



Dear Councillors,

January 23, 2017

As many of you will remember my team and I began the development of the 2016-2017 Board Strategic Work Plan (SWP) in late April and after a broad consultative effort, we presented the finalized plan to GSA Council in October.

In early January, my team and I met to discuss our progress on the various initiatives developed in the plan. In preparation for providing this update to you, I asked my team to each identify two initiatives that they have completed and that they feel have had a notable impact, as well as the two initiatives that they are most excited about tackling next. Below is a summary of our discussion. Attached you will find the complete GSA Board SWP as it was presented to you in October. My team and I have reviewed it carefully and developed a colour-coding system to track our progress on the various elements of the SWP – I encourage you all to have a look and I welcome the chance to discuss this with you on January 23.

#### Completed Initiatives

- Working with ab-GPAC on the Alberta government's labour review and tuition review
- GSA advocacy concerning the international graduate student tuition increase
- Consulting graduate students and restructuring the GSA Board Strategic Work Plan
- Working with the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research (FGSR) to implement the professional (experience or development) leave
- On-going discussions with FGSR regarding supervision, mentorship programs and funding packages
- Enhancing student engagement
- Building relationships with various stakeholders on campus
- Provision of timely support to graduate students
- Helping in the development of the Sexual Violence Policy
- GSA Board review of the GSA Health and Dental Plan
- On-going partnership with the Campus Food Bank
- Finalizing the 2017-2021 U-Pass agreement

#### Upcoming Initiatives

- Having a voice on the University Childcare Taskforce
- Discussion of homelessness on campus
- Discussion regarding gathering spaces for indigenous graduate students
- Continuing discussion with FGSR on supervision, mentorship programs and funding packages
- On-going discussions regarding the fee collection for residence associations
- Developing a white paper on immigration policy for international students
- Meeting with GSA Councillors regarding the application of the Collective Agreement in their departments
- Transit to Michener Park residence
- Social space in the North Power Plant building
- Promoting mental wellness on campus

Sincerely,

Sarah Ficko 2016-2017 GSA President