

GSA Council Meeting CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

Monday, April 18, 2016 at 6:00 pm
2-100 University Hall, Van Vliet Complex

A pizza dinner will be served at 5:15 pm

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 Sulya Fenichel in the Chair

OPEN SESSION

**Attached Numbered
Pages**

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of the 18 April 2016 Agenda
3. Presentation of a President's Citation
Colin More (GSA President) will present the item
Please note that the President's Citations were given on April 1 at GSA Awards Night. Unfortunately one of the recipients could not attend and the GSA President will present the President Citation to this recipient, Philip Stack.
4. Approval of the Minutes from the 21 March 2016 GSA Council Meeting
Attachments:
 - Minutes from the 21 March 2016 GSA Council Meeting
5. 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*)

3.0 - 3.10

Presentations and Councillor Announcements

6. Councillor Announcements

Action Items, Elections, Appointments, Special Business, Updates

7. GSA Health and Dental Plan Fees for 2016-2017
Colin More (GSA President) will present the item.
Guests Present to Answer Questions: Kristin Foster, Director of Partnership and Development, Studentcare, and Colten Yamagishi, Program Manager, Studentcare

GSA BFC members who are members of GSA Council: Colin More (GSA President and GSA BFC Chair), Sarah Ficko (GSA Vice-President Labour and GSA BFC Vice-Chair), Dasha Smirnow (Councillor, Business PhD)

GSA BFC voting members invited to GSA Council as guests: Karen Turpin and Sina Yansori

Attachments:

- Cover Letter

7.0

Prepared by J Tanguay, C Thomas, and E Schoeck for the Council Meeting of 18 April 2016

- Outline of Issue: GSA Health and Dental Plan Fees for 2016-2017 7.1 - 7.3
- GSA Health and Dental Plan Summary Sheet 7.4 - 7.5
- Studentcare Survey Results 7.6 - 7.29

Please Note:

8. GSA Council Elections
Michele DuVal (Administrative Chair of the GSA Nominating Committee) will present the item.

Attachments:

- Nominees for GSA Councillor-at-Large By-Elections 8.0 - 8.1

For Information:

9. GSA Board 2015-2016 Strategic Work Plan: Final Update
Colin More (GSA President) will present the item.

Attachments:

- Letter from the GSA President 9.0 - 9.1

Reports

10. President (**Colin More, GSA President**) 10.0 – 10.1
- i. President’s Report 10.2
 - ii. GSA Board 10.3
 - iii. GSA Budget and Finance Committee 10.4
 - iv. GSA Governance Committee
11. GSA Nominating Committee 11.0 – 11.1
- i. GSA Nominating Committee Report (**Michele DuVal, GSA Nominating Committee Administrative Chair**)
12. Vice-President Academic (**Harsh Thaker, GSA Vice-President Academic**) 12.0 - 12.1
- i. Vice-President Academic’s Report
13. Vice-President External (**Alphonse Ndem Ahola, GSA Vice-President External**) 13.0
- i. Vice-President External’s Report
 - ii. GSA Awards Selection Committee (**no meetings this reporting period**)
14. Vice-President Labour (**Sarah Ficko, GSA Vice-President Labour**) 14.0 - 14.2
- i. Vice-President Labour’s Report
 - ii. GSA Negotiating Committee (**no meetings this reporting period**)
 - iii. GSA Labour Relations Committee (**no meetings this reporting period**)
15. Vice-President Student Services (**Alireza Talaei, GSA Vice-President Student Services**) 15.0 - 15.1
- i. Vice-President Student Services’ Report
 - ii. GSA Student Affairs Advisory Committee (Joint Chair: Vice-President External) (**no meetings this reporting period**)
16. Senator (**Leigh Spanner, GSA Senator**)
- i. Senator’s Report (**no written report at this time**)
17. Speaker (**Sulya Fenichel, GSA Speaker**)
- i. Speaker’s Report (**no written report at this time**)
18. Chief Returning Officer (**Virginia Pimmett, GSA Chief Returning Officer**)
- i. Chief Returning Officer’s Report (**no written report at this time**)

Prepared by J Tanguay, C Thomas, and E Schoeck for the Council Meeting of 18 April 2016

- 19. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (**Leigh Spanner, GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Chair**)
 - i. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Report **19.0**

- 20. GSA Management (**Ellen Schoeck, GSA Executive Director**)
 - i. Executive Director's Report **20.0 - 20.5**

Question Period

- 21. Written Questions (**none at this time**)

- 22. Oral Questions

Adjournment

GSA Council Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 21, 2016 at 6:00 pm
2-100 University Hall, Van Vliet Complex

IN ATTENDANCE:

Colin More (President)	Dasha Smirnow (Business PhD)	Sumit Mandal (Human Ecology)	Kathy Tang (Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences)
Harsh Thaker (VP Academic)	Beth Richardson (Cell Bio)	Muhammad Usama Arif (Internetworking)	Jay Worthy (Philosophy)
Sarah Ficko (VP Labour)	Sahar Saadat (Chemical & Materials Engineering)	Mahalakshmi Kumaran (Laboratory Medicine & Pathology)	Brayden Whitlock (Physiology)
Alphonse Ndem Ahola (VP External)	Joseph Cheramy (Chemistry)	Carla Lewis (Library & Information Studies)	Noureddin Zaamout (Political Science)
Ali Talei (VP Student Services)	Firouz Khodayari (Civil & Environmental Engineering)	Claudia Heinrich (Linguistics)	Michal Juhas (Psychiatry)
Sulya Fenichel (Speaker)	Darian Brennekamp (Communication Science & Disorders)	Michelle Michelle (Mathematical & Statistical Sciences)	Joshua Yong (Psychology)
Virginia Pimmett (CRO)	Cathy Pang (Computing Science)	Hirad Soltani (Mech Eng)	Colin Reynolds (Public Health)
Sean Rah (DRO)	Samira Diar-Bakirly (Dentistry)	Vanessa Carias (Medical Genetics)	Brooke Hanson (Rehab Med)
Pooran Appadu (Councillor-at-Large)	Shelby Sander (Earth & Atmospheric Sciences)	Ninad Mehta (Medical Microbio & Immunology)	Pat Hart (Religious Studies)
Susan Cake (Councillor-at-Large)	Shelby Sanders (Earth & Atmospheric Sciences)	Alexandra Dittrich (Medicine)	Ryan Stanfield (Renewable Resources)
Sarang Gumfekar (Councillor-at-Large)	Jane Traynor (East Asian Studies)	Elli Dehnavi (MLCS)	Rachel Hillabrand (Renewable Resources)
Robert Recklaw (Councillor-at-Large)	Marcia East (Ed Policy Studies)	Mary Obstfeld (Nursing)	Sarah Solvey (Secondary Ed)
Tania Shewring (AFNS)	Amanda Radil (Ed Psych)	Radim Barta (Oncology)	Tasha Jayatunge (Sociology)
Michele DuVal (Biological Sciences)	Lorna Sutherland (Elementary Education)	Prabhjot Bedi (Paediatrics)	Antonio Bruni (Surgery)
Graham Little (Biomedical Engineering)	Shaina Humble (English & Film Studies)	Ines Zuna (Pharmacology)	

GUESTS: Steve Dew (Provost and Vice-President (Academic)); Amy Dambrowitz (Strategic Development Manager, Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)); Kristin Foster (Director of Partnership and Development, Studentcare); Colten Yamagishi (Program Manager, Studentcare)

Speaker Sulya Fenichel 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 21 March 2016 Consolidated Agenda**

Members had before them the 21 March 2016 Consolidated Agenda, which had been previously distributed on 18 March 2016. C More **MOVED**; A Talaei **SECONDED**.

C More made a **MOTION** to move Item 6 up to Item 5; P Appadu **SECONDED**.

Motion PASSED unanimously

Approval of Minutes**3. Minutes from the 22 February 2016 GSA Council meeting**

Members had before them the 22 February 2016 GSA Council Minutes, which had been previously distributed on 11 March 2016. S Ficko **MOVED**; R Barta **SECONDED**.

S Cake made a point of clarification and referred to an exchange between herself and C More regarding the ab-GPAC fee approval; representatives would need to obtain GSA Council's approval for the fee before moving forward.

APPROVED as amended. ABSTENTIONS: B Whitlock

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

This was the first meeting for one Councillor: M Juhas (Psychiatry)

ii. Farewell to Departing Councillors

This was the last meeting for a number of Councillors: None

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

There were no announcements.

6. Institutional Strategic Plan

C More (GSA President) presented the item and introduced guests, Steve Dew (Provost and Vice-President (Academic)) and Amy Dambrowitz (Strategic Development Manager, Office of the Provost and Vice-President (Academic)).

S Dew and A Dambrowitz noted that the Institutional Strategic Plan was produced by the Office of the President and intended to guide the University. GSA Council had seen earlier versions and this was the official first draft. The current title was For the Public Good. The new President created the Plan to give the institution a unified vision. This single document allowed everyone to make decisions based on a common framework with an aligned end point. Dare to Discover and Dare to Deliver were the current Strategic Plans, along with the Board Change Agenda and the Comprehensive Institutional Plan. One single document, the current Plan, would now guide all policy and decisions. S Dew spoke to the long consultation process involved in the development of the Plan (and asked for input before taking it to General Faculties Council (GFC) and the Board of Governors for approval. They noted that the Plan would go through the system three times and that there would also be post approvals.

With respect to the consultation process: it began a year ago when then President-Elect Turpin attended all Faculty Councils, followed by discussion at a senior administrative retreat. The process included over 30 meetings, live-streamed consultations, and roundtables with every committee on campus, Alumni Council, and the Senate. Online and email feedback was also solicited and over 850 people in various meetings provided input. All of this was gathered and is available online. The Strategic Planning Advisory Committee was then formed to represent a cross section of the campus community; most faculties as well as staff, undergraduate, and graduate students and others were on this committee. A Dambrowitz and Anne Bailey (Director, Internal Communications, University Relations) steered the logistics and have done the laborious job of capturing the ideas, integrating them, and writing the draft document. There were 6 full meetings of the Advisory Committee; sub-committees were also formed to delve into focused topics. Each worked with A Dambrowitz and A Bailey to come up with the themes present in the draft document. Some participants wanted the document to be broad and inclusive, others thought it should focus on the history of the institution and others wanted it to look forward. Some felt it should focus on teaching and research and others felt it should focus on what makes us different. So there were many issues considered.

The Plan is structured around 5 themes: Build, Experience, Excel, Engage, Sustain (BEEES). The document leads with a vision statement, mission statement, and common values. Major initiatives could all fall in these five themes. Many can go under multiple themes but the intent was one theme for each initiative. Each theme has a high level goal and a handful of objectives

within that goal. The objectives offer another level of detail and contain strategies within them. President Turpin's intention is that one can read the document in 3 minutes, 30 minutes, or 3 hours, depending on the level of detail you want to get out of it. An underlying theme is that we are a public university and we have an objective responsibility to serve the public good, hence the title.

Build – this refers to building the community, not physical infrastructure; to build an inclusive community of students, faculty, and staff from Alberta, Canada, and the whole world. 5 objectives: student body; faculty and staff; indigenous stakeholders; campus community; and building a story that tells us who we are.

Experience – this refers to the student experience; to inspire, nurture, expand knowledge, and enable success. 5 objectives: first two are based on experiential learning such as studying abroad, Community Service Learning, and internships; taking advantage of the multi-campus environment; lifelong learning.

Excel – refers to excellence. 5 objectives: recognizing that the university is about breadth, we have to “cover the waterfront” (ie. a wide variety) in different areas of research and creativity; build a concentration of activity and stature to world class levels in certain areas; broad foundation with signature areas in research and learning; structures and systems for supporting research, teaching, and professional development.

Engage – refers to engaging internal, geographic, and global communities, both reciprocal and mutually beneficial. Engagement should be meaningful and start from conceptualization of tackling and issue to how we transfer our mutual learnings into the community to address societal challenges. The theme focuses on interdisciplinarity and collaboration and on partnerships with stakeholders and other research organizations.

Sustain – refers, in a broad sense to sustaining the environment, society, and people, but also the University; sustaining staff and students, financial structures, and infrastructure including IT. The theme refers to stewardship across the board: social, economic, and environmental.

S Dew and noted that no theme was prioritized over any other. As this was the first draft, the structure will change with feedback. The title was tentative but captured the “why” of Why We Are Here: research, cultural initiatives, to help students acquire an education, and to serve the public as a public university. Dare to Discover/Dare to Deliver had the same vision, mission, and value statements, and that vision still fits. The mission was been slightly altered to emphasize the value for society; the values remained similar. They noted they were hoping to wrap up consultation on the first draft in 2-3 weeks, which will allow enough time to seek Board of Governors approval in June.

Key questions: Do the goals, objectives, and strategies reflect the values discussed in the consultation phase? If you use this document in your activities, will it empower you? Are there any suggestions for changes? You can provide feedback to engage@ualberta.ca; all the resources reside on the website.

M Juhas asked what sets U of A apart from other universities and what set this Plan apart from other plans. S Dew responded that they gathered a number of plans to use as models; they hoped to avoid disappointment and create a document that inspires and leads to coordinated behavior in a complex organization. The real proof will be in how it is implemented. M Juhas asked if there would be quantitative measures to measure achievement. S Dew stated that Administration wanted to be accountable for the delivery of the Plan and there will be some targets and metrics. At this stage, feedback on whether or not it was aimed in the right direction; the next stage will be more logistical and will include implementation. Initiatives in the next stage of the Plan will have specific objectives that will define accountability lines, metrics, budgets, baselines, and targets. This is where we will see quantitative measures. Some will be anecdotal but there will definitely be measurable components as well. This is a 10 year plan with a 5 year refresh; not everything will move far in benchmarks in the first two years.

S Cake asked about retention and ongoing support in relation to the recruitment strategy. S Dew responded that the narrative said it would seek to “attract” good students, but retention is also important. There is nothing served by bringing someone here and then not setting them up to succeed. The Registrar does not like “recruitment” and prefers “enrollment.” The Plan did not get down to that level at this point but will in future. S Cake added that it was also important to attend to the retention of current graduate students.

S Sanders asked about whether there would be reports about progression and what sort of implementation would occur under the Sustain theme, in terms of student development. S Dew stated that this document was trying to set a direction to go in – how fast we go is harder to predict and determined by variables. There will have to be some prioritization to move quickly on “low hanging fruit” but other components will take time. Building a culture takes time. The Sustain theme can produce some

faster traction around the Healthy Campus Strategy led by the Dean of Students, the Dean of Phys Ed & Recreation, and the Vice-Provost (HR), who are leading initiatives to make this campus a healthier place. Some of the focus is on physical activity and some on mental wellness.

C Reynolds thanked the guests for presenting and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to offer feedback; he pointed out that most students will spend the bulk of their life outside of the University and did the Plan address success after students have left? S Dew stated that Alumni Council also raised this issue and it was being considered.

D Smirnow asked for highlights about what was different about this Plan as compared to the previous plans. S Dew noted that one key thing was a greater focus on culture on campus and building a collaborative and interdisciplinary culture of support on campus. The sustainability piece was also something that had emerged in the past few years that was not previously present. Words like “excellence” are the same but have a different focus when applied to signature areas of excellence. Federal granting programs are aimed at world class programs and initiatives and we risked losing out of we do not build up areas of strength.

S Cake asked if there are plans to improve Michener Park, as there are few financially accessible graduate student housing options. S Dew stated that Don Hickey would more readily have answers to residence questions but that it was his understanding that there are plans to redevelop Michener Park. There has been a longstanding objective to enhance graduate student opportunity.

H Thaker asked if there is a way to put in language that would support internship or co-ops while not being penalized for taking longer to finish, as time to completion is a favoured metric. S Dew responded that the purpose of this institution is to give an experience that helps one grow as much as possible. We needed performance measures to make sure that people are effective in their time. The University was effective at moving people along but to do that at the expense of other opportunities makes no sense. Rich experience is necessary. H Thaker followed-up that the language needs to support supervisors being more supportive of students taking on these kinds of activities. S Dew responded that it is an objective of the institution to have this happen.

N Mehta asked, with falling funding and poor retention of professors, how much of this is possible? N Mehta cited losing professors in Medicine and also asked how they expected a student to pay 70-80% of their stipend to live in student housing and still manage? S Dew responded that the declining professoriate is due to diminished resources after the 2013 cuts and stated that there was interest in diversifying revenue sources. The Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry was hit particularly hard because the Alberta Heritage Fund for Medical Research used to fund 100 professors but the funds were repurposed. That faculty had to absorb those positions and it had come at the expense of new hires. This transition is mostly over although there are still a couple of tough years ahead. That same endowment launched a program to hire new faculty. A number of faculties have lean percentages of the professoriate at the assistant level. Medicine is one of the places where we look to be creative and apply new ideas. In reference to residence costs, S Dew again noted that it served no purpose to bring people here and then set them up to fail due to financial circumstances.

P Appadu pointed to the issue of food security and asked if there were plans to determine if this is a problem for students. S Dew responded that we needed support levels that are viable for students. The Healthy Campus Initiative works to build awareness around good nutrition.

E Dehnavi thanked the presenters; she pointed out that sustainability, diversity, and excellence are nice words but asked how they work in practice. Her observation was that things are not changing for the better. Comparative Literature used to be thriving but now is invisible in Modern Languages and Cultural Studies (MLCS). Graduate funding comes from teaching language courses or literature content courses. This is getting worse with budget cuts. Many have to work part-time and this makes it difficult to finish in 5 years. Fewer and fewer language courses are being taught and in fewer languages as part of the proposed BA Transition project – she noted this was moving back to a Eurocentric model with respect to the study of languages. Many students in her department have no funding; with the funding situation getting worse, they will not be able to attract the best grad students. S Dew expressed appreciation for these comments but added that he is not really in a position to comment on the BA Transition, as it was a faculty prerogative. He noted that he saw Councillor Dehnavi’s point – through developing efficiencies we risk undermining some of the more niche programs that fuel our diversity. S Dew and the Dean of FGSR have discussed how to make the experience and support levels across campus more uniform so we do not have “ghettos”. This will take time but it is something to aspire to.

B Richardson brought up diversity and the importance of recruiting from other universities – considering the difficulties of transferring from a non-GPA system, can this be looked into? S Dew responded that a major priority was a more sophisticated approach to international students, particularly understanding applicants better. This would will take time they were currently

reviewing the three most common to align them with our own systems. He noted that the University hoped to partner with some universities with enough frequency that both institutions become familiar to each other. The Registrar and FGSR recognize this and are currently working on it.

N Mehta pointed out that a recent survey showed that 40% of students who do not live with their parents have used the campus food bank. If students and faculty cannot be healthy and happy, what is the point? Without keeping the stipends up, the number of students must decrease so that the ones already here can stay happy and healthy. S Dew acknowledged Councillor Mehta's point and thanked him for his comments.

S Dew closed by asking GSA Council to visit the website to provide further comments.

Action Items, Elections, Appointments, Special Business, Updates

7. GSA Health and Dental Plan Fees

C More (GSA President) presented the item and introduce guests, Kristin Foster (Director of Partnership and Development, Studentcare) and Colten Yamagishi (Program Manager, Studentcare).

C More explained that the Health and Dental fee was driven by the numbers and amounts of claims. It usually increased from year to year. The fee has to be set well in advance of its collection. There is a projected fee increase of 17% for 2016-2017. As per GSA Policy, any increases over 15% must go to a referendum. C More added that it was possible to draw down from the Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund (HDPRF) to bridge the remaining 2%. C More concluded by saying that, following extensive discussion at GSA Board (GSAB) on the subject, the GSAB was not ready to come to GSA Council with a recommendation and would like to hear GSA Council thoughts on the subject. C More introduced the guests.

K Foster noted that claims have increased dramatically. She added that it is a good thing that the claims are going up it means that the students are using the Health and Dental Plan and communication strategies are working. She mentioned that she would not be comfortable if graduate students were not using the Health and Dental Plan; there would be no point in having a Health and Dental Plan if no one was using it. She then mentioned that dentists in Alberta have really high fees, so much so that it attracted national attention and referred to a recent newspaper article

C Yamagashi presented the document "U of A GSA Council: Health and Dental Plan Renewal Summary" distributed to GSA Council in advance of the meeting. He specified that the number per capita claims was obtained by dividing the total of claims by the enrolment in the Health and Dental Plan. He noted that usually fees increase around 5% and 6%, this increase is high.

K Foster noted that the increase was due to the increase in volume and cost of these claims. All the other costs were constant (such as administration fees). K Foster mentioned that the 17% increase projected was based on data until the end of February and that she was hoping that claims would go down and the increase would be lower than 17%. She added that she would have data until the end of March at the April GSA Council. K Foster outlined the three main options in front of GSA Council to manage the projected increase: GSA Council could approve a 15% increase (any increase over 15% must go to referendum as per GSA Policy) with the remaining 2% bring bridged from the HDPRF (making the fee paid by graduate students \$492.95); GSA Council could approve holding a referendum to increase the fee by the full 17% (bringing the fee to \$500.34); or GSA Council could approve decreasing coverage.

K Foster noted that, in order to gauge the opinions of graduate students, Studentcare conducted a phone survey from March 1 to March 8, 2016 using a random generated list of GSA members. She mentioned that Studentcare did a survey every couple of years; this year they did something unique by asking very pointed questions using concrete example. The results indicated that 50.4% of respondents supported increasing the cost of the Health and Dental Plan to maintain the current level of coverage, 23.5% preferred to decrease coverage in order to maintain the current Health and Dental Health and Dental Plan cost, and 21.7% supported increasing the cost of the Health and Dental Plan by more than 80% in order to increase coverage. C Yamagashi highlighted that there were three types of students: the ones that were satisfied, the ones that were more finance conscious, and the ones that want to pay more for more benefits. The survey gave an idea of the scope of what the student membership wanted. K Foster noted that respondents were asked which category they would feel more comfortable decreasing. The results showed that students would choose to reduce vision care coverage (53%). K Foster than added that when she was looking at mitigating the increase she focused on dental costs – where the large increase is coming from, however students absolutely do not want to reduce dental care coverage. Lastly K Foster mentioned that there was no easy answer although, by experience, reducing benefits was more noticeable and tended to raise more voices. C More noted that his personal choice was to increase the fee by 15% and bridge the difference by using the HDPRF. Using the HDPRF would allow

time to consult students properly with a well-thought referendum question presenting all the options possible including possibly a tiered plan. He added that going to a referendum now could seem attractive but the process might be rushed.

J Kong noted that Studentcare came to GSA Council every year and asked if there was a way to not have an increase every year. He then asked about the negotiation process with the insurance company and where the projected numbers were coming from. K Foster replied that the projections are internal and that they usually have been accurate compared to the numbers insurance come up with. She added that it was possible to proceed with a request for quotations from other insurers, although it is better to do when there is a change in the insurance landscape (for example a new player in the market). She also noted that, if you send a request for quotations too often, insurers will stop quoting as it is a long and expensive process. She added that if the GSA chooses to send out a request for quotations she will do it. To a comment made by J Kong, A Talaei mentioned that the GSA appreciates all the great work K Foster does for the GSA. If sending out a request for quotations was not a viable solution for the moment, it certainly was an idea to revisit in the next 3 or 4 months. A Talaei added that in his opinion K Foster worked hard to establish a strong network with professionals that offered discounts to graduate students. K Foster then added that she wished the increase was not as substantive as it was, regardless of who the broker was.

R Barta asked if it was possible to project for a two-year period. K Foster explained that she has done so in the past and it was not accurate. She specified it was hard to project without at least 6 months data and it was made further difficult and less accurate because the graduate student population was always changing and had different health issues. She noted that it was possible to negotiate for a multiple year plan, however as the insurers were taking a greater risk in doing this, the fee was usually higher and after the set number of years there was an even greater increase.

P Appadu asked if it was possible to distribute the Health and Dental fees over the semester as to not have a bigger bill in the Fall. K Foster replied that that would be a change to work out with the University as they were collecting the fee.

S Cake asked about the procedure of having a referendum in the fall and how a decision made by GSA Council might then be changed by a referendum. C More specified that the decision taken next month by GSA Council would be applicable for the whole 2016-2017 school year, the a coming referendum would then apply to upcoming years. K Foster noted that the last time graduate students examined a Health and Dental question by referendum was in 2003; the Health and Dental Plan has evolved since then. It was a good idea to ask graduate students for a fresh mandate on the administration of the Health and Dental Plan.

M Juhas asked how the survey was representative of the student body and noted that he has heard of international students for whom their funding does not pay for the Health and Dental Plan and they chose to opt-out of the Health and Dental Plan as they are covered by the U of A Health Insurance Plan (UAHIP). K Foster explained that the survey was contracted to a firm on behalf of the GSA. The intent was to reach three hundred graduate students who were asked validation questions to ensure that the survey group was as comparable to the actual demographic of the graduate student population at the University of Alberta, including students who opted out of the Health and Dental Plan. The margin of error of the survey was of 5.4. On M Juhas's second question, K Foster replied that UAHIP was an emergency plan that helped international students who don't have access to Alberta Health Care because they have not been in the country for at least 12 months. To opt-out of the GSA Health and Dental Plan a student has to be covered by an equivalent plan, UAHIP is not an equivalent plan.

C Reynolds asked if by using the network (a group of specialists who agree to offer discount to students covered by Studentcare Health and Dental Plan) students end up paying more the next year. KF replied that she was always exploring elements that she can twig so that students pay the least amount possible. She outlined one possibility: negotiate a discount of 30% instead of the current 20% with the dentists in the network and decrease the dental coverage by a percentage offset by the dental network. K Foster also noted that she did a comparative table of the cost of the GSA Health and Dental Plan with other student plans administered by Studentcare and that the GSA Health and Dental Plan is not in the most expensive range, it is in the middle.

Following a question by D Smirnow, C More specified that the HDPRF would not be emptied out, it had not been emptied out for 15 years and it would not be the best practice.

Following a question by D Brennekamp, K Foster replied that the danger with using the HDPRF is that the gap between the real cost and the cost paid by the students increases continuously.

Following a question by S Cake asking for demographic data on the survey respondents, K Foster offered to circulate the survey to GSA Council. She also specified that the survey had two validation questions: the faculty the student was in and their status (full time or part time). The validation questions were in the regular range. The idea of the survey was to take the pulse of members. K Foster noted that she did not know how many students were called to reach the 300 student target.

F Khodayari asked why, if the big increase in the claims was with dental, the health increase was bigger. C Yamagashi explained that it is because, in the past, the HDPRF subsidy had been applied to the Health Plan. K foster specified that last breakdown did not match the actual cost of each coverage as most students stay enrolled in both plans it is irrelevant if you are overcharging for one.

R Barta suggested that students that opt-out of the Health and Dental Plan enrolled in plans with better coverage. He added that he thought GSA Council should increase coverage.

B Whitlock noted that he supported C More's earlier proposal to increase the fee by 15% and bridge the difference by using the HDPRF. He expressed concerns on the collegiality of questions for fear of silencing people. Speaker agreed the tone was not as collegial as it could be.

Following a question by B Richardson, it was noted that the last referendum turnout was higher than the General Election turnout.

R Reklow noted that he supported holding a referendum as important changes needs to be made and required broader approval. M Juhas suggested presenting all the possible options in a referendum question. C More noted that, as per GSA Policy, a referendum question has to be a yes/no question and it was one of the reason to delay, so that Policy could perhaps be changed and a better questions shaped.

S Cake supported R Reklow and noted her belief that GSA Council did not base decisions on majority - there was not proportional representation on GSA Council. She asked for GSAB to be more creative in solutions and to think outside of the box, using the example of perhaps incorporating the payment of H&D fees into the Collective Agreement. A Talaei raised the possibility of tiered plan in the future. C More encouraged Councillors to bring forward any creative solutions they may have.

Following a question by J Kong, K Foster specified that the internal analysis was not shared with the insurers and if Desjardins came up with significantly higher numbers Studentcare would push for a different insurer.

MOTION: That the GSA Council conduct a straw poll of GSA Council to provide some guidance to GSAB on how to proceed between the following options 1) holding a referendum, 2) 15% increase coupled with a drawdown of the HDPRF (with a referendum to be held in the coming year), and 3) decreasing coverage. S Sanders **MOVED**. N Metha **SECONDED**.

Option 1: In Favor: 4. Opposed: 25. Abstentions: 11 (J Kong, F Khodayari, C Reynolds, J Yong, J Worthy, H Thaker)

Option 2: In favour: 32. Opposed: 5 Abstentions: 4 (J Kong, H Thaker, V Carias, J Worhty)

Option 3: In favor: 1. Opposed: 26. Abstentions: 14 (S Cake, S Humble, B Richardson, J Kong, J Traynor, R Barta, D Brennekamp, R Reklow, S Ficko, C More, C Reynolds, M DuVal).

8. GSA Standing Committee Elections

S Fenichel (GSA Speaker) and M DuVal (GSA Nominating Committee Administrative Chair) presented the items.

- i. **MOTION BEFORE GSA COUNCIL:** That GSA Council, acting on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Speaker, Executive Director, and GSA Nominating Committee Administrative Chair, **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the newly-elected GSA Council member for the joint position on the GSA Board/GSA Nominating Committee, as noted below.

M DuVal noted that no additional nominations were received. Radim Barta (Oncology) was elected.

MOTION: That GSA Council, acting on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Speaker, Executive Director, and GSA Nominating Committee Administrative Chair, **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the newly-elected GSA Council member for the joint position on the GSA Board/GSA Nominating Committee. S Ficko **MOVED**. P Appadu **SECONDED**.

Motion PASSED unanimously

- ii. Vote for GSA Deputy Speaker

M DuVal presented the item and noted that this election was to fill the Deputy Speaker vacancy for the remainder of the term, until June Council. The GSA Nominating Committee received two (2) nominations. She asked members to cast their ballots in one of the ballot boxes and ask any questions they may have.

The two nominees are:

1. Stephanie Ibsen (Renewable Resources)
2. Leigh Spanner (Political Science)

9. General Election 2016 Results: To Receive for Information For Purposes of Transferring Banking Signing Authority.

C More (GSA President) presented the item.

MOTION BEFORE GSA COUNCIL: That the GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the results of the General Election 2016 wherein the following graduate students were duly elected as President, Vice-President Academic, Vice-President External, Vice-President Labour, and Vice-President Student Services:

President	Sarah Ficko
Vice-President Academic	Firouz Khodayari
Vice-President External	Masoud Khademi
Vice-President Labour	Sasha van der Klein
Vice-President Student Services	Alireza Talaei

C More **MOVED**. D Smirnow **SECONDED**.

C More reported to Council that voter turnout was up from previous years.

MOTION: That the GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the results of the General Election 2016.

Motion PASSED unanimously.

For Information

10. Executive Summary of the Survey on GSA Services Undertaken in October-November 2015

A Talaei (GSA Vice-President Student Services) presented the item.

A Talaei explained that the GSA undertook a survey last October/November to find out what graduate students think of GSA Services; this was not to be confused with the survey undertaken by Studentcare, discussed earlier. The GSA wished to monitor and measure the quality of services provided. The questions were available to all graduate students through the newsletter and circulated to GSA Council. 200 responses were received: the general takeaway was that graduate students are overall satisfied but do not know a lot about the services available to them, many people reported to not using all of the services, and responses regarding the Child Care Grant were positive but few people have used it. A Talaei noted that the GSA was promoting services through orientations, the GSA handbook, and the website and would continue to promote and advertise GSA services and requested that Councillors also help in spreading this information.

S Cake pointed out that part of the survey was done in GSA Council and Councillors-at-Large were asked to self-identify. She asked how this information was used? A Talaei responded that everything was anonymized and a differentiation was not made. C Thomas explained that because the survey was opened up to all graduate students, rather than just to GSA Council as originally intended, this differentiation did not matter. S Cake pointed out that she did not self-identify because she was concerned that her answers would not be anonymous.

R Recklow asked if there was an opportunity to suggest services. A Talaei responded that students could provide comments and suggestions on the survey and C Thomas added that the only comment received concerning introducing a new service was to provide a bursary for pet owners.

P Appadu asked, since there was a large percentage of students that indicated that Health and Dental was a high value service, whether or not we will lobby for an increase in those services. A Talaei responded that according to Studentcare's recent survey, only ¼ of respondents wanted an increase so this will have to be discussed further in the coming months.

M Juhas asked if it could be determined how many of the respondents received grants. A Talaei noted that participants had the option of indicating if they had never used a particular service.

Reports

11. President

i. President's Report:

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 March 2016. The report stood as submitted. In addition C More stated that the GSA Governance Committee discussed quorum and would meet again on April 5 to discuss this issue further. Additionally, a review of VP portfolios was currently underway with S Ficko; results will be brought to GSA Council. C More also recently had a phone call with the Minister of Advanced Education; their intention is to consult with individual student groups as well as provincial student associations.

S Cake asked for more details on the sexual assault review. C More explained that the report was the result of a meeting between the Provost, Dean of Students' representative, and University Relations. The meeting was on Friday and the report came out on the following Monday so we were informed that the report was coming out in case we received media requests (we did not). Hopefully a committee will be struck to look at the findings in the report, which showed poor coordination between bodies on campus that deal with sexual assault. I expect the GSA to be involved but we do not yet know how or when.

H Thaker asked if the GSA Governance Committee could suggest possible changes to GSA Policy on referenda and V Pimmitt stated, as a Point of Information, that this would go to GSA Elections and Referenda Committee. C More noted that changes would require a change to GSA Bylaw and GSA Policy, which were GSA Council decisions. H Thaker pointed out that a yes/no questions seemed restrictive and V Pimmitt noted that she would bring this issue forward to the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee.

i. GSA Board

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 March 2016. The report stood as submitted.

ii. GSA Budget and Finance Committee

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 March 2016. The report stood as submitted. In addition C More stated that GSA BFC recommended a proposal to GSA Council to use three-year projections rather than five-year projections when developing the budget.

iii. GSA Governance Committee

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 March 2016. The report stood as submitted.

12. GSA Nominating Committee

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 March 2016. The report stood as submitted. In addition M DuVal highlighted upcoming vacancies: General Faculties Council has 14 grad student positions; there is also a GSA Board vacancy for Councillors; the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board was looking for current or recent former councillors. If the person who was councillor before you is still a graduate student, they are eligible. S Cake asked if Councillors-at-Large are eligible. M DuVal responded, that as they participated in the previous election, they were not eligible. If a student has run in the most recent election, they are not eligible; if you were a Councillor-at-Large two years ago, you would be eligible.

13. Vice-President Academic

ii. Vice-President's Academic's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 March 2016. The report stood as submitted.

14. Vice-President External

iii. Vice-President External's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 March 2016. The report stood as submitted.

iv. GSA Awards Selection Committee's Report

No meetings this reporting period.

15. Vice-President Labour

i. Vice-President Labour's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 March 2016. In addition, S Ficko noted that the GSA Labour Relations Committee has discussed how to increase awareness regarding the AEGS Collective Agreement. She stated that she wished to continue this discussion in the future. She added that she had been meeting with GSA Councillors to gain an understanding of how each departments function. P Appadu noted that he appreciated the effort and the proactivity and hope S van der Klein continues.

S Cake asked what the goal of these meetings was and S Ficko replied that she wanted to gain an understanding of the culture of departments and of common issues to be able to target better actions taken in the future. S Cake specified that actions should be taken now to better the situation in certain departments. S Ficko encouraged Councillors to approach her if they want to discuss the culture in their department.

ii. GSA Negotiating Committee

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 March 2016. The report stood as submitted.

iii. GSA Labour Relations Committee

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 March 2016. The report stood as submitted.

16. Vice-President Student Services

i. Vice-President Student Services' Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 March 2016. The report stood as submitted.

ii. GSA Student Affairs Advisory Committee

No meetings this reporting period.

17. Senator

i. Senator's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 March 2016. The report stood as submitted.

18. Speaker

i. Speaker's Report

No written report at this time.

19. Chief Returning Officer

i. Chief Returning Officer's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 March 2016. The report stood as submitted. Additionally, V Pimmitt thanked candidates in the recent General Election and everyone who voted. She noted that the turnout last year was 5.8% and this year it was 10.8%.

S Cake asked about the nature of complaints made in the General Election. V Pimmitt replied that the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee had not debriefed yet and she added they dealt with informal complaints as well as formal complaints. She also mentioned that there would be another report that would also highlight some needed GSA Bylaw and Policy changes.

S Cake asked whether you were able to vote if you were a graduate student on leave. E Schoeck replied that, as per the GSA's third-party information sharing agreement, only registered graduate students were eligible to vote which discounted graduate students on leave unless they had registered in order to have access to certain University and GSA services. V Pimmitt noted that this issue was on the "to fix" list.

20. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee

i. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 March 2016. The report stood as submitted.

21. GSA Management

i. Executive Director's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 March 2016. The report stood as submitted. Additionally, E Schoeck noted that the office was getting ready for transition; two full days (April 8 and April 22). She indicated that the newly-elected Directly-Elected Officers (DEOs) had started job shadowing.

J Kong indicated that he wanted to make a motion to investigate the payment of the Health and Dental Plan fee of the DEOs through the use of GSA fees.

MOTION IN FRONT OF GSA COUNCIL: That the GSA Council refer to the GSA Budget and Finance Committee an investigation of the payment of the Health and Dental fees for the Directly-Elected Officers. J Kong **MOVED**. P Appadu **SECONDED**.

S Cake asked who had made the decision that the DEOs' Health and Dental Plan fee would be paid for. E Schoeck replied that the GSA Budget and Finance Committee compared the DEOs' stipends and benefits with those for the DEOs at the University of Calgary (who are the closest equivalent to the GSA with respect to workloads, etc) and they did not feel a change was necessary. S Cake raised the question of transparency.

C More noted that the payment of this fee for the DEOs was the equivalent of approximately 36 cents/graduate student. It was also noted that most companies and Boards paid for such things for employees and members, even though DEOs did not fall under employment law. It was specified that they are full time graduate students.

MOTION: That the GSA Council refer to GSA Budget and Finance Committee to investigate the payment of the Health and Dental fees for the Directly-Elected Officers. J Kong **MOVED**. P Appadu **SECONDED**.

Motion **FAILED**. In favour: 5. Opposed: 7. 9 Abstentions (J Worhty, C More, S Ficko, A Talaei, H Thaker, A Ndem Ahola)

Question Period

22. Written Questions

None at this time.

23. Oral Questions

P Appadu indicated that he wanted to bring forward a motion to refer to the GSA Governance Committee a review of the duties and responsibilities of the DEOs. P Appadu withdrew the motion until next GSA Council.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:54 pm.



Dear Council Colleagues,

Following on our discussion last month, at our Council meeting on April 18 you will be asked to consider a recommendation from the GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC) and another from the GSA Board with respect to use of the Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund (HDPRF), as well as the Health and Dental Plan Fee (hereafter referred to as the "Fee") collected from students. The first is to use the HDPRF for payment of any difference between the 2016-2017 Fee and the actual cost of the plan. The second is a proposal regarding the exact amount of the 2016-2017 Fee.

As I wrote to you in my cover letter for the March meeting, usage levels and the number of claims are the largest drivers of cost for a group health and dental plan such as ours. Increasingly large numbers of Graduate students are using the GSA Health and Dental Plan, which is good news -- we are happy to see people using this important service. It does, however, mean that the cost of the Plan has risen. As you know, there is a projected overall increase of 16% in the cost of the Plan for 2016-2017. This is not the first time that we have seen an increase in the cost of the Plan, although it is a larger amount than we have seen in the previous few years. Without a corresponding increase to the Fee, coverage and benefits will need to be cut. Similarly, should this proposed fee increase and drawdown of the HDPRF not gain approval, we will return to you with a proposal to decrease coverage to keep the cost of the Plan the same as it is now.

Kristin Foster (Director, Partnerships and Development, Studentcare – as a reminder, Studentcare serves as our broker, while Desjardins is our insurer) attended the March meeting of GSA Council to provide you with information and field your questions. At the same meeting, you considered several possible options related to establishing the fee for 2016-2017. Based on your feedback, we have since developed this proposal -- additional information about this process is provided in the attached outline of issue. We hope that you have used the time since the March meeting to consult with your colleagues, and that you will do so again now in advance of the April GSA Council meeting!

The first governance step for the proposal before you was a recommendation from the GSA Board to the GSA BFC that a portion (approximately 1%) of the total projected increase (16%) be paid through a drawdown of the HDPRF. The GSA BFC considered the recommendation, and subsequently recommended it to GSA Council. Currently, there is a balance of \$159,612.28 in the HDPRF; approximately \$144,151.28 would remain should GSA Council approve the proposed drawdown. The Fee paid by graduate students for the Health and Dental Plan would then be \$492.95/year.

As Plan usage is likely to continue to rise, it is very likely that there will be fee increases in the future. While the GSA has used the HDPRF over the past two years to offset the cost of the Plan for graduate students, the fund cannot continue subsidizing the Fee indefinitely. The last time we held a referendum regarding the cost of the Plan and the associated levels of coverage was in 2003. Therefore, moving forward, we shall continue consulting with graduate students as to their needs and desires for the Plan, and consider holding another referendum on this critical subject in the near future.

I want to thank you again for your close consideration of this proposal. I will be happy to answer any questions you have at the meeting, but also encourage you to send me questions before then as you consult with your colleagues.

Best,

Colin More, GSA President 2015-2016

Outline of Issue (GSA Council)

GSA Health and Dental Plan: Fee for 2016-2017 AND Payment from the HDPRF of the Difference Between the GSA Health and Dental Plan Fee and the Actual Cost of the Plan for 2016-2017

NOTE: Graduate students are utilizing the GSA Health and Dental Plan at a high rate and this is good news (dental claims alone are up by ~18%, and health claims are up by ~9%). As claims largely drive the cost of the Plan, the projected total actual cost of the Plan for 2016-2017 is \$495.76/year, a 16% increase from \$428.65. **It is proposed that ~1% of this projected 16% increase (~\$15,461) be bridged through a drawdown of the HDPRF.** The fee paid by graduate students for the Health and Dental Plan should GSA Council approve the fee increase and the drawdown of the HDPRF would be \$492.95/year, an increase of 15% (or \$64.30/year) over 2015-2016. Should this proposed fee increase and drawdown of the HDPRF **not gain approval**, an alternate proposal that might include a different fee and proposed drawdown amount or possible reductions in coverage will need to be developed.

Suggested Motions for GSA Council:

MOTION 1: That GSA Council **APPROVE**, on the recommendation of the GSA Board, that the GSA Health and Dental Plan fee be set at \$492.95/year, effective September 1, 2016, with collection from graduate students to begin September 1, 2016.

MOTION 2: That GSA Council **APPROVE**, on the recommendation of the GSA Budget and Finance Committee, payment from the Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund (HDPRF) of the GSA Health Plan and GSA Dental Plan fee for 2016-2017 above graduate students' fee contribution.

NOTE ON MOTION 1: With respect to the fee of \$492.95/year, which will be supplemented by the drawdown from the HDPRF for a total amount of \$495.76/year, \$285.26 will be applied to the Health Plan and \$210.51 will be applied to the Dental Plan.

NOTE ON MOTION 2: As per GSA Policy, the **GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC)** has assessed the financial soundness of this plan and its financial implications.

Background:

CURRENT SITUATION: The key driver for cost increases to the Plan is usage. Graduate students are using the Plan at increasing rates (which is good news). There is an overall projected 16% increase in premiums for 2016-2017, resulting in a proposed fee increase of \$67.11 (bringing the fee to \$495.76). After extensive discussion by the GSA Board and GSA Council, it is proposed that a portion of this increase (~1%, ~\$2.80/graduate student, for a total drawdown of ~\$15,461.00) be paid through a drawdown of the HDPRF. The proposed fee for 2016-2017 was recommended to GSA Council by the GSA Board at its meeting of March 23, 2016. At that meeting the GSA Board also recommended a proposal regarding a drawdown of the HDPRF to the GSA BFC. The GSA BFC then recommended that proposal to GSA Council at its meeting of March 29, 2016.

Currently, there is a balance of \$159,612.28 in the HDPRF and approximately \$144,151.28 would remain should GSA Council approve this proposed drawdown. **The fee paid by graduate students for the Health and Dental Plan should GSA Council approve the fee increase and the drawdown of the HDPRF would be \$492.95.**

Kristin Foster (Director and Partnerships, Studentcare) acts as our broker, whereas Desjardins is our insurer. K Foster presented to GSA Council at the March 21, 2016 meeting and Studentcare also surveyed Plan members regarding this matter. **The results indicated that 50.4% of respondents supported increasing the cost of the Plan to maintain the current level of coverage, 23.5% preferred to decrease coverage in order to maintain the current Plan cost, and 21.7% supported increasing the cost of the Plan by more than 80% in order to increase coverage.**

At the March 21 GSA Council meeting, members discussed whether to increase the fee by 15%, coupled with a drawdown of the HDPRF, to increase the fee by the full 17% (based on the data available in March that was the then projected increase) via a referendum, or to decrease coverage. **Based upon a straw poll of GSA Council members**, the GSA Board decided to pursue an increase coupled with a drawdown of the HDPRF (in the straw poll: 4 members supported holding a referendum, 32 supported a 15% increase coupled with a drawdown of the HDPRF (with a referendum to be held in the coming year), and 1 member supported decreasing coverage).

As the fee is set using the claims data available to date (six months, September 1 to February 29), the projected premium may change as more claims data comes in after that date. Should premiums decrease after the fee for 2016-2017 is approved, the amount drawn down from the HDPRF will be lower. The total drawdown of the HDPRF will be determined by the number of graduate students enrolled in the Plan in September 2016 and January 2017. Should GSA Council approve this proposal, the total actual cost will be reported back as Council would be approving use of the HDPRF rather than the amount of the drawdown (although an estimate is provided here).

MOVING FORWARD: As discussed at the March GSA Council meeting, there has not been a referendum with respect to the GSA Health and Dental Plan since 2003, when the GSA Health Plan was created and integrated with the existing GSA Dental Plan. As both cost and usage of the Plan are only likely to increase, holding a referendum in the coming year (and potentially exploring additional increases to enhance coverage or introducing a two-level plan, with different budgets and associated coverage levels) will be considered. Likewise, the purpose and long-term management (and associated GSA Policy) of the HDPHF will be reviewed and discussed.

HISTORICAL: The GSA implemented the GSA Dental Plan through a referendum in 1994, and the GSA Dental Plan was administered in the GSA office at that time. The GSA Health Plan was implemented through a referendum conducted in March 2003. At this time, both the GSA Dental Plan and the GSA Health Plan began to be administered through Studentcare. The Agreement with Studentcare has been renewed three times, with the newest agreement taking effect September 1, 2015 and expiring August 31, 2020.

The GSA Health and Dental Plan Fee had a 2-year premium guarantee (for 2012-2013 and 2013-2014) as part of the transition to Desjardins as the plan provider in Fall 2012. In 2014, following an increase in premiums, GSA Council approved a Motion that “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 GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund (HDPHF)” (GSA Council Motion, April 14, 2014). Additionally, **GSA Council approved, at its meeting of July 14, 2014, an increase to vision benefits.**

In 2015-2016 the cost of the Plan increased by 11% total and GSA Council voted to approve an increase of 8% and a draw down of the HDPHF by 3% in order to bridge the cost. At that time, it was reported to members that another fee increase would likely follow in 2016, as both usage of the Plan was likely in increase (which drives the cost) and as 3% of the cost was still being subsidized by the HDPHF, which is at a low point.

While the GSA Financial Team and the GSA BFC, as per GSA Policy on the HDPHF, had developed a rolling plan in 2015 with respect to future use of the HDPHF, the new projected increases make that rolling plan no longer viable.

These are the usage figures:

Health Plan	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016*
Paid Claims	\$687,160	\$819,533	\$882,134	\$913,072	\$903,759	\$1,046,325	\$1,118,690	\$1,229,944.27
Enrolment	4,738	5,324	5,451	5,409	5,469	5,427	5,303	5,482
Per Capita Claims	\$145.02	\$153.94	\$161.83	\$168.80	\$165.24	\$192.79	\$210.97	\$224.35
Dental Plan								
Paid Claims	\$569,986	\$664,506	\$696,000	\$705,749	\$713,678	\$749,820	\$759,450	\$921,163.07
Enrolment	4,691	5,260	5,409	5,377	5,410	5,353	5,242	5,429
Per Capita Claims	\$121.51	\$126.34	\$128.67	\$131.25	\$131.92	\$140.07	\$144.87	\$169.66
Total								
Incurred Claims	\$1,257,146	\$1,484,039	\$1,578,134	\$1,618,821	\$1,617,438	\$1,796,145	\$1,878,141	\$2,151,107.34
Enrolment	5,292	4,715	5,430	5,393	5,440	5,390	5,278	5,459
Per Capita Claims	\$280.45	\$266.65	\$290.62	\$300.16	\$297.34	\$332.23	\$355.84	\$394.01

* Projected Claims Data

The table below shows the breakdown of projected premiums, actual premiums, and the fee charged to graduate students from 2008-2009 to 2015-2016. Any differences between the actual premium and the fee paid by graduate students reflects either payment into the HDPHF of the positive difference between premium and fee or, when the difference is negative, use of the HDPHF to offset cost to students.

Plan Year	Projected Premium	Actual Premium	HDP Fee Paid by Students	Use of HDPHF*
2008-09	\$326.63	\$329.61	\$329.64	+ \$0.03
2009-10	\$345.93	\$330.70	\$346.12	+ \$15.42
2010-11	\$361.75	\$360.00	\$360.00	--
2011-12	\$384.15	\$384.12	\$378.00	- \$6.12
2012-13	\$405.00**	\$376.08	\$396.90	+ \$20.82
2013-14	N/A***	\$376.08	\$396.90	+ \$20.82
2014-15	\$414.05	\$413.16	\$396.90	- \$16.26
2015-16	\$440.37	\$440.28	\$428.65	- \$11.63
2016-17****	\$495.76	< >	\$492.95	-\$2.80

* A positive figure indicates payment into the HDPHF; a negative figure indicates use of the HDPHF

Prepared by C Thomas and E Schoeck for the GSA Council of 18 April 2016

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** High jump in premium resulted in a request for proposals and switch to Desjardins as the plan provider

*** No projected premium necessary because of two-year guaranteed premium rate

**** Projected premium and fee

Jurisdiction:

GSA Bylaw, Part X Finances, Section 3.2.1.1:

"The HDPRF is meant to ensure that all Health and Dental Plan fees paid by graduate students are going towards health and dental coverage... lessen the GSA Health and Dental Plan fee increases from one year to another, acting as a buffer."

GSA Policy, GSA Health and Dental Plan and GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund, Section 3.1:

"Fee(s)" shall refer to the amount of money paid by enrolled graduate students for the Plan. The amount of the Fee includes both Plan premiums and administrative overhead. The Fee may include an amount for the replenishment of the Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund (see GSA Policy, GSA Health and Dental Plan and GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund, Section 8, Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund)."

GSA Policy, GSA Health and Dental Plan and GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund, Section 6.1:

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

GSA Policy, GSA Health and Dental Plan and GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund, Section 7.1:

"Any increase in the Fee or modification of coverage must be approved by GSA Council on the recommendation of the GSA Board. Any increase in the Fee exceeding 15% of the previous year's Fee must also be put to a referendum."

GSA Policy, GSA Health and Dental Plan and GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund, Section 8.2.c:

"To draw down the HDPRF, the GSA Board must provide to the GSA BFC information regarding the proposed use of the HDPRF, including the anticipated amounts to be drawn down from the HDPRF (quoted in GSA Policy, Standing Committees, Section 4, Budget and Finance Committee, 4.2.g) and a rolling plan regarding the HDPRF."

GSA Policy, GSA Health and Dental Plan and GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund, Section 8.2.c.i:

"If the GSA BFC finds that the proposal is financially sound, it shall present the proposal and the financial implications to GSA Council for approval (quoted in GSA Policy, Standing Committees, Section 4, GSA Budget and Finance Committee, 4.2.g.i)."

GSA Policy, GSA Health and Dental Plan and GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund, Section 8.2.c.ii:

"If the GSA BFC finds that the proposal is financially unsound, it will report its findings to the GSA Board for reconsideration (quoted in GSA Policy, Standing Committees, Section 4, GSA Budget and Finance Committee, 4.2.g.i)."

GSA Policy, GSA Health and Dental Plan and GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund, Section 8.2.d:

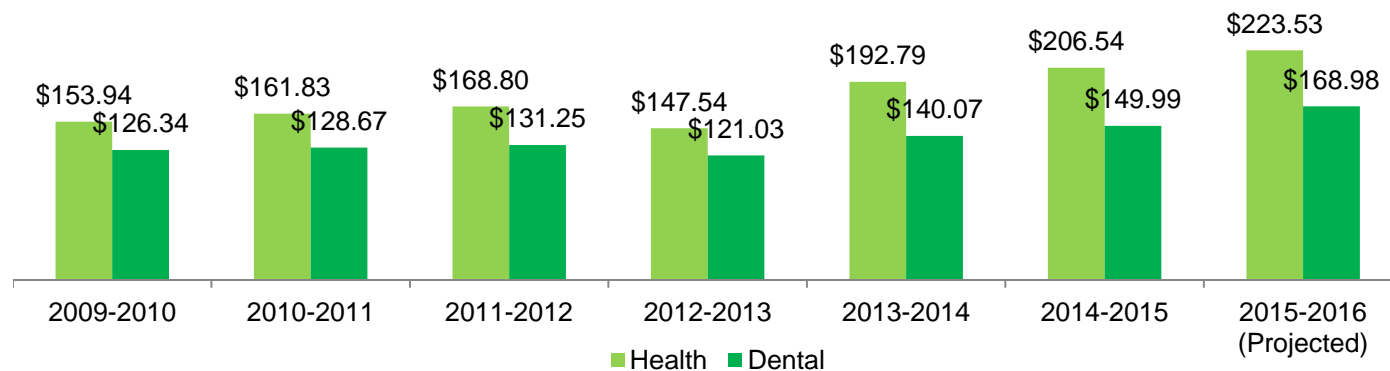
"GSA Council must approve any proposals prior to use of HDPRF funds."

U of A GSA Council: Health & Dental Plan Renewal Summary

- The insurance policy for the GSA Health & Dental Plan is renewed with the Plan insurer each policy year
- The projected renewal rate for the upcoming policy year is based on an analysis of the Plan's claims experience. Claims drive the cost of the Plan, representing 90% of the cost. All other costs are fixed.
- This background document is provided by Studentcare, to allow GSA Council to review and make required decisions in time to submit the Plan Fee to U of A Board of Governors, typically by late April.

Projections:

GSA Health & Dental: Per Capita Claims



Comparing the first 6 months of this policy year (Sept – Feb) to the same time period of the past policy year, Health Claims have increased 16% and Dental Claims have increase 21%.

Therefore, 2016-2017 Plan Premiums are projected to be significantly higher (**17%**) than the current Plan Fee:

2016-2017 PROJECTED COST ANALYSIS

	Health	Dental	Total
Projected Plan Premiums 2016-2017	\$ 287.78	\$ 212.56	\$ 500.34
Current Plan Fees 2015-16 (Subsidized*)	\$ 244.09	\$ 184.56	\$ 428.65
Difference between Current Fees and Projected Premiums	-\$43.69	-\$28.00	-\$71.69
Percentage Change with Full Fee Increase (no use of reserve fund)	18%	15%	17%

Note: Current Plan Fees are subsidized by a \$11.63 per member contribution from GSA Reserve Fund.

Options:

The GSA has multiple mechanisms available to manage the required **17%** increase in Projected Premiums:

- 1) Increase the Plan Fee by 17%, which would require a referendum conducted in April
- 2) Increase the Plan Fee by up to 15%, the maximum allowed by a motion of Council (per GSA Bylaws)
- 3) Partially subsidize the Fee using the Reserve Fund (based on current reserves: 3% - 4% maximum)
- 4) Decrease benefits (only benefits being used significantly will have a material impact when reduced)

Unless Option 1 is chosen, the GSA must utilize a combination of Options 2-4 to fund the Plan in 2016-17.



To help provide context and direction regarding the decision, the GSA asked Studentcare to survey the GSA membership about their priorities relating to the Plan cost versus coverage.

Survey Highlights: (Conducted March 1-8, 2016: by telephone using a randomly generated list)

- The survey was conducted using accepted methodology accurate within 5.4%, 19 times out of 20
- **50.4%** are in favour of increasing the Plan cost to maintain the current coverage
- **23.5%** preferred to decrease the coverage in order to maintain the Plan cost
- **21.7%** wished to increase the Plan cost by over \$80 to increase coverage

RESERVE FUND OPTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

	Health	Dental	Total
Option 1) 17% Increase to Plan Fees, No Reserve Fund, No Cuts	\$ 285.59	\$ 215.94	\$ 501.52
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires Immediate Referendum 			
Option 2) 15% Increase to Plan Fees + Reserve Fund, No Cuts	\$ 280.70	\$ 212.24	\$ 492.95
Option 3) 10% Increase Plan Fees + Reserve Fund + Benefit Cuts	\$ 268.50	\$ 203.02	\$ 471.52
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not be enough to be sustainable over the long-term 			
Option 4) Combination: Increase Plan Fees, use Reserve Fund, Reduce Benefits			

Some Ideas for Discussion:

Difference between Projected Premium and Current Fee	17%
% to Increase Plan Fee, following established pattern	10%
% to Subsidize from Reserve Fund, for long-term stability	3%
Potential % Reduction in Benefits Required	4%

Potential Benefit Reductions to Consider: Prices as Estimate - Subject to Change

Benefit Changes	% Impact	Approx. Cost of Benefit Change
HEALTH: Implement a Dispensing Fee Cap @ \$8	-5%	\$ (14.09)
DENTAL: Reduce Preventive Services from 80% - 70%	-6%	\$ (13.28)
DENTAL: Reduce Preventive Services from 80% - 75%	-3%	\$ (6.64)

Note: Dental Claims are driving the need to increase premiums. Reducing benefits on the Dental side is the best option to control costs in the long-term.

Moving Forward:

- Determine Fee Increase, between 10% - 17%
- Determine sustainable amount to be subsidized from Reserve Fund, with a plan of reducing subsidy to zero within two years (as per plan initiated in 2014 with a goal of zero subsidy within 4 years)
- Decide upon "least-worst" benefit reductions, to be implemented only if required
- Lock in rate now, but closely monitor March claims data for improvements. If a lower premium is possible, this would reduce or eliminate the need for benefit reductions.

HEALTH & DENTAL PLAN SURVEY REPORT

University of Alberta Graduate Students' Association

Prepared by:
Studentcare
March 2016



ihaveaplan.ca

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Rationale

In partnership with the University of Alberta Graduate Students' Association (GSA), Studentcare has conducted a survey of GSA members in order to obtain information and feedback on the GSA Health & Dental Plan.

Survey findings will be presented to the GSA Executive to assist in determining the level of student satisfaction with the Plan, as well as to gauge the health and dental care needs and preferences of its members, in order to inform and better shape the future development and growth of the GSA Health & Dental Plan.

This report provides an overview of the survey objectives and methodology, presents the key findings of the survey, and makes a number of recommendations for consideration by the GSA. The report has been prepared by Studentcare' research staff and is based on survey data collected over the phone from March 1 - 8, 2016.

The survey provided students with an opportunity to comment on a number of key issues regarding the GSA Health & Dental Plan, including Plan benefit priorities, as well as potential changes to the Plan coverage in the near future.

1.2 Organizational Profile: Studentcare

Studentcare is Canada's largest provider of student health and dental plans and is the only organization in Canada that specializes exclusively in student health care.

Established in 1996 to serve the health and dental care needs of Canadian post-secondary students, Studentcare now serves over 750,000 members at over 50 post-secondary institutions and 70 student associations.

Studentcare is a full-service health and dental plan provider, delivering a wide range of value-added services to clients, including brokerage services, Plan management and administration, communications, and research.

The company's head office is in Montreal, with service offices located throughout Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia.

2.0 OBJECTIVE

2.1 Research Objective

The primary objective of the survey was to obtain feedback from GSA members on their current level of satisfaction with the GSA Health & Dental Plan, as well as their preferences with regard to specific Plan components. This feedback will inform future Plan-related decisions by the GSA Executive.

A secondary objective of the survey was to provide the GSA with feedback from its membership on future changes to the Plan. Due to an increase in claims in 2014, certain benefit changes could be implemented (i.e. an increase or decrease in Plan coverage). GSA members were given the opportunity to weigh in on specific scenarios proposed by the GSA Executive.

2.2 Survey Design

The GSA was given the opportunity to review and provide input on the survey questions. In consultation with Studentcare, feedback from members was sought in three key areas: communications, coverage and costs, and opt outs.

1) Communications

- Are students aware of their Health & Dental Plan?
- How do students find out about the Plan?

2) Coverage & Costs

- What importance do students place on the Plan?
- Are students covered by another plan?
- What do students think should be the top priority for the GSA Plan in the future?
- Which benefits would students feel most comfortable reducing, if necessary?
- Which benefits would students like to increase, if given the opportunity?
- What is the maximum amount students would be willing to pay for the Plan?
- Do students support the continuation of the GSA Plan?

3) Opt Outs

- Are students aware that they can opt out of the Plan?
- Did students choose to opt out of the Plan?

Respondents were also given the opportunity to give additional comments at the end of the survey.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Sampling Methods

The survey was conducted from March 1 - 8, 2016 in the form of telephone interviews lasting approximately 5-8 minutes, in an effort to obtain responses from a representative sample of GSA members. The objective was to obtain 300 completed surveys. This goal was surpassed; 319 surveys were completed.

A random sample of about 3,000 names was generated from a list of students eligible for the Plan, including students who are enrolled in the Plan and those who opted out. Students were called at home during the afternoon and the early hours of the evening. This method of collecting data is the most effective way to contact students.

3.2 Representative Sample

The first section of the survey gathered general demographic information.

We have used the most recent enrolment statistics available online¹ from the University of Alberta Databook for comparison with respondent demographic statistics to demonstrate that a representative sample was obtained.

The following charts compare the status and field of study of respondents with actual student statistics.

Status

Status	# of Respondents	% of Total Respondents	% of Actual Enrolment
Full-time	303	97.1%	85.5%
Part-time	9	2.9%	14.5%
Total	312	100.0%	100.0%

The sampling distribution was compared with the student population distribution. It was found that the sample contains a slightly higher proportion of full-time students than the actual University of Alberta graduate student population. Therefore, the survey sample is only fairly representative with respect to status.

¹https://idwbi.ualberta.ca/t/Production/views/StudentPublicDatabook/UofAStudentFallHeadcount?:embed=y&:showShareOptions=true&:display_count=no

Field of Study

Field of Study	# of Respondents	% of Total Respondents	% of Actual Enrolment
Arts	18	5.7%	9.2%
Physical Education and Recreation	17	5.4%	1.5%
Medicine and Dentistry	18	5.7%	19.2%
Rehabilitation Medicine	11	3.5%	10.2%
Nursing	7	2.2%	1.5%
Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences	8	2.5%	0.6%
Engineering	69	21.9%	15.4%
Extension	3	1.0%	0.7%
Science	63	20.0%	13.2%
Native Studies	13	4.1%	0.1%
Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences	30	9.5%	6.1%
Education	37	11.7%	11.1%
School of Public Health	6	1.9%	3.2%
Alberta School of Business	14	4.4%	7.5%
Law	1	0.3%	0.1%
Campus St. Jean	0	0.0%	0.4%
Total	315	100.0%	100.0%

Unfortunately, the sample cannot be evaluated in terms of age or gender, as the information from the Databook is not available in clear categories.

3.3 Margin of Error

With a graduate student population of 6,271 a sample size of 319 GSA members gives us a margin of error of +/- 5.4%, 19 times out of 20.

This is an acceptable margin of error as the objective is to observe general trends (i.e. benefit preferences) and to look for potential areas of concern (i.e. coverage awareness). In either case, even the most extreme deviation possible (within +/- 5.4%) would not alter the conclusion derived from the data. For example, whether 84.6% or 95.4% of respondents indicate that they are aware of their Plan coverage, the conclusion that there is a high level of Plan awareness among students would not be altered.

4.0 SURVEY FINDINGS

4.1 Key Findings

- Almost all (98.2%) of respondents think that the GSA should continue to provide the GSA Health & Dental Plan.
- Most respondents (88.1%) also feel that the current GSA Health & Dental Plan is either “very important” or “somewhat important” to them.
- The majority (88.8%) of respondents were already aware of the Health & Dental Plan before participating in this survey.

Communications

- Surveyed students found out about the Plan through a variety of media and resources. The most common resources were:
 - 1) Registrar’s / Student Accounts office / Tuition bill (41.6%)
 - 2) Email (16.5%)
 - 3) GSA website (14.7%)
 - 4) Orientation events (13.3%)
 - 5) Word of mouth / Family / Friends (9.3%)

Opt Outs

- Though most respondents were aware that they could opt out of the Plan (79.9%), less than a quarter (23.0%) of GSA members who participated in the survey did in fact opt out.
- Just over a third (35.1%) of surveyed students reported being covered by another private health and dental plan.

Benefit Priorities & Costs

- If adjustments were to be made to the Plan in the future:
 - Half of respondents (50.4%) indicated they would increase the cost only as much as necessary to maintain the current coverage.
 - Nearly one quarter (23.5%) of respondents preferred to decrease the coverage as much as necessary in order to maintain the current cost.
 - 21.7% of students surveyed wished to increase the Plan cost by more than \$80 to increase the level of coverage.
 - Only 4.4% students surveyed would prefer to decrease their current coverage substantially in order to decrease the current cost of the Plan.
- If it becomes necessary to decrease coverage in order to control Plan costs, GSA members reported being most comfortable reducing coverage for vision care (53.5%). Another 46.5% would consider paying a deductible on the first

claim of each year rather than decrease coverage. Many would also consider reducing health practitioners (45.1%).

- If benefits were to be increased, respondents felt that dental checkups and cleanings (66.8%), dental fillings, roots canals, and wisdom teeth removal (52.7%), and coverage for prescription drugs (49.1%) should be prioritized.
- Over half of respondents (58.0%) wish to pay less than \$500 per year for the Plan over the next three years, while little over a third (34.5%) indicated they would be willing to pay between \$500 and \$650 per year over the next three years.

Comments

- When asked if they had other comments or feedback about the Plan, a number of respondents had suggestions concerning increasing coverage, particularly for dental and mental health services. There were also several requests for increased communication of Plan-related information. Please see Appendix A for a complete list of the participating students' comments.

4.2 Survey Data

Q1 (DO NOT READ) Indicate if student is:

Answered: 319 Skipped: 0

Answer Choices	Responses	
Male	50.16%	160
Female	49.84%	159
Total		319

Q2 What is your field of study? (DO NOT READ)

Answered: 319 Skipped: 0

Answer Choices	Responses	
Arts	5.64%	18
Physical Education and Recreation	5.33%	17
Medicine and Dentistry	5.64%	18
Rehabilitation Medicine	3.45%	11
Nursing	2.19%	7
Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences	2.51%	8
Engineering	21.63%	69
Extension	0.94%	3
Science	19.75%	63
Native Studies	4.08%	13
Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences	9.40%	30
Education	11.60%	37
School of Public Health	1.88%	6
Alberta School of Business	4.39%	14
Law	0.31%	1
Campus St. Jean	0.00%	0
Decline to answer	1.25%	4
Total		319

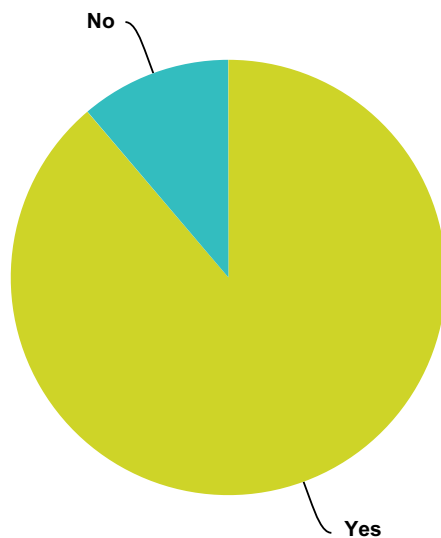
Q3 Are you currently a full-time or part-time student? (DO NOT READ)

Answered: 319 Skipped: 0

Answer Choices	Responses	
Full-time	94.98%	303
Part-time	2.82%	9
Decline to answer	2.19%	7
Total		319

Q4 Are you aware of the Health & Dental Plan provided to students at the University of Alberta, through the GSA? (DO NOT READ)

Answered: 312 Skipped: 7



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	88.78%	277
No	11.22%	35
Total		312

Q5 How did you find out about the Plan? (DO NOT READ)

Answered: 279 Skipped: 40

Answer Choices	Responses	
Registrar's / Student Accounts office / Tuition bill	41.58%	116
Email	16.49%	46
GSA website	14.70%	41
Orientation events	13.26%	37
Word of mouth / Family / Friends	9.32%	26
Not sure	8.96%	25
Health & Dental Plan Reference Guide	2.87%	8
On-campus office	2.51%	7
GSA office	2.51%	7
Other (please specify):	1.79%	5
Social media	1.43%	4
Student handbook	0.72%	2
Posters on campus	0.72%	2
Info on TV screens in SUB and other buildings	0.72%	2
GSA newsletter	0.00%	0
"The Gateway" newspaper	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 279		

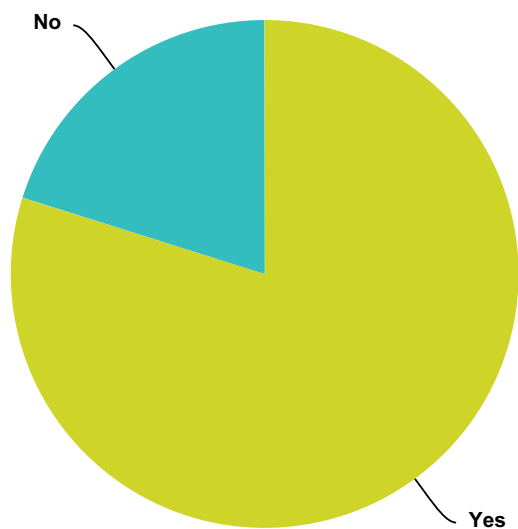
Q6 Are you covered by another private health and dental plan, beyond your provincial health-care (i.e. a parent, spouse, or employee plan)? (DO NOT READ)

Answered: 279 Skipped: 40

Answer Choices	Responses	
No	64.16%	179
Yes	35.13%	98
Not Sure	0.72%	2
Total		279

Q7 Did you know that you could opt out of your Student Health and/or Dental Plan? (DO NOT READ)

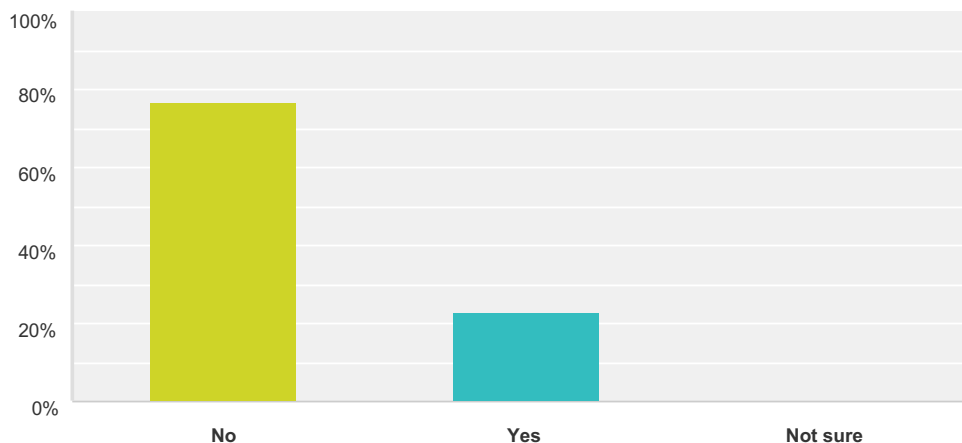
Answered: 278 Skipped: 41



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	79.86%	222
No	20.14%	56
Total		278

Q8 Did you opt out of the Health and/or Dental Plan this year? (DO NOT READ)

Answered: 222 Skipped: 97



Answer Choices	Responses	
No	76.58%	170
Yes	22.97%	51
Not sure	0.45%	1
Total		222

Q9 Since 2014, students' use of the Plan has been increasing. The GSA must now consider how to address this situation. The estimated cost increase to maintain all benefits for next year would be approximately 20% or \$80 more than the current Plan fee of \$428. With that in mind, which of the following options would you prefer for the GSA Plan:

Answered: 226 Skipped: 93

Answer Choices	Responses	
Increase the cost of the Plan only as much as necessary to maintain the current coverage	50.44%	114
Maintain the current cost of the Plan, and decrease the coverage only as much as necessary	23.45%	53
Increase the cost of the Plan by more than \$80 to increase the level of coverage	21.68%	49
Decrease the cost of the Plan and decrease coverage substantially	4.42%	10
Total		226

Q10 In the event that coverage must be decreased to control costs, which of these categories of benefits would you feel most comfortable reducing? Please pick three:

Answered: 226 Skipped: 93

Answer Choices	Responses	
Vision Care	53.54%	121
Keep all benefits, but pay a deductible on 1st claim each year	46.46%	105
Prescription Drugs	45.13%	102
Health Practitioners (Psychologists, Chiropractors, Physiotherapists, etc.)	45.13%	102
Dental Fillings, Root Canals & Wisdom Teeth Removal	44.69%	101
Overall Dental Annual Maximum	34.51%	78
Dental Checkups & Cleanings	30.53%	69
Total Respondents: 226		

Q11 In the event that coverage is increased, which of these categories of benefits would you feel most comfortable increasing? Please pick three:

Answered: 226 Skipped: 93

Answer Choices	Responses	
Prescription Drugs	49.12%	111
Vision Care	48.67%	110
Health Practitioners (Psychologists, Chiropractors, Physiotherapists, etc.)	38.05%	86
Dental Checkups & Cleanings	66.81%	151
Dental Fillings, Root Canals & Wisdom Teeth Removal	52.65%	119
Overall Dental Annual Maximum	44.69%	101
Total Respondents: 226		

Q12 What is the maximum you would be willing to pay for the Plan over the next 3 years?

Answered: 226 Skipped: 93



Answer Choices	Responses	
Less than \$500 per year	57.96%	131
Between \$500 and \$650 per year	34.51%	78
Over \$650 per year	3.98%	9
(DO NOT READ) None of the above	3.54%	8
(DO NOT READ) Another amount (please specify):	0.00%	0
Total		226

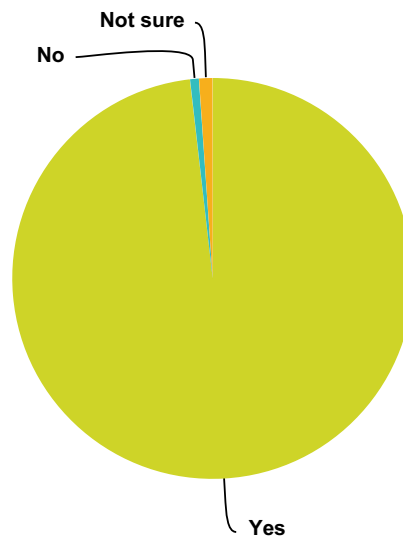
Q13 Overall, how important do you feel the Health & Dental Plan is to you personally? Would you say it is:

Answered: 277 Skipped: 42

Answer Choices	Responses	
Very important	59.21%	164
Somewhat important	28.88%	80
Not very important	6.50%	18
Not at all important	5.42%	15
Total		277

Q14 Do you think the GSA should continue to provide the Health & Dental Plan? (DO NOT READ)

Answered: 277 Skipped: 42



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	98.19%	272
No	0.72%	2
Not sure	1.08%	3
Total		277

Q15 Which age category do you fall under?

Answered: 312 Skipped: 7

Answer Choices	Responses
21 and under	0.32% 1
22 to 25	20.19% 63
26 to 29	33.01% 103
30 to 35	28.21% 88
36 to 39	7.69% 24
40 and older	10.58% 33
(DO NOT READ) Decline to answer	0.00% 0
Total	312

Q16 And finally, do you have any comments or feedback about the Health & Dental Plan that you would like to provide?

Answered: 319 Skipped: 0

Answer Choices	Responses
No	72.41% 231
Yes	27.59% 88
Total	319

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Studentcare presents the following recommendations to the GSA Executive for consideration:

1. There is a fairly high level of Plan awareness among members. Digital means of communication, like email and websites, should continue to be focused on, as survey respondents ranked these items highly when asked how they found out about the Plan.
2. If the GSA is considering restructuring benefits in order to decrease Plan costs, they may look at decreasing vision coverage or implementing a deductible on the first claim of each year, as these were the options that respondents supported the most.
3. In the event that coverage is to be increased, the GSA should focus on the Dental Plan (checkups and cleanings, dental fillings, root canals, and wisdom teeth removal), as students expressed the most interest in increasing dental benefits. This is also supported by the comments left by respondents, many of which express concern for the dental benefits currently available.
4. As indicated by members' feedback, half of respondents felt that they would consider an increase in the cost of the Plan in order to maintain their current level of coverage. Less than one third of respondents would risk a decrease in coverage in order to maintain the current cost of the Plan. As such, the GSA may consider increasing Plan fees in the future (in order to maintain current levels of coverage). However, if a fee increase is being considered, the fee should not go above \$500, as over half students surveyed reported that they would prefer to keep the Plan under \$500.
5. Some respondents chose to leave comments at the end of the survey, the full list of which is included in Appendix A. To summarize, students most often mentioned that they would like to see increases to Plan coverage, especially regarding dental coverage and psychology coverage. There were also several requests for increased Plan communications and a focus on Plan affordability. The GSA can take these comments into account when adjusting the Plan to best meet future students' needs and wishes.

APPENDIX A – SURVEY COMMENTS

Question 5

How did you find out about the Plan?

1	undergrad
2	student just always knew
3	undergrad
4	undergrad
5	assumed

Question 16

And finally, do you have any comments of feedback about the Plan?

1	The dental plan is really useful and sufficient.
2	other options for health practitioners, support for graduate students because they are having much stress, have mental health care
3	The student would like the opt-out process to be more accessible.
4	so far not so bad
5	it is not very clear what number to give to the pharmacy
6	The student wishes there was an opt out option without an alternative plan
7	they should improve it, it is really bad
8	Student suggests making the plan details clearer and more accessible to students (what is covered/included), for information dissemination purposes
9	The student is happy with the plan
10	Student says if it's possible, to increase the value of coverage (an international student, not a local) and sometimes, it's better to go somewhere else and have some procedures done elsewhere (where it's cheaper). This way, student can save more and avail/make use of the plan more conveniently/economically.
11	The student is unhappy with the plan because they need an alternative health and dental plan in order to opt out.
12	The student prefers higher per visit coverage for the health practitioners.
13	Student says the questions in the survey don't seem to have been studied a lot. Would be better if the association would come up with new and innovative ideas that would help pass along the costs (do things differently and hopefully, decrease the cost for the students). Maybe if possible, join other undergraduate associations again to try to share the costs with more participants in the plan. Consider increasing the cost as the last resort for the students.
14	The student prefers better quality of prescription drugs
15	The student prefers more centres/clinics for psychology.
16	The student is unhappy with the services and having some issues with contacting the company
17	Student hopes that the benefits/coverage of the plan will be increased.
18	Student says some of the rates under the plan are not as competitive as the rates from other universities (e.g. Queen's University). The coverage pays only \$30 for physiotherapy or naturopathy, which cost substantially more (between 80 and 150). Graduate students have been exposed to better plans from employers previously. Would appreciate it if the plan can be adjusted/calibrated for higher values to better afford the said services.
19	Student finds the \$500 maximum too little for the dental coverage. Student says dentists are very expensive.
20	The student prefers vision checks every year, and easy access to the plan and billings.
21	Student has a son and last year, the son went to the dentist and was able to avail of the dental services under the health/dental plan. In November, student was notified that the son is no longer covered. Student wants to know what to do so she can add back into the plan her 15-year-old son (minor/underage).
22	The student wishes the plan would provide more information so that the students would be more aware of the plan.
23	Student requires lens and frame adjustment every two years and the coverage for vision care

	(which is limited to \$100 per year) is not enough for student's coverage requirement. Student suggests increasing the value of coverage for the vision care or scrapping the vision care part of the plan and just deduct the cost from the total amount due so student won't have to pay as much
24	The student wishes the plan would provide more information so that the students would be more aware of the plan.
25	The student is contented and happy with the plan.
26	Student suggests keeping the costs at a minimum so students won't opt out of the plan (when, instead of paying for the plan, students will just hope that if and when there's medical attention required, it will not be a very expensive out-of-pocket cost).
27	The student is not happy with the plan due to the unorganized dental plan.
28	The student wishes for more information for international students about the plan.
29	Student is very happy that the health and dental plan exists (student being an international student). Student has also enrolled her partner in the plan.
30	Student suggests the GSA negotiate for more dental coverage (more options for the dental benefits instead of just one dental visit, which student availed themselves of) so students can have more options to consider, and no longer have to get insurance from other sources.
31	I want my family to be covered also
32	The student isn't happy with the plan because it's expensive and they have to opt out every year.
33	it's really convenient.
34	The student prefers better information about the plan, and for the dental plan, the student wants to have better coverage for less cost.
35	keep costs low for students
36	The student wishes for a better-communicated opt out.
37	The student prefers better coverage under the plan.
38	The student wishes the prescription drugs would decrease their cost.
39	The student prefers better information about the plan.
40	I would like to see improvements for vision care; make the vision check-up yearly
41	the student wants to see more coverage of physiotherapy
42	vision care is most lacking; I like the dental care
43	awesome idea but the student must have the option to choose their coverage, not automatically enrolling and including it in the bill
44	The student wishes for a deduction on the cost for all coverage.
45	The student prefers easy access to the plan and more information about it.
46	The student wishes the dental plan would increase its coverage for the students who need it.
47	The student is wondering if their siblings are also covered by their GSA plan.
48	The student wishes to increase the coverage
49	The student is not happy with the plan and its company. It's difficult to make claims and the company is rude to people who don't speak fluent English.
50	make it affordable for students
51	The students prefer an information package at the start of the school year.
52	more coverage in dental, inform us about changes in coverage
53	The student prefers mental health coverage and easy access to the plan.
54	it doesn't cover much
55	The student prefers better coverage for the plan
56	The student prefers full dental coverage.
57	The student prefers a better vision care plan for the students and negotiable prices for contact lenses or eyeglasses.
58	The student wishes the plan would increase its coverage for both dental and health without increasing the cost.
59	Underwriters are getting so much out of this. No need to cut coverage.
60	more affordable
61	The student doesn't agree paying a higher cost for the plan in order for it to increase coverage

62	it barely covers anything
63	Student suggests making the submission of forms electronic, and improve information dissemination (for easier access and reference).
64	Student strongly acknowledges the importance of the health and dental plan and that some of student's classmates/peers don't have coverage other than the University's health and dental plan.
65	Student would like to add laser eye services to the plan because it's very expensive to have an eye laser service. Also, the email reminder service doesn't work (reminders for doctors' appointments don't go through all the time because sometimes the student is in the basement of the building) and no email goes through to follow through for the schedule reminder.
66	don't have any idea
67	when there's a change in medical coverage, they don't notify us of what is covered and not covered by the plan
68	Student prefers an online survey instead of an over-the-phone survey so she can concentrate more on the questions.
69	if the survey can be done online
70	The student is unhappy with the plan because it is increasing its cost without increasing the coverage.
71	The student finds the plan extremely annoying to use
72	Student says if there will be an increase in cost, please keep it to a minimum.
73	Student thinks it's really great that the University offers this health and dental plan. Student enjoyed the benefits (both vision and dental services), which don't cost as much as the insurance plans outside the university.
74	it is lacking in terms of overall coverage
75	The student says that it's a good thing that the plan has options for opting out.
76	The student prefers more coverage for vision.
77	The student prefers more information about the vision and dental plan
78	The student is asking for a list of covered prescription drugs.
79	The student prefers other ways of communicating with the student.
80	The student wishes to maintain the prescription drug coverage.
81	include dental utensils
82	they should increase dental coverage
83	the student is not happy and content with the plan because it's expensive and lacking in dental coverage.
84	The student is not satisfied with the dental coverage.
85	The student prefers better coverage in the dental plan for less cost
86	The plan has a poor dental coverage.
87	The student prefers a better health and dental plan for less cost.
88	The student is not happy paying for something that she doesn't need. Through her work she already has a separate health and dental plan.



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Centre de UV_éRdV

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**GSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE (GSA NoC)
GSA Councillor-at-Large By-Election (ONE POSITION)
NOMINEES**

In the GSA General Election 2016 in February, nine (9) out of the ten (10) Councillor-at-Large positions were filled. On March 18 and 23, 2016, the GSA Nominating Committee advertised the remaining one (1) Councillor-at-Large position for 2016-2017 to all graduate students through the GSA Newsletter. The deadline to receive nominations was March 29, 2016, at 12:00 PM (Noon). The GSA NoC received one (1) nomination. On April 4, 2016 the GSA NoC forwarded this nomination to GSA Council with a call for additional nominations. Additional nominations were accepted until Friday, April 8, 2016 at 12:00 PM (Noon). One (1) additional nomination was received.

As set out in GSA Policy, Elections, By-Elections, Section 11.3:

“In the event that any **CAL positions** are not filled by the end of the General Election, [...] GSA Council will be responsible for electing any remaining CALs. When electing any remaining CALs, the GSA Council will aim to elect graduate students from as broad a range of disciplines as possible. The GSA NoC will decide on procedures and then provide one or more names to GSA Council for consideration, except that the GSA NoC may not waive advertising. Note that the legislated GSA NoC process allows for Councillors to make additional nominations. If the matter is urgent, GSA Council can hold this election electronically.”

There will be a paper ballot vote held at the April 18, 2016 GSA Council meeting for the Councillor-at-Large position.

If you and your alternate are unable to attend the April 18, 2016, meeting of GSA Council and would like to cast an electronic vote for this position, you must contact the Nominating Committee Coordinator (gsa.nomcomm@ualberta.ca) BEFORE 3:00 PM on Monday April 18, 2016, in order to cast your vote in advance of the Council meeting.

Nominees for this position are listed in alphabetical order by last name and will be presented in reverse alphabetical order on the ballot. ‘None of the Candidates’ will also be considered a nominee on the ballot.

- 1. Ahmed Najar (Renewable Resources)**
- 2. Alphonse Ndem Ahola (Anthropology)**

The names and biographies received (two nominees) are BELOW. Biographies are presented as received (i.e. not edited) and in alphabetical order by surname.

Biographies and Resumes of Nominees

1. Ahmed Najar

Ahmed Najar's Bio:

I was born in Tunisia and obtained my BSc (2009) there in Bio-Process Engineering. I had a passion for multiculturalism and spoke 5 languages by age 23, so Canada seemed to be the obvious next step. While in Tunisia my friends and I founded Teatro-INSAT a student initiative for freedom of speech and meaningful expression. Under the previous regime we were granted permit to perform in Tunis but banned from touring in the rest of the country. I was expecting Canada to be my haven of extracurricular activities yet was faced with a loss of relevance and context due to cultural difference. Here in Edmonton I volunteer with the Green Room and the John Humphrey Center.

TWO PAGES

Ahmed Najar's Resume:

I am now a third-year PhD student in the Department of Renewable Resources studying the immune system of trees. After few research assistantships in Quebec I moved to Alberta for my MSc (completed 2012) and started my PhD right after in the same lab. I worked in Dr Erbilgin's lab for the last 6 years. I was the PI for the BIOLE 108 course in Campus Saint-Jean and volunteer with the bridges program in various elementary schools.

I am interested in the LRC committee because I would love to learn how collective bargaining is conducted and the challenges of such exercise. I hope my skills in cross cultural communication will come in handy.

Ahmed Najar currently serves on the following committees: None

2. Alphonse Ndem Ahola**Alphonse Ndem Ahola's bio:**

I was born in Cameroon. After I completed my Bachelors in Psychology at University of Yaoundé, I attended the Higher Teacher Training School. Upon graduation, I taught for ten years. I completed my Masters in Sociology at University of Ngaoundéré, Cameroon. In 2003, I moved to Norway to attend the University of Tromso where I completed my Masters in Anthropology. During my stay in Norway, I was elected student representative on the Board of Governors, University of Tromso. I was the president of the Cameroonian Association at the same time. I returned to Cameroon in 2005 and worked as Human Resources officer. In that position, I was involved in lobbying the government on issues related to schools and teachers in Cameroon. I moved in Canada in 2013 and was registered full time PhD student at University of Alberta in fall 2013. In 2015, I was elected Vice-President External with the GSA (2015-2016)

Alphonse Ndem Ahola's resume:

My research focuses on cultural challenges West African families face in Alberta. I investigate how in spite of conflictual cultural trends they are succeeding in making a significant life for them and their family in Alberta, and what elements of their cultural backgrounds seem resilient. I am involved with GSA since 2014 as Anthropology Students representative, sitting in various committees. I was elected Vice- President External in March 2015. My experience in Cameroon mediating and resolving conflict situations in the schools, including various stakeholders such as community members, parents, staff, and students has been very helpful in my endeavor to lobby the University administration and the Government on issues related to graduate students. Beside my position as GSA Vice-president external and my Teaching Assistantship, I am volunteering in Cameroonian Association in Edmonton. I was elected in January 2016 President of the Francophonie Albertaine Plurielle Association (FRAP), with the mandate of advocating and negotiating on issues related to francophone communities in Alberta.

Alphonse Ndem Ahola currently serves on the following committees: None.



Dear Councillors,

April 8, 2016

At its May 2015 meeting, GSA Council received the 2015-2016 Graduate Students' Association Board Strategic Work Plan (SWP). The SWP is prepared annually by both the current and incoming teams of Directly-Elected Officers (DEOs), and GSA Management. It serves to direct the GSA's efforts over the course of the year, and identify areas where we can work with others in the University community. Reports on our team's efforts with respect to the SWP's goals occurred at the September 2015 and January 2016 GSA Council meetings. As this is the last GSA Council meeting for my team, I would like to give a final update on our progress. The complete SWP is available for your review on the GSA website at <http://www.gsa.ualberta.ca/03SWP.aspx>.

Highlights include:

- **Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees (MNIFs):** The GSA, SU, and Administration recently put forward a joint proposal to restructure how the University handles the collection and oversight of MNIFs. The proposal included the establishment of an oversight body of six students, seven administrators, and a Senator to track how MNIF money is being spent, and to recommend to the Board of Governors on how the fees should be adjusted each year. I'm just tickled to say that the proposal has now been approved by all the necessary governance committees, with the final stop being the Board of Governors on March 18.
- **Relationships with Administration and Government:** As you may have heard, Mr. Michael Phair was recently appointed as Chair of the University's Board of Governors, while Mr. Marlin Schmidt has been appointed as the provincial Minister of Advanced Education. I have talked to both on several occasions; incoming GSA President (and current VP Labour) Sarah Ficko has also had a chance to meet them, and the rest of this year's DEO's met Minister Schmidt on April 1st. During all of these meetings, we have educated the Minister and the Chair on the GSA and the issues faced by graduate students.
- **Residences:** Vice-President External Alphonse Ndem Ahola has been closely following issues concerning graduate residences, including matters related to the health of residence associations and the quality of accommodations in Michener Park. I encourage you to speak to the GSA if you hear of any problems concerning residences. In addition, Vice-President Student Services Ali Talaei has been a tireless advocate for direct transit access to the North Campus for residents of Michener Park (most of whom are graduate students). He has discussed this matter with stakeholders on campus as well as with the City, and is collaborating with the Michener Park Residents' Association in pursuit of this goal.
- **GSA Fall and Winter Orientations, Departmental Orientations, and GSA Coffee Breaks:** It is vital for the GSA to reach as many students as possible, introducing them to the organization and the various services and benefits we provide. All the current DEOs were very active in the planning and execution of the GSA's annual fall and winter orientations, as well as the 40 departmental orientations we gave this year. Additionally, thanks to a competitive grant secured by our staff from the Unwind Your Mind program, we hosted several coffee break-style events in Triffo Hall and the PAW Graduate Student Lounge. Building upon the success of the latter events, my team discussed a similar application for the 2016-17 funding year. Vice-President Academic Harsh Thaker raised the possibility of reaching out to and collaborating with departmental GSAs to host these events in more numerous locations. We received a Gold Level Green Spaces Certification for the Coffee Breaks from the Office of Sustainability, and will be applying for similar certification at future events.
- **ab-GPAC and GU15:** After a lengthy building process, the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) is now meeting regularly to discuss issues of importance to graduate students at Alberta's four CARI institutions (us, the University of Calgary, the University of Lethbridge, and Athabasca University), and to advocate on their behalf. We attended an AGM for the group in Lethbridge this past November and continue to meet via conference call. As a group we have had meaningful conversations with the provincial government and have submitted feedback on the provincial budget. In addition, we have actively participated in a consultation process related to the right to strike and other possible amendments to the Post-Secondary Learning Act.



Our GSA also meets several times per year with peer organization at Canada's other major research and teaching institutions, in a group which informally refers to itself as GU15. The group met in Calgary last spring, Winnipeg last summer, and will be meeting April 12-15 in Vancouver. The UBC GSA is hosting; myself, Sarah, and the incoming Vice-President External will be representing the U of A.

- **Professional Development:** Harsh, Sarah, and I have been involved throughout the year in FGSR's ongoing work to develop comprehensive, meaningful professional development opportunities for graduate students, including the mentorship opportunities that now exist. The GSA also hosted the Fall Mix and Mingle Professional Development Event (generously sponsored by FGSR), and a similar event sponsored by the Alumni Association in the winter.
- **Negotiations:** A major part of Sarah's time this year has been spent leading the GSA's negotiations with the University for a new Collective Agreement. In preparation for these negotiations, she and I presented on graduate student working conditions and institutional impact to the Board Human Resources and Compensation Committee, which I understand caught the committee's attention. Meanwhile, while our Agreement has yet to be finalized and ratified, it is very close. I encourage you to watch for updates over the next few weeks.

Another set of negotiations involves the U-Pass. The current agreement between the University and the City of Edmonton expires in 2017, at the same time as a secondary agreement regarding the University's subsidization of the program expires with the SU and GSA. The GSA will obviously be heavily involved in renegotiating both agreements. To that end, Ali has been meeting with stakeholders at both levels to discuss tactics. The real outcomes of these meetings will be seen next fall and winter, but for now we are pleased to announce (along with the SU) that the University will continue to subsidize the service, though the amount has yet to be determined.

- **Mental Health Services:** In addition to her labour portfolio, Sarah has worked a great deal on issues related to the critical concern of on-campus mental health services. She has met with a wide array of stakeholders both on and off our campus, and has participated in numerous conferences and information sharing opportunities. This is another area where the real results will be seen in a year or two as new programs are formed and (hopefully) provincial funding is secured.

As always, we have striven throughout the year for transparency, accountability, and the building of the GSA's reputation in all of our dealings throughout the year. Regular reporting on our progress against the goals of the SWP to Council and other stakeholders is part of this process, which will continue when the new DEOs take office on May 1. Until then, I look forward to our discussion on April 18, and welcome any questions you may have beforehand.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Colin More'.

Colin More 2015-2016 GSA President

GSA President
Report to GSA Council for the April 18, 2016 Meeting

To: GSA Council
From: Colin More
Date: April 15, 2016

Hello everyone,

I hope you're all taking maximum advantage of spring's early arrival! If we're stuck with global warming, we might as well get some flowers out of it.

Growing up on the coast of BC, I was used to things being green by February or early March. I was reminded of this when the graduate student associations from the U15 universities (the fifteen major institutes across Canada) met in Vancouver last week. Over the course of three days, we discussed a variety of topics, ranging from copyright issues to post-secondary learner data to ways of better responding to sexual assault. I have attended many of these meetings in the past, and feel they have three major uses. First, they allow executives at different schools to identify and understand common issues. Second, that shared knowledge allows access to a much broader set of solutions than may be imagined by any single executive team. Finally, the connections made with other student leaders across the country fosters a level of comfort in reaching out if a problem at one school has already been experienced by another. I personally have capitalized on all of these opportunities in my time with the GSA; I hope my successors find similar value!

Continuing with the external theme, and as reported by others as well, the Minister of Advanced Education, Marlin Schmidt, accepted an invitation from the GSA last month to attend the GSA Awards Night (see below). In conjunction with that invitation, he met with the leadership of the Students' Union, the GSA, the academic staff association, and the Board of Governors. Having now met and spoken with the Minister on a number of occasions, I believe my initial impression of him being an intelligent and thoughtful individual with a genuine drive to advance post-secondary education in this province is correct.

Speaking of Awards Night, we had an Awards Night! On April 1st we celebrated the remarkable teaching, research, and service performed by 26 graduate students across campus. Besides the Minister, we were assisted in this by a number of dignitaries including Chancellor Ralph Young, the University's VP Research Dr. Lorne Babiuk, VP University Relations Dr. Debra Pozega Osburn, Deputy Provost Dr. Wendy Rodgers, and Acting Dean of Students Dr. Robin Everall. It was a wonderful, and rather humbling, evening!

To change gears, and as Ali also reports, I was recently contacted by representatives from the Faculty Club. In a bid to increase (and, frankly, to lower the average age of) their membership, they are exploring ways to include graduate students in the Club. To start, they will be allowing graduate students free access from May 1 to August 31. This will come with drink specials and substantial discounts on other items, including the buffet. We support this effort to welcome students into the campus community!

Finally, this is my last written report to GSA Council as a sitting Directly-Elected Officer. The three years I have spent in office have been the most rewarding of my life. I have been so incredibly ludicrously absurdly lucky to have had this opportunity, and I hope that I have somehow made our campus a better place along the way. The list of people to cite is long and distinguished, but to everyone who has supported me along the way, my deepest thanks. I couldn't have done this without you.

So long!

Colin More, GSA President

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between March 22, 2016 to April 18, 2016. The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

March 23	General Faculties Council Academic Planning Committee (GFC APC)
March 24	Vice-President Finance and Administration (VP F&A) and Vice-President Facilities and Operations (VP F&O) Portfolio Discussion
March 29	GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC)
March 29	Discussion about BA Renewal Proposal with a Graduate Student
March 31	Meeting with the Dean of Students (R Overall)
April 1	Meeting with the Minister of Advanced Education Marlin Schmidt
April 1	Board of Governors Special Meeting
April 1	GSA Awards Night
April 4	Chancellor Search Committee
April 5	GSA Governance Committee (GSA GC)
April 5	Student Leaders' Meeting with the Provincial Government
April 6	Meeting with a GSA Councillor
April 7	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC)
April 7	Chancellor Search Committee Interviews
April 8	GSA Transition
April 9	Chancellor Search Committee Interviews
April 11	Chancellor Selection
April 11	SU/GSA Team Dinner
April 11	Meeting with Faculty Club Management
April 12-15	GU15

**GSA Board (GSAB)
Report to GSA Council for the April 18, 2016 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: 15 April 2016

The GSA Board (GSAB) 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 to the GSAB in Item 20 (Executive Director's Report to GSA Council) on pages 20.3-20.5.

23 March 2016 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Campus Food Bank: support form the GSA in 2015-2016; GSA Health and Dental Plan Fees for 2016-2017; Academic Travel Awards, Child Care Grants, and Emergency Bursaries: Reallocation of GSSF Rolling Opening Balances

Motions and Agreements:

MOTION: That the GSA give the Campus Food Bank an initial quarterly payment for 2016-2017 of \$2,250 with two-thirds restricted to food purchases and with the next quarterly payment to be conditional based upon the following: a meeting with members of the GSA Board to discuss recent meetings of the Campus Food Bank Board and to review of the usage of funds provided by the GSA, the development of an improved budget, and the completion of an audit. CM **MOVED**. SF Seconded. **CARRIED**.

MOTION: That the GSA Board **RECOMMEND TO GSA COUNCIL** that the GSA Health and Dental Plan Fee be set at \$492.95/annum, effective September 1, 2016, with collection from graduate students to begin September 1, 2016. CM **MOVED**. SF Seconded. **CARRIED**.

MOTION: That the GSA Board **PROPOSE TO THE GSA BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE** that, following on the GSA Board's recent recommendation to GSA Council that the GSA Health and Dental Plan Fee be set at \$492.95/annum, effective September 1, 2016, the payment of premium increases to the GSA Health Plan and GSA Dental Plan for 2016-2017 above the fee contribution collected from graduate students detailed above, be paid from the Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund (HDPRF). CM **MOVED**. AT Seconded. **CARRIED**.

MOTION: That the GSA Board **APPROVE** the reallocation of the amounts remaining in the budgets and contingency budgets for Academic Travel Awards, Child Care Grants, and Emergency Bursaries (approximately \$93,900 in total) as follows: ~\$30,000 to the budget line for Academic Travel Awards, ~\$57,900 to the budget line for Child Care Grants, and ~\$6,000 to the budget line for Emergency Bursaries. AT **MOVED**. ANA Seconded. **CARRIED. Passed**

30 March 2016 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Using a Three-Year Time Span in the GSA Rolling Budget and Business Plan: Proposed Changes to GSA Bylaw and GSA Policy; Discussion Topics for a Meeting with the Minister of Advanced Education – April 1, 2016

Motions and Agreements:

MOTION: That the GSA Board **RECOMMEND TO GSA COUNCIL**, having been unanimously recommended by the GSA BFC, a change to GSA Bylaw and GSA Policy to enable the use of a three-year, rather than a five-year, time span when developing the GSA rolling budget and business plan. HT **MOVED**. CM Seconded. **CARRIED**.

9 March 2016 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Reports Only

Motions and Agreements:

None at this time

GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC)
Report to GSA Council for the April 18, 2016 Meeting

To: GSA Council
From: Colin More
Date: April 18, 2016

Dear Council Colleagues,

The GSA BFC met on March 29, 2016 to discuss the GSA's investment strategy and investment management. As you may recall from previous reports, the GSA BFC's consideration of this matter has been extensive. Following discussion at the meetings of September 9 and November 12, 2015, and January 26, February 9, March 14, and March 29, 2016, the GSA BFC has designated authority to provide direction to the external Investment Manager with respect to the GSA's investment plan to the President as the Chair of the GSA BFC and the Executive Director as the Financial Team lead. The GSA has also developed an investment plan that includes regular review of the GSA's investments by the GSA BFC and the GSA Board.

Additionally, at the meeting of March 29, 2016, following on a proposal made by the GSA Board and previous discussion by GSA Council and the GSA BFC, members recommended to GSA Council that the payment of premium increases to the GSA Health Plan and GSA Dental Plan for 2016-2017, above the fee contribution collected from graduate students (which would be \$492.95, pending approval from GSA Council), be paid from the GSA Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund (HDPRF).

Sincerely,
Colin More, GSA President and Chair, GSA Budget and Finance Committee

GSA Governance Committee (GSA GC)
Report to GSA Council for the April 18, 2016 Meeting

To: GSA Council
From: Colin More
Date: April 15, 2016

Dear Council Colleagues,

The GSA GC met on April 5, 2016. At this meeting, members continued discussion about the integrated version of GSA Bylaw and Policy. They also continued the discussion on GSA Council quorum, which had been referred to the GSA GC by GSA Council at its February meeting.

After a lengthy discussion, GSA GC settled on a quorum of 34 voting members for GSA Council. A proposal will be prepared and presented to GSA Council, for consideration, in the upcoming months. During this discussion, the GSA GC also highlighted some issues regarding the structure and the functioning of GSA Council that they would like to address further. This conversation will continue in coming meetings.

Sincerely,
Colin More, GSA President and Chair, GSA Governance Committee

**GSA Nominating Committee (GSA NoC)
Report to GSA Council for the April 18, 2016 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Michele DuVal
Date: April 15, 2016

Dear Council Colleagues,

The report from the GSA Nominating Committee (GSA NoC) this month is a summary of discussions/decisions the GSA NoC has made since its last report, together with a list of all vacancies filled and those which will be filled shortly.

GSA Bylaw governing the GSA NoC is located in Part V (Standing Committees). GSA 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 NoC has been conducting business via e-mail.

Sincerely,

Michele DuVal, Administrative Chair, GSA Nominating Committee

GSA Council-Elected Officers

1) GSA Senator (1 Position)

As per GSA Policy, nominations for Senator opened in April. The GSA NoC advertised for the position in the GSA newsletter on Friday, April 8, 2016 and Friday, April 15, 2016. The deadline to receive nominations is Friday, May 6, 2016. GSA Council will vote to elect an individual to this position at the May GSA Council meeting.

GSA Standing Committees

1) GSA Councillor-at-Large (1 Graduate Student Position)

In the GSA newsletters of March 18 and 23, 2016 the GSA NoC advertised for the vacant GSA Councillor-at-Large position. The deadline to receive nominations was March 29, 2016 and one nomination was received. A call for additional nominations was emailed to GSA Council on March 29, 2016. The deadline to receive additional nominations was Friday, April 8, 2016 and one additional nomination was received. **See Item 8 – Nominees for GSA Councillors-at-Large By-Elections**

Bodies External to the GSA

1) United Way Grant Selection Committee (1 Graduate Student Position)

The GSA NoC ran an advertisement in the GSA newsletter on March 18, 2016 for a graduate student position on the United Way's 75th Anniversary Grant Project Selection Committee. The deadline for nominations was Friday, April 1, 2016, and **two nominations were received**. The nominations were both considered by the GSA NoC on Friday April 1, 2016 and **Lisa Jensen was selected for the position**.

2) President's Standing Committee on Convocation (1 Graduate Student Position)

The GSA NoC ran an advertisement in the GSA newsletter on March 18, 2016, for a graduate student position on the University of Alberta President's Standing Committee on Convocation. The deadline for nominations was

Friday, April 1, 2016 and **one nomination was received**. The nomination was considered and approved by the GSA NoC on Monday, April 4, 2016. **Alexandra Dixon (Public Health) was selected**.

Current Vacancies

GSA Standing Committees

1) GSA Board (1 GSA Councillor Position)

Monty Bal has stepped down from his position on GSA Board, leaving one non-voting position vacant for a member of GSA Council. The advertisement for this position will be emailed to Council on Wednesday, April 20, 2016 and the deadline for the first call for nominations will be Wednesday, April 27, 2016.

2) GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (1 GSA Departmental Councillor, Alternate, or Recent-Former Departmental Councillor)

One position remains open for a Departmental Councillor, alternate, or recent-former Departmental Councillor on the GSA ACB. The advertisement for this position will be emailed to Council on Wednesday, April 20, 2016 and the deadline for the first call for nominations will be Wednesday, April 27, 2016. The GSA NoC will interview candidates after nominations are received following the first and the second call.

Bodies External to the GSA

3) Arts Faculty Council and Committees (10 Positions)

The GSA NoC ran an advertisement in the GSA newsletter on April 8 and 15, 2016, for various Arts Faculty Council and Committee positions. With the approval of the Arts Governance Coordinator the GSA NoC also reached out to the representatives currently serving in these positions to ask if they would be interested in applying to serve a second term. The deadline for Arts graduate students to apply for these positions is Friday, May 6, 2016. The positions advertised were, as follows:

- **3 vacancies** for Arts graduate students—1 from the Humanities, 1 from Social Sciences, 1 from Fine Arts—on the **Faculty of Arts Academic Affairs Committee**;
- **5 vacancies** for Arts graduate students from any department to serve as representatives on the **Arts Faculty Council**
- **1 vacancy** for an Arts graduate student from any department to serve on the **Faculty Academic and Grade Appeals Committee**
- **1 vacancy** for an Arts graduate student from any department to serve on the **Faculty of Arts Research Committee and the McCalla Professorship Committee**

4) Steering Committee for the Development of the Maskwa House Designs and Programming (1 Indigenous Graduate Student Position)

There is **1 vacancy for an indigenous graduate student** representative to serve on the Steering Committee for the Development of the Maskwa House Designs and Programming. This position was advertised in the GSA newsletter on April 15, 2016 with a deadline of April 22, 2016.

**GSA Vice-President Academic
Report to GSA Council for the April 18, 2016 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Harsh Thaker
Date: April 18, 2016

Dear Council Colleagues,

I'll start off by saying that this is not my last report (I will still have 2 weeks worth of meetings to report on in May). Having said that, it has been a pleasure serving as the VP Academic and working with all of you who offer a great opportunity to link into the numerous departments at the University when weighing decisions that will have an impact on each and every graduate student on campus. We had our annual Awards Night celebration on April 1 and congratulations to all the award winners for their excellent contributions to the University community through teaching, research, and service. I would like now to highlight a couple of the meetings I have attended in the past month.

Academic Governance Working Group

This group has now expanded to include members from General Faculties Council (GFC) and at our most recent meeting we reviewed the Terms of Reference (ToR) for all of the GFC standing committees to assess whether they are current and accurately reflect the work being done at the committee level. There will be a special meeting of GFC on May 2 to discuss academic governance and delegated authority in more detail and will also provide an opportunity for GFC members to review the ToR for the entire Council to make any specific recommendations for the working group to look at.

Meeting with the Minister of Advanced Education

The meeting with the Minister went well, as some of the other DEOs have noted in their reports. Given that the budget will have been delivered on Thursday afternoon, I can only speculate at this point that it full of good news for post-secondary education. During the meeting with Minister Schmidt, he did mention that the targeted funding for graduate professional development and mental health service units would likely be renewed in the near future.

General Faculties Council Nominating Committee

The replenishment of standing committees is currently underway at the GFC level and students were elected/appointed into the various GFC standing committees at the March 21 meeting (which include committees/boards that fall under the judicial arm of the University's governance structure). Staff members were subsequently appointed to upcoming vacancies at a separate GFC Nominating Committee meeting on April 11.

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

12.1

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between March 22, 2016 to April 18, 2016. The meetings were accurate at the time of printing. I was away on Research Leave from April 8, 2016 to April 15, 2016.

March 21	General Faculties Council Nominating Committee (GFC NC)
March 21	General Faculties Council Facilities Development Committee (GFC FDC)
March 29	General Faculties Council (GFC) Working Group
March 29	Discussion about BA Renewal Proposal with a Graduate Student
April 1	Meeting with the Minister of Advanced Education M Schmidt
April 1	GSA Awards Night
April 5	Office of the Registrar Student Advisory Committee (ORSAC)
April 6	General Faculties Council Committee on the Learning Environment (GFC CLE)
April 7	World Health Day
April 7	General Faculties Council Academic Standards Committee Subcommittee on Standards (GFC ASC SoS)
April 14	CTL Director Search Committee Meeting
April 18	Academic Governance Working Group Meeting

**GSA Vice-President External
Report to GSA Council for the April 18, 2016 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Alphonse Ndem Ahola
Date: April 15, 2016

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope your semester is ending on a positive note. I will highlight two important meetings in my report.

Meeting with the Minister of Advanced Education: On April 1, Colin, Sarah, Ali and Harsh, and I had a meeting with the Minister of Advanced Education, Marlin Schmidt. We discussed the Tuition Fee Regulation, asking the Minister that it would be ideal to have international students included so that they had predictable increases. He said the government wants to make it as easy as possible for international students to come here to study. We also discussed mental health, asking that steady funding be considered so that the U of A could retain trained personnel.

Meeting with Alumni: Since last year I have been a member of the Alumni New Program Development Committee. We held our last meeting on April 7. The purpose of the New Program Development Committee is to explore the following focus areas emerging from the planning process for the next Alumni Association Strategic Plan: alumni leadership, an engagement pathway, and campus collaboration. The committee's role was to understand the goals associated with each area as it relates to strategic planning, review recently added portfolios with the potential to expand these areas, and discuss any gaps in programming that would need to be addressed to effectively implement the focus area. With regard to engaging graduate students, we came to an agreement that there is a need to improve connections with student leaders because they are already engaged with the University, they can be influencers within their networks and grow those networks, and they often represent the type of student wanting to connect with alumni.

Another theme that emerged, related to students in the strategic planning process, is to engage students early in their University careers. Mentioned in several consultations as critical to the success of the transition to alumni, early engagement provides an opportunity for the Alumni Association to enhance the student experience and helps to build a culture of community for the U of A family. In addition, The Alumni Association can contribute to the development of graduate students and prepare them to enter jobs outside of academia by providing soft skill development. I am convinced that we have a great opportunity to build a very fruitful relationship with Alumni and I recommend that the new GSA DEOs and Board work specifically with Sean Price to explore engagement pathways suggested in the new development committee report.

All the best,

Alphonse Ndem Ahola, GSA Vice-President External

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between March 22, 2016 to April 18, 2016. The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

April 1	Meeting with the Minister of Advanced Education M Schmidt
April 1	GSA Awards Night
April 4	Residence Advisory Committee (RAC)
April 7	Alumni New Program Development
April 7	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC)
April 8	GSA Transition
April 11	GSA/SU Dinner
April 12	Meeting with W Doughty
April 15	Council of Residence Associations (CORA)

**GSA Vice-President Labour
Report to GSA Council for the April 18, 2016 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Sarah Ficko
Date: April 15, 2016

Hi Everyone,

I'm finding it hard to believe that almost a year has gone by already since I started as the VP Labour! I want to thank everyone for their support and input around the shared goal of wanting the best experience possible for grad students at the U of A. Providing assistance to graduate students in need has been a driving factor for me this past year, and the reason why I chose to run to become GSA President as of May 1.

Regarding my report as Vice-President Labour, this month has been busy due to a combination of labour-related meetings and transitions meetings. Some of the key areas include continuing to reach out to Councillors to gain a better understanding of the labour situation in each department, meetings with students about several serious cases that Heather Hogg and I are dealing with, continuing negotiations for the Collective Agreement, assisting with transition of the incoming team, and attending GU15. I've also been involved in a consulting session for the Healthy Campus Strategy as well as meeting Minister of Advanced Education Marlin Schmidt and helping celebrate outstanding grad students at the GSA Awards Night (as other DEOs report).

As I discussed last month, I generally hear issues on a case-by-case basis, (sometimes with multiple issues from one department or faculty). For instance, several examples of recent issues include helping a student who has been waiting 9 months get a defense date set, assisting a student with funding issues, and dealing with a case of sexual harassment. While even one case indicates a problem, it is useful to have a better understanding of the culture, range of issues and number of students affected in each department before we can begin to create meaningful change. To address this issue, I've started to meet with Councillors for an informal chat to gain a sense of the culture in each department. If you haven't received an email yet, please keep an eye out for it in the next few months, and I or my successor Sasha van der Klein will be happy to chat over a beverage! Once we've met with Councillors we will then determine how best to proceed. Some options could include sending out a survey to collect more information from all or select departments, offering education sessions on the Collective Agreement to grad students, and working with FGSR and the Provost's Office to ensure staff and faculty are also aware of, and following, the terms and conditions in the Collective Agreement.

For Collective Bargaining, Heather and I are finalizing edits to the Collective Agreement, and we are meeting with the University about their response to our financial counter-offer on Tuesday. If this meeting goes well, we will likely need a special meeting early in May for ratification of the Collective Agreement once the Memorandum of Settlement is signed.

This month, my Collective Agreement Fun Fact is:

6.05.02 In cases where the assistantship can no longer be funded through restricted funds, the Assistantship Supervisor will notify the Department Chair. The Department will be responsible for

providing funding to the graduate student at a level equivalent to the original assistantship appointment.

Note: This clause is included to prevent a supervisor from suddenly cut off funding to a student if something happens to the grant or other funding source they have been paying the student from during a contract term.

As incoming President, I've also been attending meetings with Colin, as well as working closely with him and the Management Team to help ensure the incoming team have opportunities to attend meetings, meet key people and stakeholders, identify gaps in training that can be rectified, and are feeling confident starting their new roles in May. I am also in this boat of having to learn a new job while doing my job of VPL, so I'm writing this report from Vancouver where Colin and I are attending GU15. I am proud and excited to be continuing with the GSA and working with and leading a creative, energetic, and hardworking team next year!

Finally, as I've mentioned in my previous reports, please continue to bring forward general or specific issues with your own RA/TAships or other issues in your departments as you will likely hear about it before I do, and at a point where it could potentially be more easily resolved. I would be happy to present to departmental GSAs on the Collective Agreement and assistantships, so please ask! We're also still collecting copies of letters of offers, contracts and assistantship appointment letters that have been received by graduate students.

Happy April!

Sarah Ficko, GSA Vice-President Labour, incoming GSA President

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between March 22, 2016 to April 18, 2016. The meetings were accurate at the time of printing.

March 22	Meeting with Director of Community Social Workers Team
March 23	General Faculties Council Academic Planning Committee (GFC APC)
March 24	Healthy Campus Strategy
March 29	GSA Budget and Finance Committee (GSA BFC)
March 31	Dean of Students (R Overall)
April 1	Meeting with the Minister of Advanced Education M Schmidt
April 1	GSA Awards Night
April 4	Meeting with a Councillor re the Statue in Dewey's
April 5	GSA Governance Committee (GSA GC)
April 5	Meeting with the Graduate Ombudsperson
April 5	Meeting with a Graduate Student
April 5	Meeting with a Graduate Student
April 6	Meeting with a GSA Councillor
April 6	Meeting with the Administrative Chair of the GSA Nominating Committee (GSA NoC)
April 6	Adolescent/young adult Connections to Community-driven, Early, Strengths-based and stigma-free Services (ACCESS) Project Working Group
April 7	World Health Day

April 7	Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC)
April 7	Research re Inquiring Minds Program (K Dobson)
April 7	Meeting with a GSA Councillor
April 7	Meeting with a GSA Councillor
April 8	GSA Transition
April 8	Meeting with Councillor
April 8	Meeting with a Associate Dean FGSR, Graduate Ombudsperson, Associate Chair and a Graduate Student
April 11	SU/GSA Dinner
April 12-15	GU15
April 18	Meeting with a GSA Councillor

**GSA Vice-President Student Services
Report to GSA Council for the April 18, 2016 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Alireza Talaei
Date: April 15, 2016

Dear Council Colleagues,

Hope all is good and you are doing fine. Coming to the end of academic year, the past few weeks has been quite busy both academic wise and in terms of the work of the GSA. However, there have been several exciting meetings and events which made the past month quite unique for me. Overall, participating in several awards ceremonies (including GSA Awards Night) and occasions provided me the opportunity to meet with unique and intelligent graduate students and professors and be impressed about the quality of ongoing work in the great University that I am a part of.

The highlights of my past month activities at the GSA are as follows:

- Together with Colin, we have had meetings with the Faculty Club management team. As the potential next generation of professors, we thought that it would be a good opportunity for graduate students to be able to join the Faculty Club community and benefit from the very many services that they provide. We have negotiated a discounted membership and food rates for graduate students as well as access to the services provided by the Faculty Club. For graduate students, the membership will be free during the summer months so, if you are interested, take your friends and family to the Faculty Club, enjoy the unique view of the river, have good food, and enjoy the discounted rate of food and drinks for graduate students.
- In a meeting with Edmonton Transit Services and other U-Pass stakeholders, the continuation of the pro-rated U-Pass replacement program was discussed and, as expected, it will be continued.
- U-Pass related news again: For several years the GSA, in partnership with other U-Pass stakeholders, have advocated for the introduction of Smart Fare technology which will accurately track ridership, etc and help us in future U-Pass negotiations. The U of A community (including students, staff, and faculty members) is one of the biggest users of the Edmonton transit system but without a way to accurately track usage, collecting data is difficult. The good news is that the project is moving forward and, depending on the scope, it might become practical in the next few month/years!
- I have also had several meetings with the current and incoming SU elected officers which helped us come to a mutual understanding about the ongoing issues affecting students on campus and how we could maintain and even enhance our good collaboration as the two student bodies at U of A.

Sincerely,

Ali Talaei, Vice-President Student Services

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between March 22, 2016 and April, 2016:

April 1	Meeting with the Minister of Advanced Education M Schmidt
April 1	GSA Awards Night
April 4	University Research Policy Committee (URPC)
April 8	GSA Transition
April 11	SU/GSA Dinner
April 11	Meeting with Faculty Club Management
April 11	Campus Food Bank Board Meeting
April 13	Killam Award for Excellence in Mentoring Final Selection Meeting
April 13	Smart Fare Feedback
April 13	3-Minute Thesis Finals
April 14	Graduate Teaching Awards Reception and Festival Teaching Spotlight

**GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC)
Report to GSA Council for the April 18, 2016 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Leigh Spanner
Date: April 15, 2016

Dear Council Colleagues,

The GSA ERC is scheduled to meet on Thursday, April 21, 2016 to debrief GSA General Election. Subjects for discussion at this meeting include the nomination process, the candidate videos, the candidates' forum, voting, and campaigning issues. The GSA ERC will also review the results of a survey prepared by the GSA ERC Vice-Chair and circulated to all GSA General Election 2016 candidates.

I am happy to answer any questions.

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

**GSA Executive Director
Report to GSA Council for the April 18, 2016 Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Ellen Schoeck
Date: April 15, 2016

Dear Council Colleagues,

The table below lists the GSA's key corporate docs, which define us as a corporate entity. I will be happy to answer any questions at Council.

The detailed management reports submitted weekly to the Board are attached. As always, Courtney, Heather, and I welcome your questions and feedback.

Best,
Ellen Schoeck, Executive Director

NAME	SUMMARY	STATUS
<i>Agreements with Expiry Dates</i>		
Campus Food Bank	Regulates GSA involvement with Food Bank.	GSA gives \$9000/annum to Campus Food Bank. MOU expired April 30, 2015 and GSAB decided on terms for a grant of \$9000 for 2016-2017.
Collective Agreement (AEGS)	Sets out terms of employment for certain graduate students and terms for use of AEGS funds.	Current agreement expires August 31, 2016. Negotiations are ongoing.
Collective Agreement with NASA covering office staff	Sets out terms of employment for GSA staff.	Renegotiated by the Executive Director and Director of Operations in April 2012. This agreement expired April 30, 2015, and has been renegotiated and signed. Expires in 2020.
Graduate Student Assistance Program (GSAP)	Provides for a wide range of personal counselling.	Originally signed December 31, 2010 for a two-year period with the possibility of 4 two-year extensions. Was reviewed and re-signed via email in August 2013. Dependents added in December 2013. Current agreement expires December 31, 2014 but is described by Administration as a rolling plan. Reviewed annually with Administration.
Health and Dental Agreement with Studentcare	Provides for Health and Dental Plan.	Provider changed in 2012. Re-signed in 2014. Current agreement expires August 31, 2020 (renegotiated agreement was signed in October 2014). Review service levels annually.
Liability Insurance	As a separate corporation from the university, we carry our own General Liability insurance and Directors and Officers insurance.	We doubled our liability insurance in 2012. We are not covered for alcohol use and yet have GSA students groups who have self-reported that they use alcohol: discussions in 2013-2014 with Administration and insurance experts. General Liability insurance expires May 17, 2016. Agreement received April 6 and we are reviewing.

NAME	SUMMARY	STATUS
North Power Plant and Dewey's	<p>2009 Memorandum of Agreement with the Students' Union regarding the operation of Dewey's</p> <p>2010 Memorandum of Understanding with the U of A for use of North Power Plant Space for the Tory Building decant</p> <p>1997 Memorandum of Agreement with the U of A guaranteeing graduate social space in North Power Plant or at another location;</p> <p>2004 Letter of Confirmation on this MoU from the Dean of Students. The space included is the current sustainability offices and Tory decant space.</p>	<p>Expired August 2012 - conversations and negotiations are currently ongoing</p> <p>Expired - Tory Decant complete</p> <p>No Expiration - conversation regarding Dewey's/NPP underway as part of this MoA</p>
Officers/Directors' Insurance	As a separate corporation from the university, we carry insurance that covers the elected officials, and management.	We doubled our coverage in 2013. We switched brokers in 2016 and signed a new agreement. Current agreement expires January 28, 2017.
Photocopier Lease with Xerox	Covers two photocopiers.	Current agreement expires March 31, 2018.
TDIMM	Provides for group auto and home insurance as well as some funding for GSA events.	Current agreement expires October 7, 2016. Funding for the TD Student Service Award continues until 2017.
Triffo Lease	Detailed lease covering our use of Triffo office space.	First-ever lease was signed in June 2011; 5-year term, four renewals. Current agreement expires May 30, 2016 (notification of desire to renew must be given 6-12 months before expiry). We have provided notice and been informed there are no issues with renewal. Resigned for another 5-year term.
U of A Financial Services	Stipulates when GSA receives fees collected by the U of A on our behalf.	Re-negotiated and signed in April 2012. Re-negotiated again in 2013 for the academic years 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016. Re-negotiated again in 2016 for the academic years 2016-2017, 2017-2018, and 2018-2019. Deals with cash flow issue. Current agreement expires April 30, 2019.
U-PASS Transit Agreement with the U of A Agreement with the City of Edmonton	Governs U-PASS. Governs U-PASS.	Referendum held in March 2013. New agreement signed in September 2013. Current agreement expires in 2017 when the U of A agreement with the City of Edmonton expires. The University, rather than the GSA, signs this agreement with the City and the U of A and the GSA and SU then sign a separate agreement. Current agreement expires in 2017 and an agreement in principle on renewal must be reached between the U of A and City of Edmonton by October 31, 2016.

AGREEMENTS WITH NO EXPIRY DATE (ONGOING)		
NAME	SUMMARY	STATUS
Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council	Society under the <i>Societies Act</i> .	Registered in March 2015 with U of C, U of L and AU GSAs. No expiration date; annual <i>Societies Act</i> filing required. (The former Alberta Graduate Council disbanded in 2013).
Banking and signing authorities	Operating account, GICs, investments.	Actively reviewed with BMO in April 2012. Signing authorities reviewed annually. GSA will change banks to ATB starting May 1.
Investment	GICs, Investment with ATB	Agreement was signed on April 11, 2016.
CAPS and Writing Resources Centre Agreement (Academic Workshop Subsidies)	Provides for subsidy of certain CAPS and WRC courses for grad students.	Annual subsidy of \$5500. Subsidy part of the GSA budget. Reviewed annually.
Ceridian (Payroll)	GSA staff and elected officials are now paid by direct deposit.	We are very pleased with Ceridian. Outsourcing is cheaper than in-house production of cheques. Agreement signed May 30, 2011. Ongoing with no expiry date.
Direct Deposit	Provides for direct deposit of AEGS cheques and T4A production by U of A.	Signed 2012. Major infrastructure change. Ongoing with no expiry date.
Info Sharing with Studentcare and University	Allows Studentcare access to graduate students' personal information for strictly defined purposes regarding the GSA's Health and Dental Plan.	Reviewed with the U of A Privacy Officer and Studentcare in 2012 and new agreement signed on May 3, 2013. Ongoing with no expiry date, GSA gives notice of 6 months if wanting to terminate.
PAW Centre Agreement	Sets out terms of operation of PAW. SU also a signatory to the Agreement.	Signed in April 2012. Need to negotiate business terms with SU (discussion began in December 2013 and continues).
Personal Information Sharing Agreement with the U of A	Allows the GSA access to graduate students' personal information for strictly defined purposes, e.g. emailing the newsletter, elections.	Signed in May 2013. Ongoing with no expiry date.
Semi-Annual Pay Cycle	Governs AEGS pay cycle	Signed in April 2012. Ongoing with no expiry date.
Student Financial Services (formerly UBEF)	Student Financial Services administers the GSA's Emergency Bursary funds.	2006 AEGS Memorandum of Settlement between GSA/BoG provides for establishment of bursary program with terms of reference developed by GSA and "distributed through the University Bursary Program."

Other Corporate Documents		
NAME	SUMMARY	STATUS
Audit (based on GSA Council-approved budget)	As a separate corporation from the University, we hire our own auditor. Requirement of the <i>Post-Secondary Learning Act</i> .	Audit occurs annually in May-June. Audit field officers were on site June 15-17, 2015.
Council Bylaws and Policies	Enabled by the <i>Post-Secondary Learning Act</i> .	Comprehensive review began in 2013 and continues.
Management Contracts with ED/Letters of Appointment	Sets out terms of employment for managers.	Standard appointment letter has been reviewed by our lawyers.
Referenda Master File	All referenda questions that actively impact graduate students (eg UPASS, PAW Centre, GSAP, Health and Dental Plan, etc).	Compiled and filed. Ongoing as referenda arise.
Tuition Agreement Letters	Letters from the University stating the tuition increases for the upcoming academic year.	Received annually.

Management Report to the GSA Board, March 23, 2016

Dear All,

The following issues have dominated management’s attention in the week since the last GSA Board meeting on March 16, 2016:

Strategic

- **Main Issues Dealt With in the Past Week:** Health and Dental Plan fee for 2016-2017, Transition, preparing for a GSA Budget and Finance Committee meeting, Collective Agreement, GSA Council attendance historical data, GSA Council meeting, Unwind Your Mind final report and new application, GFC Caucus, staff transition and training, election of a new Occupational Therapy Councillor to GSA Council, election of faculty GSA executive in ALES, eGrad graduate student group.
- **Bylaw and Policy Review:** a review of all Bylaws and Policies for inconsistencies and errors and integration of the two (a draft has been prepared and a meeting of the GSA Governance Committee, at which it will be reviewed for the second time, is upcoming).
- **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.

Grants and Operations

- **Social Media:** Facebook = 754 likes (up 4 from March 16). Our Facebook posts reached 557 users this week and our “post engagement” count was 11. Twitter = 576 followers (up 2 from March 16). Our tweets earned 5,825 “impressions” over the last week.
- Planning for **GSA Awards Night**.
- **Grants processing** (period runs January 1 to March 31, period is 89% completed).

	Total Amount Available This Period	Total Amount Remaining This Period	Number of New Applications Since Last GSAB	Total Number of Applications This Period
ATA	\$79,684.38	\$34,456.37	14	102 (17 pending processing)
CCG	\$85,176.60	\$0 CLOSED	60	60 (0 pending processing)
ASGA	\$6,142.50	\$0 CLOSED	0	7 (0 pending processing)
EB	\$147,351.87* (no periods)	\$21,154.37* (no periods)	2	40 (0 pending processing)

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- Supporting the **work of the GSA NoC** (recommending graduate students to serve on GFC Standing Committees, election of a new Occupational Therapy Councillor to GSA Council, election of faculty GSA executives in ALES, CALs, Deputy Speaker, President’s Standing Committee on Convocation, United Way Campaign Committee)
- Assistance with planning for **Awards Night**.
- Assistance with **planning for Transition**.
- Grants processing.

Management Report to the GSA Board, March 30, 2016

Dear All,

The following issues have dominated management’s attention in the week since the last GSA Board meeting on March 23, 2016:

Strategic

- **Main Issues Dealt With in the Past Week:** Health and Dental Plan fee for 2016-2017 and forward thinking on the Plan, Transition, preparing for a GSA Budget and Finance Committee meeting, Collective Agreement negotiations, Unwind Your Mind final report and new application (**we got word that our application was successful and we will receive the grant a second time!**), election of a new Occupational Therapy Councillor to GSA Council, election of faculty GSA executive in ALES, eGrad graduate student group, preparing for an upcoming meeting on the GSA Governance Committee.
- **Bylaw and Policy Review:** a review of all Bylaws and Policies for inconsistencies and errors and integration of the two (a draft has been prepared and a meeting of the GSA Governance Committee, at which it will be reviewed for the second time, is upcoming).
- **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.

Grants and Operations

- **Social Media:** Facebook = 754 likes (up 4 from March 23). Our Facebook posts reached 524 users this week and our “post engagement” count was 6. Twitter = 583 followers (up 17 from March 23). Our tweets earned 4,616 “impressions” over the last week.
- Planning for **GSA Awards Night** (catering order, program design and printing, preparation of certificates, preparation of the script, etc).
- **Grants processing** (period runs January 1 to March 31, period is 96% completed).

	Total Amount Available This Period	Total Amount Remaining This Period	Number of New Applications Since Last GSAB	Total Number of Applications This Period
ATA	\$79,684.38	\$28,887.37	12	114 (12 pending processing)
CCG	\$85,176.60	\$0 CLOSED	60	60 (0 pending processing)
ASGA	\$6,142.50	\$0 CLOSED	0	7 (0 pending processing)
EB	\$147,351.87* (no periods)	\$21,154.37* (no periods)	0	40 (0 pending processing)

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- Supporting the **work of the GSA NoC** (recommending graduate students to serve on GFC Standing Committees, election of a new Occupational Therapy Councillor to GSA Council, election of faculty GSA executives in ALES, CAL election, President’s Standing Committee on Convocation, United Way Campaign Committee)
- Assistance with planning for **Awards Night**.
- Assistance with **planning for Transition**.
- Thinking on the **GSA’s social media strategy**.
- Grants processing.

Management Report to the GSA Board, April 6, 2016

Dear All,

The following issues have dominated management’s attention in the week since the last GSA Board meeting on April 6, 2016:

Strategic

- **Main Issues Dealt With in the Past Week:** Transition, preparing for a GSA Governance Committee meeting, Collective Agreement negotiations, Unwind Your Mind final report, election of a new Occupational Therapy Councillor to GSA Council, election of faculty GSA executive in ALES, GSA Awards Night.
- **Bylaw and Policy Review:** a review of all Bylaws and Policies for inconsistencies and errors and integration of the two (a draft has been prepared and a GSA Governance Committee reviewed it for the second time at its last meeting).
- **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.

Grants and Operations

- **Social Media:** Facebook = 754 likes (up 0 from March 30). Our Facebook posts reached 474 users this week and our “post engagement” count was 6. Twitter = 584 followers (up 1 from March 30). Our tweets earned 5,317 “impressions” over the last week.
- **Grants processing** (period runs April 1 – June 30, period is 4% completed).

	Total Amount Available This Period	Total Amount Remaining This Period	Number of New Applications Since Last GSAB	Total Number of Applications This Period
ATA	\$113,718.75	\$109,718.75	8	8 (8 pending processing)
CCG	\$104,737.50	\$10,737.50 CLOSED	55	55 (55 pending processing)
ASGA	\$3,562.50	\$1,832.50	2	2 (2 pending processing)
EB	\$135,125 (no periods)	\$135,125	0	0 (0 Pending processing)

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- Supporting the **work of the GSA NoC** (election of a new Occupational Therapy Councillor to GSA Council, election of faculty GSA executives in ALES, CAL election, President’s Standing Committee on Convocation, United Way Campaign Committee, Faculty of Arts Committees)
- Assistance with planning for **Awards Night**.
- Assistance with **planning for Transition**.
- Thinking on the **GSA’s social media strategy**.
- Grants processing.