his joint position on GSA Board and GSA NoC. This joint position was advertised via email to GSA Council on Wednesday, December 2, 2015 with a deadline of Friday, December 11, 2015. No nominations have been received, and the GSA NoC has begun a directed search. A call for additional nominations will follow.

2) GSA Awards Selection Committee (1 graduate student position)

Following the resignation of one (1) of the GSA Awards Selection Committee (GSA ASC) members, there is currently one (1) vacancy on the GSA ASC. This vacancy was advertised in the Friday, December 4, 2015, GSA Newsletter. The deadline to receive nominations was Friday, December 11, 2015, at 12:00 PM (Noon), and the deadline for additional nominations is Friday, December 18, 2015. An election will take place at the January GSA Council meeting.

Bodies External to the GSA

1) Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund (TLEF) Selection Committee (1 position)

The GSA NoC advertised this vacancy in the Friday, November 20, 2015, GSA Newsletter with a deadline of Friday, November 27, 2015 at 12:00 PM (Noon). Four (4) nominations were received. The GSA NoC elected **Ines Zuna (Pharmacology)** to serve on the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund (TLEF) Selection Committee.

2) University of Alberta Art Acquisitions Committee (1 position)

The GSA NoC advertised this vacancy in the Friday, November 20, 2015, GSA Newsletter with a deadline of Friday, November 27, 2015 at 12:00 PM (Noon). One (1) nomination was received. The GSA NoC elected **Meining Wang (Art History)** to serve on the University of Alberta Art Acquisitions Committee.

3) University of Alberta Museums Policy and Planning Committee (1 position)

The GSA NoC advertised this vacancy in the Friday, November 20, 2015, GSA Newsletter with a deadline of Friday, November 27, 2015 at 12:00 PM (Noon). Two (2) nominations were received. The GSA NoC elected **Scott Wilson (Biological Sciences)** to serve on the University of Alberta Museums Policy and Planning Committee.

The following addendum addresses questions about the GSA ACB recruitment process that were raised at the November 23, 2015 GSA Council meeting.

Addendum - Nomination Process for Appeals and Complaints Board

At the July 20, 2015, GSA Council meeting, Council approved the first reading of the formation of the Appeals and Complaints Board (ACB), a quasi-judicial committee that hears appeals of CRO decisions and complaints against officers. Subsequently, on September 21, 2015, GSA Council approved the second reading of the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board, signaling official installation of the GSA ACB.

In order to populate the GSA ACB with the required 12 members in a timely fashion, the GSA Nominating Committee (GSA NoC) followed legislated process, and sought to recommend names to GSA Council in time for the following Council meeting (October 19, 2015). In accord with GSA policy, the GSA NoC advertised the vacancies on the GSA ACB via the GSA Newsletter and received biographies and resumes from interested students. GSA policy also requires that the GSA NoC must conduct interviews for vacancies on the ACB, which is a procedure unique to this standing committee (GSA Policy Manual, Standing Committees, Part 11.5).

Thus, all members of the NoC met to outline a list of qualities based in large part on GSA policy that were necessary to serve on the GSA ACB and which could be assessed during the interview:

- Impartiality
- Thoughtfulness/Consideration of many points of view
- Ability to reserve judgment until all parties are heard
- Interpersonal skills
- Independent Thinking

These qualities were assessed using a scenario question which was aimed at determining whether candidates were aware of possible bias and aware of the right to be heard. In addition to the scenario question, nominees were asked their availability for hearings throughout the year and specifically their availability during the GSA 2016 General Election. Candidates were also asked if they could serve more than one term, which would provide for overlap in the position of chair and vice chair. Interviews of 15-20 minutes were offered to all students who submitted nominations. After conducting all interviews, the GSA NoC considered the interviews, bios and resumes at length and voted on nominations to forward to GSA Council.

**GSA Vice-President External
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled December 14, 2015 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Harsh Thaker
Date: December 10, 2015

Dear Council Colleagues,

To underscore that the winter season is looming, the Game of Thrones showrunners gifted us with a teaser for Season 6 that was a very nice prelude to the holidays. With cooler temperatures on the way, be sure to bundle up before you go outside to avoid getting sick.

Over the past few weeks, I have participated in several fora (FGSR Council, GFC CLE, GSA Board, etc.) to discuss the development of our University's next strategic plan. These conversations have been both engaging and informative on how the academy should evolve to meet the needs of their stakeholders. Some of the discussion has rightly focused on the messaging of what our University already does well and how we can better communicate our story to the public. Suggestions have ranged from focusing on our priorities instead of trying to do everything ever and not necessarily limiting ourselves to measuring citations and publications just because it's easy to do so.

This process also intends to explore our core values as an institution and set goals for what the University should look like 5 years from now and beyond. Topics of interest for graduate students include, but are not limited to: quality supervision/mentorship of graduate students, teaching quality, community engagement, professional and career development, and a more connected campus. More importantly, how do we as graduate students view ourselves in the context of a Comprehensive Academic and Research Institution (CARI). We play multiple roles throughout the duration of our graduate studies and this is an element that I believe should be widely acknowledged. Should one of our goals be for the University of Alberta to have the best working conditions for graduate students (and post-docs) with built-in supports for career development regardless of your discipline? I have submitted my personal thoughts on this matter and would highly encourage you to do the same by sending an email to engage@ualberta.ca. Also, if you have more concrete ideas, which can be incorporated into larger goals/themes, I would be more than happy to chat with you about it.

As always, I am happy to answer any questions you may have regarding these items or about any of the other meetings I attended this past month.

Thanks,

Harsh Thaker, GSA Vice-President Academic

4.1

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between November 23, 2015 to December 14, 2015. The meetings were accurate at the time of printing. I am away from December 17, 2015 to December 18, 2015 and January 4, 2016 to January 8, 2016 on academic leave.

November 24	TEC Edmonton
November 25	FGSR Council
November 26	Dean of FGSR (Heather Zwicker)
November 27	Early Call: SWP; Hot Topics
November 30	Early Call: SWP; Hot Topics
December 1	Graduate Student Coffee Break
December 1	ORSAC
December 2	General Faculties Council Committee on the Learning Environment (GFC CLE)
December 3	Assistant Secretary to GFC (Andrea Patrick)
December 3	Academic Integrity Council (AIC)
December 7	GSA Negotiating Committee
December 7	GSA Coffee Break
December 7	General Faculties Council (GFC) Executive
December 10	Board of Governors Holiday Dinner

**GSA Vice-President External
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled December 14, 2015 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Alphonse Ndem Ahola
Date: December 10, 2015

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope you made it to the end of semester. Since the last Council, I have been working on number of issues related to graduate students. I would like to highlight the following:

- Alumni Council:

As a member of the Alumni Council, I am sitting in Alumni New Program Development Committee. The committee is working on fostering student and Alumni leadership. We are looking for ways to reach out to students and connect them to Alumni mentors. The conversation is also around the value of being involved for students. The ultimate goal is to cultivate a group with continued growth of highly engaged and knowledgeable alumni who serve as ambassadors and advocate for the University.

- Student Residence:

University of Alberta Hospitality Services is proposing a switch in Fall 2016 to a mandatory All You Care To Eat (AYCTE) Meal Plan for all residents in Lister Centre. The new plan would replace the existing declining balance plan and would offer all Lister residents an unlimited, all they can eat, anytime meal plan for a single price, located at the Lister Market (Fresh Food Company). Along with the SU, we have been discussing this; making sure that students are being consulted and are willing to agree to the changes.

- Residence Associations:

The SU is proposing a new fee policy for Residence Associations, it is meant to have a consistent procedure for collection for all residences. We are in the process of improving the proposal and discussing about it with Residence Services.

- Early Call for Talent

Along with my colleagues and management, I took part in several Early Call training sessions, discussing with graduate students GSA priorities for external advocacy.

Finally, I encourage you all to consider applying for one of the GSA Recognition Awards. Nominations are due on January 13 at 4 pm and further information about eligibility, applying, the value of the Awards, etc can be found on the GSA website.

I wish you a happy holiday and look forward to meet you at the next GSA Council.

Alphonse Ndem Ahola, GSA Vice-President External

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Please find below a list of meetings I attended between November 23, 2015 and December 14, 2015. The meetings were accurate at the time of printing. I am away from December 14, 2015 to December 16, 2015 on personal leave.

November 24	New Development Program
November 25	Residence Advisory Committee (RAC)
November 25	Early Call: External Advocacy 101
November 25	Council on Student Affairs (COSA)
November 30	Early Call: SWP; Hot Topics
December 2	Council of Residence Associations (CORA)
December 3	Early Call: External Advocacy 101
December 3	Graduate Residence Council
December 3	Alumni Council Christmas Social
December 4	Interuniversity Athletics
December 4	Experience Brainstorms Function
December 7	Post-Secondary Education (PSE) Task Force
December 8	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC)
December 8	FGSR Open House

**GSA Awards Selection Committee (ASC)
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled December 14, 2015 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Alphonse Ndem Ahola
Date: December 10, 2015

Dear Council Colleagues,

The GSA Awards Selection Committee (GSA ASC) is responsible for adjudicating applications for the Government of Alberta Graduate Citizenship Award (AGCA) on behalf of the province. As was reported last month, the deadline for the GSA to receive AGCA applications was October 15, 2015. The GSA received 123 applications, up from the 78 received in 2014.

The members of the GSA ASC adjudicated these applications and voted to recommend twenty nominees to the government. The list of nominees was provided to the Government of Alberta on November 13, 2015.

The recipients of the 2015 AGCA are:

Colin More	Jessica Hogan
Andrew Williams	Valerie Miller
Ines Zuna	Alison Muller
Sarah Purcell	Jacqueline Torti
Katherine Satchwell	Shawna White
Shrida Sahadevan	Katherine Neely
Jillian Schneider	Megha Bajaj
Jagdeep Virk	Vanessa Karin Carias
Katherine Evans	Yuliya Khakhuda
Joshua Firsow	Ayat Omar

Congratulations to the recipients and thank you to GSA ASC members for their hard work.

I will also take this opportunity to remind GSA Council that the nomination period for the GSA Recognition Awards, which are conferred at our annual Awards Night celebration, is currently open. **Applications are due at 4 PM (MST) on January 13, 2016.** For more information, visit <http://gsa.ualberta.ca/GSAAwards.aspx>.

Best,
Alphonse Ndem Ahola, Chair of the GSA ASC and GSA Vice-President External

**GSA Vice-President Labour
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled December 14, 2015 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Sarah Ficko
Date: December 10, 2015

Hi Everyone,

Congratulations on (almost) making it to the end of the semester! I hope you are all looking forward to a much deserved and needed break from the busyness of being a grad student. This month has been a bit quieter than the last few in terms of number of meetings to attend, though there are always projects on the go! The three main areas I have focused in my report are mental health, Early Call sessions, and Collective Bargaining negotiations.

On November 26 I attended the Alberta Post-Secondary Mental Health and Addiction Community of Practice Workshop in Calgary, where approximately 75 attendees from across the province collaborated on the development of a vision, mission, and goals for the community of practice. It was positive to see how serious mental health is being taken by post-secondary institutions and the range of current practices and ideas that are being brought together to provide minimum standards and expectations. This province wide initiative will continue to develop with more discussion to occur at the Wellness Summit being held here at the U of A in January. If anyone else is interested in attending, I can pass on more information. On a more serious note, the topic of student homelessness was also brought up at the workshop and I have followed up with the Community Social Worker Team here to learn more about how this affects students at the U of A. Food security and sustainable housing are two serious and complicated issues facing students, which can significantly impact their ability to learn, study and do research, and their mental health. At present it is a small number of students each year (~15 to 20) who end up seeking assistance for housing issues due to evictions, domestic violence, or other conflicts. However, this is not the full scope of the issue as anecdotal evidence indicates a larger problem with students who couch surf with friends or live out of a vehicle. I will continue to follow up on this issue and bring more information forward to council if it becomes available. Please feel free to contact me if you want to discuss or share information.

As you've probably already noticed in the weekly newsletters and as my fellow DEOs have reported, the GSA has been offering a variety of training sessions for any graduate student interested in running for an elected position next year. It's hard to believe that only a year ago I was also attending those sessions! The last few weeks I've helped present on our Services and Hot Topics, and generally been impressed with the thoughtful questions and discussion that has ensued.

Since my last update, Colin and I presented to the Board Human Resources and Compensation Committee (BHRCC) on November 24, which is the Board of Governors' committee that sets the mandate for this year's negotiations. After our presentation, we had a discussion around compliance and student-supervisor relationships and the Committee has requested that the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) investigate this issue further. Following that meeting, the two negotiating teams met to begin discussing the GSA's opening position as well as any revisions to the current collective agreement. As in past years, the negotiations are a closed process to ensure open discussion and create a more collegial atmosphere. For those who are curious, the process involves a negotiating team from the Provost's office working with our negotiating team to reach a Memorandum of

6.1

Settlement. Once we have formalized that document, I will bring it to GSA Council for ratification. If GSA Council agrees, then the document will come into effect for September 1, 2017. If GSA Council does not approve, the two teams will meet again or go to arbitration to finalize the agreement. To date, the GSA has had a positive working relationship with the Provost's office which I expect to continue based on our initial meetings!

As usual, please feel free to contact us with any new or ongoing issues related to your RA/TAs hip, so we can help you sort it out. We're also still collecting copies of letters of offers, contracts and assistantship appointment letters that have been received by graduate students over the last few years. Finally, if your departmental GSA would like a presentation on the Collective Agreement and assistantships, please let me know so we can arrange a time.

Merry Christmas/Happy Holidays!

Sarah Ficko, GSA Vice-President Labour

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between November 23, 2015 and December 14, 2015. The meetings were accurate at the time of printing. I am away from December 11, 2015 to December 18, 2015 and January 4, 2016 to January 5, 2016 on personal leave.

November 24	Board Human Resources and Compensation Committee (BHRCC) Presentation
November 24	S Buchsdruecker re Collective Agreement
November 24	Early Call: Services 101
November 24	Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) Council
November 26	Alberta Post-Secondary Mental Health and Addiction Framework and Community of Practice
November 30	Early Call: SWP; Hot Topics
November 30	Procedural Fairness
November 30	Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols Reading
December 1	Meeting about Internships
December 1	Meeting with Community Social Worker
December 3	Transformational Research In Adolescent Mental Health (TRAM) Adolescent/young adult Connections to Community-driven, Early, Strengths-based and stigma-free Services (ACCESS) Self-Assessment Working Group
December 7	GSA Negotiating Committee
December 7	Early Call: Services 101
December 8	S Buchsdruecker re Collective Agreement

**GSA Negotiating Committee (GSA NC)
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled December 14, 2015 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Sarah Ficko
Date: December 10, 2015

Dear Council Colleagues,

The GSA Negotiating Committee met on December 7, 2015 and a further meeting is scheduled for January. I can provide further brief updates in Closed Session when GSA Council meets in January.

Sincerely,
Sarah Ficko, Chair of the GSA Negotiating Committee and GSA Vice-President Labour

**GSA Vice-President Student Services
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled December 14, 2015 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Ali Talaei
Date: December 10, 2015

Dear Council Colleagues,

Hope you are all well. First of all, I wish you have had a successful and productive end of the semester exam period.

Since the last Council meeting, I have been involved with several important student services issues the summary of which is as following.

The new round of U-Pass negotiations is starting and there has been some progress on that. As mentioned in the previous report, in the past round of U-Pass agreement talks, among all universities and colleges participating in the program, U of A was the only institute that agreed to provide a subsidy for the U-Pass. For the next round, the procedure for subsidizing the U-Pass is expected to change (some level of subsidy is still expected, but the subsidizing process would change and the amount may decrease) and we, together with other stakeholders, are working on that.

I had a meeting with Kristin Foster, Director of Partnerships & Development at Studentcare. According to our agreement with the Studentcare, they report regularly on the usage of the plan by students. According to the latest report, in the past few months, students have been using different services included in the Plan, in line with what had been predicted and there have not been major discrepancies in the usage rate. Kristin will come to Council in January to present.

On a similar topic, the survey on GSA Services is now closed. The overall response is that students are happy with GSA Services but more advertising of them is needed. At the office, we are still working on the results of the survey and I will provide you with updates when it is ready.

I have had several meetings with students living in Michener Park Residences regarding transit service. A petition to the City is now ready (thank those of you who showed interest and participated in the petition). I have also met with different members of University administration to inform them about the concerns that our graduate students have. In a nutshell, the progress has been promising and we are expecting to be able to help the Michener Park residents with this matter.

Finally, I would like to take the opportunity to wish you all having happy holidays together with friends and family. Enjoy the warm winter and see you all in January Council.

Sincerely,

Ali Talaei, Vice-President Student Services

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between November 23, 2015 to December 14, 2015. The meetings were accurate at the time of the mailing.

24 Nov 2015	Dean of Student Selection Committee
24 Nov 2015	Early Call: Services 101
25 Nov 2015	Meeting with SU VP Student Life
25 Nov 2015	Meeting with Studentcare
26 Nov 2015	GFC Facilities Development Committee (GFC FDC)
27 Nov 2015	University Research Policy Committee (URPC)
27 Nov 2015	ONE card Student Advisory Group
30 Nov 2015	Early Call: SWP; Hot Topics
1 Dec 2015	GSA Coffee Break
4 Dec 2015	Interuniversity Athletics Meeting
10 Dec 2015	SU Executive Team

GSA Senator
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled December 14, 2015 Meeting

To: GSA Council
From: Leigh Spanner
Date: December 10, 2015

Dear Council Colleagues,

Just last week Senate had another plenary meeting. The first day's meetings took place at Campus Saint-Jean, and the second day's meetings took place at St. Joseph's college. It was wonderful to be at and learn about the various institutions, which are a part of, or related to, the University of Alberta. One of the main outcomes of the meeting was a commitment that the Senate would initiate a Task Force on student mental health, which Senators acknowledge as a pressing issue facing students.

Otherwise, the Community Engagement Committee meeting was rescheduled for the next calendar year.

I wish you all a very restful break,

Leigh Spanner, GSA Senator

**GSA Chief Returning Officer
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled December 14, 2015 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Virginia Pimmett
Date: December 10, 2015

Dear Council Colleagues,

I met with the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC) on December 7, 2015 to discuss the timeline for the 2016 GSA General Election. This meeting was very productive, and I thank all members of the GSA ERC and the GSA staff for their hard work in gearing up for the 2016 election period.

Nominations for all positions will be opening on January 25, 2016 at 1 pm. Nomination forms will be made available at the GSA office for pickup at that time, and completed forms must be returned to the office for verification by myself and Seah Rah, the GSA Deputy Returning Officer. The nomination period will close on February 8, 2016; this will be followed by the All Candidates' Meeting on February 8 at 2 pm.

The voting period will be February 23-25, 2016.

Further details around the All Candidates' Forum and candidate videos will be announced closer to the date, so please keep an eye out in the upcoming weeks.

I would like to ask all Councillors to please start thinking about ways you can engage with your department members and encourage them to vote. The GSA ERC will be working to push a Get Out the Vote campaign, and its success will need help from all Councillors.

Thank you,

Virginia Pimmett, GSA Chief Returning Officer

**GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC)
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled December 14, 2015 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Leigh Spanner
Date: December 10, 2015

Dear Council Colleagues,

The GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC) met on December 7, 2015 to provide feedback to the CRO on the 2016 GSA General Election timeline and the nomination forms for Councillors-at-Large and Directly-Elected Officers.

Also, as I reported to GSA Council in August, the GSA ERC and the GSA Governance Committee agreed to make available on the GSA website the two GSA Appeals and Complaint Board (GSA ACB) appendices as soon as the GSA ACB was populated. Accordingly, as the GSA ACB is now populated, those appendices are now available online. As a reminder, these appendices (entitled "Sample Procedures for Hearings" and "Hearing Summary Template Elements") not part of GSA Policy and are provided for information only.

In January, the GSA ERC will meet to discuss issues related to voter turnout and plan events associated with the 2016 GSA General Election.

Sincerely,
Leigh Spanner, Chair of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee

**GSA Vice-President External
Report to GSA Council for the Cancelled December 14, 2015 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Ellen Schoeck
Date: December 10, 2015

Dear Council Colleagues

The GSA office has been particularly busy since our last GSA Council meeting with two matters.

First, Early Call. We have had people come and go, and now have eight active graduate students interested in running for office. They have attended a majority of the five training sessions we offer: Governance/GSA 101; Services 101; External Advocacy; Board Strategic Work Plan/Hot Topics; and Elections and Procedural Fairness.

Second, training for the new GSA Appeals and Complaints Board. Two sessions on Procedural Fairness have been offered, with one more to occur in early January. The Chair and Vice-Chair, together with the Administrative Chair of the Nominating Committee, the Deputy Returning Officer and GSA ACB member Dasha Smirnow, attended a lunch where Professor Lewis Klar (former Dean of Law and former University Appeal Board Chair) shared his tips on chairing quasi-judicial boards. In addition, the CRO and Deputy CRO and I will meet with the administrative lawyer from the GSA's law firm to learn about writing reasons for decisions. The GSA ACB will then have this training as well.

Ellen Schoeck, GSA Executive Director

Management Report to the GSA Board, November 25, 2015

Dear All,

The following issues have dominated management's attention in the week since the last GSA Board meeting on November 18, 2015:

Strategic

- **Main Issues Dealt With in the Past Week:** Early Call training sessions, Budget 101, consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the GSA ASC about the timeline for GSA Recognition Awards (application period proposed to open on December 7 and close on January 13), survey about GSA negotiated services, GSA investment strategies and investment management, GSA Council, GSA Council Handbook draft, review of IT, website move to Sitecore 3 (and associated training, site map, etc), finding a representative from Rehabilitation Medicine to sit on a Dean Selection Committee, GSA presentation to BHRCC, GFC Caucus, U-Pass Admin meeting.
- **Bylaw and Policy Review – Editorial:** A review of all Bylaws and Policies for inconsistencies and errors, integration of the two (in development), and creating a “definitions” section; and **Substantive:** thinking regarding a review of the Board Policy Manual. A targeted focus on some specific bylaws and policies is ongoing.
- **Graduate Student Groups:** Creation of an alcohol liability waiver (upcoming discussion with the new manager, Office of Insurance and Risk Assessment) and several other matters on the backburner – met recently with new staff in Student Group Services and with the Student Affairs Officer to maintain relationships and enquire about upcoming reviews of Student Groups policies in UAPPOL.

Grants and Operations

- **Social Media:** Facebook = 720 likes (up 3 from November 18). Our Facebook posts reached 402 users this week, down 24 from November 18, and our “post engagement” count was 53. Twitter = 504 followers (up 9 from November 18).
- **GSA Coffee Breaks.**
- **Forward thinking on the winter term GSA PD event** (sponsored by the Alumni Association), **GSA Winter Orientation, GSA Winter Departmental Orientations, and GSA Awards Night.**
- **Grants processing** (period runs October 1 to December 31, period is 59% completed).

	Total Amount Available This Period	Total Amount Remaining This Period	Number of New Applications Since Last GSAB	Total Number of Applications This Period
PDA	\$79,684.38	\$34,022.84	9	100 (11 pending processing)
CCG	\$47,039.41	\$4,976.91 CLOSED	0	25 (0 pending processing)
ASGA	\$3,562.50	\$2,562.50	0	1 (0 pending processing)
EB	\$147,351.87* (no periods)	\$59,531.37* (no periods)	1	27 (1 pending processing)

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- Supporting the work of the GSA NoC (**assisting the GSA NoC with filling vacancies on the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund Selection Committee, Museums Policy and Planning Committee, and Art Acquisition Committee**), and **support for Early Call.**
- Assistance with **GSA Council.**
- Assistance with **event planning and GSA Coffee Breaks.**
- **Grants processing.**

Management Report to the GSA Board, December 2, 2015

Dear All,

The following issues have dominated management's attention in the week since the last GSA Board meeting on November 25 2015:

Strategic

- **Main Issues Dealt With in the Past Week:** Early Call training sessions, Campus Food Bank, GSA investment strategies and investment management, preparing for a GSA ERC meeting, fair process training, Google Forms for the GSA General Election, data requests to FGSR (graduate student emails and CCIDs), survey about GSA negotiated services, review of IT, website move to Sitecore 3 (and associated training, site map creation, etc), finding a representative from Rehabilitation Medicine to sit on a Dean Selection Committee.
- **Bylaw and Policy Review – Editorial:** A review of all Bylaws and Policies for inconsistencies and errors, integration of the two (in development), and creating a “definitions” section; and **Substantive:** thinking regarding a review of the Board Policy Manual. A targeted focus on some specific bylaws and policies is ongoing.
- **Graduate Student Groups:** Creation of an alcohol liability waiver (upcoming discussion with the new manager, Office of Insurance and Risk Assessment) and several other matters on the backburner – met recently with new staff in Student Group Services and with the Student Affairs Officer to maintain relationships and enquire about upcoming reviews of Student Groups policies in UAPPOL.

Grants and Operations

- **Social Media:** Facebook = 723 likes (up 3 from November 25). Our Facebook posts reached 254 users this week, down 148 from November 18, and our “post engagement” count was 14. Twitter = 512 followers (up 8 from November 25).
- **GSA Coffee Breaks and designing the GSA Holiday Card.**
- **Forward thinking on the winter term GSA PD event** (sponsored by the Alumni Association), **GSA Winter Orientation, GSA Winter Departmental Orientations, and GSA Awards Night.**
- **Grants processing** (period runs October 1 to December 31, period is 67% completed).

	Total Amount Available This Period	Total Amount Remaining This Period	Number of New Applications Since Last GSAB	Total Number of Applications This Period
PDA	\$79,684.38	\$32,022.84	4	104 (5 pending processing)
CCG	\$47,039.41	\$4,976.91 CLOSED	0	25 (0 pending processing)
ASGA	\$3,562.50	\$2,562.50	0	1 (0 pending processing)
EB	\$147,351.87* (no periods)	\$56,961.37* (no periods)	1	28 (0 pending processing)

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- Supporting the work of the GSA NoC (**assisting the GSA NoC with filling vacancies on the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund Selection Committee, Museums Policy and Planning Committee, and Art Acquisition Committee**), and **support for Early Call.**
- Designing the GSA Holiday Card.
- Assistance with **event planning and GSA Coffee Breaks (December event to feature a decorate your own gingerbread cookie element).**
- **Grants processing.**

Management Report to the GSA Board, December 9, 2015

Dear All,

The following issues have dominated management's attention in the week since the last GSA Board meeting on December 2, 2015:

Strategic

- **Main Issues Dealt With in the Past Week:** Early Call training sessions, General Election nomination forms, Campus Food Bank (including discussions with the SU on this and a PaMS update), insurance renewal, GSA Negotiating Committee meeting, GSA ERC meeting, Google Forms for the GSA General Election and setting up a mock election, data requests to FGSR (graduate student emails and CCIDs), survey about GSA negotiated services, review of IT, website move to Sitecore 3 (and associated training, site map creation, etc), finding representatives from Rehabilitation Medicine to sit on a Dean Selection Committee and from East Asian Studies to sit on a Chair Selection Committee, reasons writing training and an associated meeting with one of the GSA's lawyers, fair process training for the GSA ACB, handbook for new GSA Councillors, GSA investment strategies and investment management, staff performance appraisals.
- **Bylaw and Policy Review – Editorial:** A review of all Bylaws and Policies for inconsistencies and errors, integration of the two (in development), and creating a "definitions" section; and **Substantive:** thinking regarding a review of the Board Policy Manual. A targeted focus on some specific bylaws and policies is ongoing.
- **Graduate Student Groups:** Creation of an alcohol liability waiver (upcoming discussion with the new manager, Office of Insurance and Risk Assessment) and several other matters on the backburner – met recently with new staff in Student Group Services and with the Student Affairs Officer to maintain relationships and enquire about upcoming reviews of Student Groups policies in UAPPOL.

Grants and Operations

- **Social Media:** Facebook = 725 likes (up 2 from December 2). Our Facebook posts reached 294 users this week, up 40 from December 2, and our "post engagement" count was 26. Twitter = 514 followers (up 2 from December 2).
- **GSA Coffee Breaks and sending out GSA holiday cards.**
- **Forward thinking on the winter term GSA PD event** (sponsored by the Alumni Association), **GSA Winter Orientation, GSA Winter Departmental Orientations (2 scheduled so far), and GSA Awards Night.**
- **Grants processing** (period runs October 1 to December 31, period is 74% completed).

	Total Amount Available This Period	Total Amount Remaining This Period	Number of New Applications Since Last GSAB	Total Number of Applications This Period
PDA	\$92,649.02	\$35,174.98	3	107 (0 pending processing)
CCG	\$47,462.22	\$6,462.22 CLOSED	0	25 (0 pending processing)
ASGA	\$3,580	\$2,580	0	1 (0 pending processing)
EB	\$147,351.87* (no periods)	\$47,509.37* (no periods)	2	30 (0 Pending processing)

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- Supporting the work of the GSA NoC (**assisting the GSA NoC with filling vacancies on the Rehabilitation Medicine Dean Selection Committee and East Asian Studies Chair Selection Committee, the GSA ASC, the GSA NoC, and the GSA Board**), and **support for Early Call.**
- Assisting with preparing and sending out GSA holiday cards.
- Assistance with **event planning and GSA Coffee Breaks (December event featured a decorate your own gingerbread cookie element).**
- **Grants processing.**