

Agenda

1. Approval of the Agenda
2. Approval of the Minutes
 - (a) August 22, 2011 **(attached)**
3. Presentations and Announcements
 - (a) Presentations by Guests
 - i. Tuition (Dr. Carl Amrhein) (60 minutes)
 - ii. Audit (Auditor Tom Gee) (30 minutes) **(three audit documents attached)**
 - iii. Alberta Graduate Council (President Paul Walz) (30 minutes) **(letter from Roy Coulthard attached)**
 - (b) Remarks from the Speaker
4. Reports
 - (a) Elected Officials
 - i. President **(attached)**
 - ii. VP Academic **(attached)**
 - iii. VP Labour **(attached)**
 - iv. VP Student Life **(attached)**
 - v. VP Student Services **(attached)**
 - (b) Officers
 - i. Speaker
 - ii. Senator **(attached)**
 - iii. Chief Returning Officer
 - (c) Standing Committees
 - i. GSA Board **(attached)**
 - ii. Governance Committee – for slate of members, refer to item 6(a)
 - iii. Budget and Finance Committee – joint meeting with GSA Board on 31 August 2011 regarding the GSA Audit – second reading of BFC Terms of Reference at this Council meeting
 - iv. Student Affairs Advisory Committee – for slate of members, refer to item 6(a)
 - v. Awards Selection Committee – preparing for adjudication of the Graduate Citizenship Award

- vi. Negotiation Committee – no business at present
- vii. Labour Relations Committee – for slate of members, refer to item 6(a)
- viii. Elections and Referenda Committee – for slate of members, refer to item 6(a)
- (d) Nominating Committee **(attached)**
- (e) GSA Management **(attached)**
- 5. Question Period
 - (a) Written Questions
 - (b) Oral Questions
- 6. Elections
 - (a) GSA Standing Committees **(Nominating Committee recommendations attached)**
- 7. Second Reading of R20110926.1: BFC Terms of Reference **(attached)**
- 8. New Business
- 9. Adjournment

General Orders

R20110926.1 *BIRT* Council, upon the recommendation of the GSA Board, approve the BFC Terms of Reference Proposal as attached in second reading.

GSA Council Minutes – 22 August 2011

Speaker called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

1) Approval of the Agenda

Agenda unanimously approved.

2) Approval of the Minutes

a) July 25, 2011

Minutes unanimously approved.

3) Presentations and Announcements

a) Presentations by Guests

i) Undergraduate Research Initiative (Dr Connie Varnhagen - CV) (30 minutes)

CV noted that the URI is important for graduate students, despite its name. In 2003, the University began a working group to complete an environmental scan in order to evaluate how undergraduate students and graduate students are being incorporated into the research process. CV noted that research is the differentiating feature that sets University of Alberta apart from other universities and colleges. Students wanted internships, coop programs and other engagement opportunities, and these were written into the Academic Plan, though not funded; this initiative has since been funded by alumni donations.

There are four main functions of the URI: to raise students' awareness of and interest in undergraduate research; to support students in developing the knowledge and skills needed for participation in undergraduate research; to facilitate opportunities for students to engage in undergraduate research; and to assist students in disseminating and celebrating undergraduate research.

The initiative should launch on September 27, 2011.

CV posed a question to the Council: "How can the URI and graduate students work together?"

A-AM Pharmacy: Organize the students that are coming to your program by discipline; this will make it easier for graduate students who are looking for summer students. From my experience, summer students are the most important graduate student/undergraduate student link.

CV: Students can use an NSERC or Roger Smith research grant at any point in the year; this could prove helpful for some Faculties.

Fred Wu MMI (FW MMI): Since these grants are so rare, are there stable financial sources from the university to encourage undergraduate research?

CV: We have some sources; we are lobbying for more.

FW MMI: “URI” has a poor medical connotation.

CV: Duly noted.

A-AM Pharmacy: There are matching funds in our Faculty. Is this happening in other places?

CV: It depends on the Faculty; there is incredible disparity between programs for the same grant. There are disciplinary pressures forcing that extra payment.

President: In your recent consultations, what buy-in and interest have you had from faculty?

CV: There are pressures, and we understand this can be downloaded to graduate students. We hope that as we learn more, we can be involved in time management initiatives with professors. For example, it’s smart to think about classes as opportunities for engagement as opposed to “sage on the stage” forums. A lot of professors are supportive, and we are working to make this as smooth as possible. We hope the positives outweigh the drawbacks.

VK CAL: Are students looking for these opportunities, or are these databases simply matchmaking?

CV: This is not eHarmony, despite the *Gateway*’s reporting. There will be a large training piece to ensure undergraduates are building their own skills.

FW MMI: It doesn’t seem to me that the research itself is the issue; it’s the teaching as well. If students are engaged in the material, they will transition into research. Have you looked into other universities’ best practices? For this to be successful, I would suggest pursuing buy-in at the departmental level.

CV: Absolutely; our next plan is to go to Faculty Councils to talk to these people. We are working to see where our efforts will be best mobilized. Our work is totally evidence-based.

FW MMI: An idea for integration might be to attach these plans to Honours Programs.

CV: Some programs have this, but there’s a lot more we can do to make this a truly great university.

URI is beginning a database for undergraduate students to broker opportunities. URI hopes this will be a more efficient and effective way to connect. Working on funding for students; right now there is a small pot of money that is non-renewable. Students may also be able to apply for grants on behalf of their research commitments. There will be drop-in sessions and workshops that graduate students can use as professional development opportunities. The database is hosted as a set of opportunities, some of which might be paid, some of which will be volunteer or internship-based. Searches will be open to anyone. Should be operational by September 27th.

i) Physical Activity and Wellness (PAW) Centre (30 minutes)

President: There was a referendum on the PAW Centre in 2010, and a majority voted in favour of the project.

Ben Louie (Architect) (BL): What does this building mean to health and wellness, campus experience, and how these spaces influence and contribute to the university.

Doug Ramsey (DR) presented via Powerpoint: In January 2010, we did some visioning sessions for PAW. The cue cards on the wall have been used as guiding principles throughout the project. We have been looking at a variety of architectural designs, and our functional programming resulted in a decision to add the new building on the corner of 114th street and 87th avenue. The PAW will be a gateway to campus, particularly as the campus plan begins to connect the new Quad with the Jubilee. The key locator for the project is the intervening space between the Butterdome, University Hall and Van Vliet. The current design doesn't take into account barrier-free access. Key pieces will be the "social street" and the "concourse." The fourth-floor Quiet Lounge will be important for graduate students.

The locker room area and west pool will be renewed through the project. These areas are being negotiated as program spaces. Along the concourse, there will be areas for games and student services.

In future, there will be an underground connection with the Health Precinct across 87th avenue.

There will be several outdoor spaces that will be accessible from the fitness centre. Active outdoor space will be available. The project's aspirations are to integrate activities and studying space with social opportunities.

The fitness centre will have a great deal of glass in order to actively engage the street; people will be able to quickly identify the PAW Centre as such. Quiet spaces will also be included.

Much of the project will be westward-facing to ensure maximal exposure to public areas. The point of context for the project will be "light."

There will be a graduate lounge with views out toward east campus and the social street.

The current LEED project is at 61 points; 50 points are needed for LEED silver, and 60 points are needed for LEED gold.

FW MMI: The fee is \$29 per term -- could you describe the value added for graduate students in terms of money spent? It isn't clear how that fits in based on the current project.

DR: Fitness centre is three times the current size; climbing wall will be amongst best in Canada. Rooms will be bookable spaces.

FW MMI: Personally, given graduate student life style, I'm not sure I see how this is sufficiently usable for graduate students to justify the cost.

VJ CAL: How accessible will the buildings be at all hours? Who will have access and when?

BL: Operations has been working to answer those questions. We don't have final agreement yet.

Kyle Braithwaite (KB): Design committee will work to set hours in consultation with students. There should be opportunities for extra hours for graduate students.

VN CAL: When will the tunnel between the PAW and Medicine be available?

BL: We don't know when the funds are available; there are mechanisms to work through this process.

CRO: Will operations be charging a user fee for groups using these various amenities (i.e. costs for the climbing wall)?

BL: These are mostly operational questions.

VK CAL: In terms of the fitness centre, is the "useable" space three times the size of the current system (i.e. will there be additional machines)?

BL: There will definitely be greater numbers of machines. There is additional space in creative areas for cardio equipment. As we work with Facilities & Operations, we will report back quantitatively and qualitatively about the machines.

Lacey Fleming, Anthropology (LF Anthro): Are there plans to allow alumni to use the facilities?

DR: It is possible to pay a fee and use the facilities.

HS Computing Science: How does the 50 foot climbing wall compare to other spaces?

DR: This wall will be bigger than most other areas in North America. In most places, people "boulder" around the wall. In the case of the PAW's wall, users will be able to "boulder" all the way up the wall. It will be a dynamic and challenging climbing centre.

Tamara Korassa Vice-President Labour (VPL): What are you doing to ensure the "wellness" component of the student space access?

DR: Within the design, the goal was always to enliven the space students will inhabit. There will be a "green wall" in the social street with living plant materials. Social spaces will be incorporated into natural spaces.

BL: The "light" aspect will be an important design element. Trying to introduce a mental health stimulant to campus, as per our entire campus plan.

VK CAL: What are the "multi-purpose" rooms to be used for?

DR: Will include a floor that will mitigate injuries and an activity room.

VK CAL: Would appreciate the incorporation of meeting space.

CRO: What is the square footage of the graduate student lounge, and how will it be influenced by graduate student input?

BL: GSA has been involved for more than a year in this process. We have been working with the functional program in governance. Trying to find the right qualitative space in the building was

important; this location is quiet and located at a removed setting. The Quiet Lounge is not just for graduate students, but should run on a differentiated, multi-purpose usage schedule.

KB: 60 people accommodated; 2000 square feet.

[After the meeting, Kyle Braithwaite from Facilities and Operations said he would submit written responses to some of the unanswered questions at a later date – see appendix 1]

b) Councillor Announcements - none

4) Reports

a) Executive Reports

i) President (written report distributed in advance)

President: Just came back from vacation; thank you to team for filling in while I was gone. Office is developing a GSA Wiki, which will be primarily for office use, though with limited public and Council access. The financial aspect of 2010-2011 is complete in draft and will come to Council next month after BFC has been briefed. Fees are allocated to GSA twice per year; our cash flow during the summer can sometimes be stressful. Governance Committee is seeking members. BFC has a business item on the agenda for new Terms of Reference. Student Affairs Advisory Committee is also seeking members. Nominating Committee will continue to meet; please volunteer for various committees.

ii) VP Academic (written report distributed in advance)

VPA: Three additions: Special Advisor search is ongoing and will give updates. We will be discussing the Graduate Attributes committee findings in the near future. Regarding PAW, tonight's presentation was a good chance to talk; however, we should have had someone from Operations to talk to Council. Since we are contributing so much money to the PAW budget, the GSA has a lot of leverage. If the two student groups are unsatisfied, the project will not be built. We will be directed by the will of Council.

iii) VP Labour (written report distributed in advance)

VPA: *The Gateway* did a story on the GSA U-Pass; GSA noted that we would like to hear from graduate students about how successful the program has been and whether they want it extended or administrative changes made. With the new school year, please be aware of first year students' challenges; let them know they can come and discuss labour disputes or other issues. Important that graduate students are paid appropriately. Labour Relations Committee hasn't had a chance to meet, and we will be re-thinking the implementation of the Labour program. Please contact me if you are interested in volunteering.

iv) VP Student Life (written report distributed in advance)

VPSL: Orientation is rolling along smoothly. Thank you to those who have volunteered to be GSA representatives; we appreciate your help. One typo: the Take Back the Term event date should be September 27th.

v) VP Student Services (**written report distributed in advance**)

VPSS: There are some issues regarding *The Gateway*'s depiction of U-Pass; make sure you talk to me if you have questions. Regarding PAW, I am open to questions and suggestions.

President: If anyone is looking for the new GSA handbook, they are being printed this week. They will be available by the 31st of August; watch for a newsletter indicating the arrival of the handbooks.

b) Officer Reports

i) Speaker

Speaker: If your name does not appear by your department, we need you to fill out your Councillor information form.

ii) Chief Returning Officer

CRO: Thank you for the year; I will be retiring after this evening.

iii) Senator

President: Senate has not met over summer.

c) Standing Committee Reports

i) GSA Board (**written report distributed in advance**)

ii) Governance Committee – seeking members

iii) Budget and Finance Committee – new TOR on Council agenda

iv) Student Affairs Advisory Committee – seeking members

v) Awards Selection Committee – will be considering Graduate Citizenship Award soon

vi) Negotiation Committee

VPL: Negotiating Committee will be forming; 1.9% is the inflation rate applied to tuition for next year.

vii) Labour Relations Committee – seeking members

viii) Elections and Referenda Committee – seeking members

ix) Nominating Committee (**written report distributed in advance**)

d) **Ad Hoc Committee Reports** - *none*

e) **Recommendations from GSA Management**

i) Executive Director (**written report distributed in advance**)

Ellen Schoeck (ED): Committee representation has been expanded to approximately 70 committees. Please talk to others about the GSA's ongoing renewal process. The Triffo Lease will be re-signed; there are several "building" pieces ongoing. The scope of PAW is massive -- there will be a meeting on August 23rd to go over details of the proposal, and we are trying to widen the scope of graduate student consultation. Audit has gone well for the GSA.

ii) Director of Operations (as above)

iii) Financial Manager (as above)

5) Question Period

a) **Written Questions** - *none*

b) **Oral Questions**

AAW Pharmacy: If the graduate students go through with the PAW proposal, the GSA should put its name on this building.

FW MMI: There are problems with the two missing weeks within the handbook. I scowl at the President with my eyes.

Medicine: Does the GSA send each department monies that go toward funding students? How do operating funds function?

TK VPL: The departments have to meet the minimum grant requirements each year.

President: There are funding package requirements that need to be met, and they are closely linked to the supervisors' funding requirements.

TK VPL: TriCouncil has recently removed any grant regulations on amounts that must be paid for student stipends. This means that supervisors must follow the GSA's collective agreement regarding minimum student stipends.

6) Elections and Appointments – *none*

a) **GSA Standing Committees (additional materials distributed in advance)**

i) Speaker

Fred Wu spoke for 2 minutes.

- ii) Chief Returning Officer

Rahul Agrawal spoke for 2 minutes.

- iii) Senator

Tamara Korassa and Anwar Anwar-Mohammed spoke for 2 minutes each.

b) Other Committees

7) Special Orders - none

8) Unfinished Business and General Orders

a) Unfinished Business – none

b) General Orders

- i) R20110822.1 *BIRT* Council, upon the recommendation of the GSA Board, approve the GSA Budget Principles, Practices and Procedures proposal as attached.

Moved by Tamara Korassa, Vice-President Labour, on behalf of Roy Coulthard, President. **Motivation** was as presented in the previously distributed document.

Introduced by VPL: update to policy manual on principles, practices and procedures to keep the GSA accountable.

VOTE: passed unanimously.

- ii) **R20110822.2** *BIRT* Council, upon the recommendation of the GSA Board, approve the BFC Terms of Reference Proposal as was attached in first reading.

Moved by Tamara Korassa, Vice-President Labour, on behalf of Roy Coulthard, President. **Motivation** was as presented in the attached document.

Introduced by President: The GSAB struck an *ad hoc* committee; the committee should no longer be operational, but based on high-level budgeting principles. This motion will change the mandate of the BFC and will require a second reading next month.

VOTE: passed unanimously.

9) New Business

a) Scheduled Business – none

b) Unscheduled Business

- i) President's speech to outgoing Speaker and CRO: Both of these two individuals were highly influential above and beyond their positions. Particularly through the challenging meetings and several by-elections, they have been extraordinary.

MOTION: President moves that the GSA confer both Steve Melenchuk and Sarah Barnes Lifelong Membership to the Graduate Students' Association.

VPA: Strongly in favour of this motion. Was very impressed with the amount of work Steve put into the position.

VOTE: unanimously passed.

10) Committee of the Whole – *none*

11) Adjournment

Adjourned at 8:43 pm.

Appendix 1 –

Written Responses to unanswered questions about PAW from Facilities and Operations

PAW

GSA Council Presentation - Questions

August 22, 2011

Q. Value added for what Graduate Student's specifically are going to receive for what their money will be paying for (comment was made that Grad Students are in labs 24 hours a day)

A. A new wellness and recreation facility with several amenities under one roof including a new 30,578 sf Fitness Facility (that is approximately 3x the size of the current facility which is 8,913 sf), a world class 5,308 sf climbing centre, a social street/gathering place with a commercial food service outlet and community kitchen, multipurpose space, and lounge space. The facility will also include 2 pools, squash courts, renovated locker rooms, games area, and an outdoor patio sitting area.

Q. 4th Level Lounge access for Graduate Students. Is it open all hours? Who else will have access?

A. The access to the 4th Level Lounge/Quiet study area will be determined by the operations committee. The current hours of operation for the Van Vliet facility are as follows:

Spring and Summer hours:

Monday to Friday: 07h00 to 21h00

Saturday: 09h00 to 16h00

Sunday: 10h00 to 16h00

Autumn/Winter hours:

Monday to Friday: 07h00 to 22h00

Saturday: 08h00 to 16h00

Sunday: 10h00 to 16h00

Q. When will the underground pedway be constructed from ECHA to PAW

A. The BLIM request has been submitted as per the UofA Capital Plan. No date has been confirmed as to when the funding will be available for the underground pedway to the ECHA.

Q. Who will fund the facilities in the PAW. Will there be an access fee charged for use of climbing wall?

A. The operating agreement will address who is responsible for ongoing operating expenses for the new facility as well as access fees for the use of the climbing centre. The GSA has representation that is currently involved in finalizing the agreement.

Q. Will there be an increase in the # of machines and usable space in the fitness space?

A. Yes, the floor area is approximately 3x greater when compared to the existing facility.

Q. Are there plans to open Paw up to alumni? Grad students who are leaving and may pay for if they want access?

A. Yes, use of the facility would be available to Alumni much like the current facility (through the appropriate membership fees)

Q. How does the height of the climbing wall compare to other institutions?

A. The climbing centre is currently designed to be approximately 65ft high which is higher than other comparable facilities in Alberta. The bouldering is unique in that it is accommodated throughout the entire height of the climbing centre.

Q. What is being done to make the wellness space more relaxing and accessible to green space?

A. There is a significant amount of glazing in the design which will result in natural light being able to penetrate the interior of the facility. A living wall is being included in the design to add some greenery.

Q. Multi-purpose rooms - what will they be used for? Are they true multi-purpose rooms?

Spaces

that can be used for activity but also meetings along with storage space for equipment...

A. The multi-purpose rooms can be used for meetings, yoga, dance, classes, etc... The current dimensions of the rooms are as follows:

Room1: 1,058 sf Room2: 943 sf Room3: 919 sf

Q. Grad student Lounge – square footage? Will other student groups have access? How much input

will GSA have into the room?

A. The lounge is currently 2,077 sf and will accommodate approximately 60 people (capacity). Throughout the design process, the GSA has been included as a user group providing input to shape the design of the space.

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

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

March 31, 2011

AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

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INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

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

Report on the Financial Statements

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta, which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2011, and the statements of operations, changes in net assets and cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditors' Responsibility

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

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

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

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta as at March 31, 2011 and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

Edmonton, Alberta
August 31, 2011

Peterson Walker LLP
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

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

Statement of Financial Position

Year Ended March 31, 2011

	2011	2010
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash--Note 3	\$1,025,006	\$1,038,503
Short-term investments--Note 4	135,590	123,518
Accounts receivable	105,060	95,603
Prepaid expenses	3,786	4,362
	<u>1,269,442</u>	<u>1,261,986</u>
SHARE IN THE UNITIZED ENDOWMENT POOL--Note 5	302,519	289,647
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT--Note 6	192,727	225,144
	<u>\$1,764,688</u>	<u>\$1,776,777</u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 145,370	\$ 55,103
Dental and health plan payable	187,415	163,903
Deferred contributions--Note 7	44,948	36,620
	<u>377,733</u>	<u>255,626</u>
DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS RELATED TO PROPERTY--Note 8	69,167	79,167
NET ASSETS		
Invested in property and equipment	123,560	145,977
Internally restricted--Note 9	705,054	646,776
Unrestricted	489,174	649,231
	<u>1,317,788</u>	<u>1,441,984</u>
	<u>\$1,764,688</u>	<u>\$1,776,777</u>

LEASE COMMITMENTS--Note 10

APPROVED ON BEHALF OF THE COUNCIL

President

Vice President

Executive Director

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

Statement of Operations

Year Ended March 31, 2011

	2011	2010
REVENUE--Schedule 1		
Academically Employed Graduate Students Fund	\$ 391,388	\$ 384,087
Administration and services	652,818	631,054
Commercial activities	19,749	20,519
Dental and health plan--net	(3,722)	69,149
Unitized Endowment Pool	35,651	44,872
	<u>1,095,884</u>	<u>1,149,681</u>
EXPENSES--Schedule 2		
Academically Employed Graduate Students Fund	395,710	389,244
Administration	750,071	452,195
Commercial activities	20,060	21,063
Services	54,239	63,197
	<u>1,220,080</u>	<u>925,699</u>
REVENUE (UNDER) OVER EXPENSES	<u>\$ (124,196)</u>	<u>\$ 223,982</u>

THE GRADUATE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Statement of Changes in Net Assets

Year Ended March 31, 2011

	Internally Restricted Net Assets--Note 9					2010
	Invested In Property and Equipment	Dental and Health Plan Reserve Fund	Legal Defense Fund	Financial Stabilization Fund	Total Internally Restricted Funds	
Balance at beginning of year	\$ 145,977	\$ 146,776	\$ 0	\$ 500,000	\$ 646,776	\$ 1,218,002
Revenue (under) over expenses	(25,658)	(3,722)	0	0	(3,722)	223,982
Investment in property and equipment	3,241	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer	0	0	62,000	0	62,000	0
BALANCE AT END OF YEAR	\$ 123,560	\$ 143,054	\$ 62,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 705,054	\$ 1,441,984

	Unrestricted	2011
	\$ 489,174	\$ 1,317,788

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

Statement of Cash Flows

Year Ended March 31, 2011

	2011	2010
CASH PROVIDED BY (USED IN)		
Operating activities:		
Revenue (under) over expenses	\$ (124,196)	\$ 223,982
Changes not affecting cash:		
Amortization	35,658	38,727
Amortization of deferred contributions related to property	(10,000)	(10,000)
Net changes in non-cash working capital items--Note 11	<u>101,154</u>	<u>4,202</u>
	2,616	256,911
Investing activities:		
Increase in Unitized Endowment Pool	(12,872)	(38,616)
Purchase of property and equipment	<u>(3,241)</u>	<u>(6,611)</u>
	<u>(16,113)</u>	<u>(45,227)</u>
CASH (DECREASE) INCREASE	(13,497)	211,684
Cash at beginning of year	<u>1,038,503</u>	<u>826,819</u>
CASH AT END OF YEAR	<u>\$1,025,006</u>	<u>\$1,038,503</u>

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

Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2011

NOTE 1--NATURE OF OPERATIONS

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

NOTE 2--SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of Presentation

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles.

Short-term Investments

Short-term investments are classified as held-for-trading financial assets that are initially recognized at acquisition cost and subsequently measured at fair value at each reporting date. Unrealized gains or losses on re-measurement are recognized in the statement of operations.

Share in the Unitized Endowment Pool

The share in the Unitized Endowment Pool is classified as a held-for-trading financial asset that is initially recognized at acquisition cost and subsequently measured at fair value at each reporting date. The Association's share in the Unitized Endowment Pool is increased by its share of investment income earned in the Pool and reduced by payments received from the University.

Revenue Recognition

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

Donated Goods and Services

Donated goods and services are recorded at fair value when fair value can be reasonably estimated. No donated goods and services have been recorded during the current year.

Property and Equipment

Property and equipment are recorded at cost and amortized over their estimated useful lives using the following annual rates and methods:

Furniture and fixtures	20% declining balance
Computer equipment	30% declining balance
Leasehold improvements	10% straight-line
Computer software	50% straight-line

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

Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2011

NOTE 2--SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

Use of Estimates

The preparation of financial statements, in conformity with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles, requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the amounts reported in the financial statements. By their nature, these estimates are subject to measurement uncertainty and actual results could differ.

NOTE 3--CASH

Cash consists of the following:

	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>
Cash	\$ 216,018	\$ 233,175
Guaranteed Investment Certificates	<u>808,988</u>	<u>805,328</u>
	<u>\$1,025,006</u>	<u>\$1,038,503</u>

Cash includes \$65,000 (2010--\$77,627) held in a separate account for the Dental and Health Plan Reserve Fund.

NOTE 4--SHORT-TERM INVESTMENTS

	<u>2011</u>		<u>2010</u>	
	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Market</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>Market</u>
Mutual funds	<u>\$124,628</u>	<u>\$135,590</u>	<u>\$120,735</u>	<u>\$123,518</u>

Included with the short-term investments is \$62,000 restricted for the Legal Defense Fund described in Note 9.

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

Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2011

NOTE 5--SHARE IN THE UNITIZED ENDOWMENT POOL

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

During the year, investment income of \$4,729 (2010--\$18,091) was earned on the fund.

NOTE 6--PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

	<u>2011</u>		<u>2010</u>	
	Cost	Accumulated Amortization	Net Book Value	Net Book Value
Furniture and fixtures	\$ 99,944	\$ 58,357	\$ 41,587	\$ 51,984
Computer equipment	64,210	50,438	13,772	15,738
Leasehold improvements	198,000	60,885	137,115	156,915
Computer software	3,450	3,197	253	507
	<u>\$365,604</u>	<u>\$172,877</u>	<u>\$192,727</u>	<u>\$225,144</u>

NOTE 7--DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS

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

	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>
Fee revenue	\$ 35,715	\$ 34,837
Academically Employed Graduate Students' Bursary Program	<u>9,233</u>	<u>1,783</u>
BALANCE AT END OF YEAR	<u>\$ 44,948</u>	<u>\$ 36,620</u>

NOTE 8--DEFERRED CONTRIBUTIONS RELATED TO PROPERTY

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

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

Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2011

NOTE 9--INTERNALLY RESTRICTED NET ASSETS

Legal Defense Fund

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

Dental and Health Plan Reserve Fund

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

Financial Stabilization Fund

The Fund is intended to safeguard the Association against uncertainty and to provide for unexpected expenditures and new program initiatives. The balance will be adjusted annually at the discretion of the Council.

NOTE 10--LEASE COMMITMENTS

During the year, the Association leased a portion of the Killam Centre for Advanced Studies from the University of Alberta at \$1 per year and utilities at no cost.

The Association leases photocopiers under operating leases expiring in 2014. Future minimum annual lease payments under these operating leases will be approximately:

2012	\$ 10,069
2013	10,069
2014	<u>10,069</u>
	<u>\$ 30,207</u>

NOTE 11--NET CHANGES IN NON-CASH WORKING CAPITAL ITEMS

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

	<u>2011</u>	<u>2010</u>
Short-term investments	\$ (12,072)	\$ (63,880)
Accounts receivable	(9,457)	3,908
Prepaid expenses	576	(2,237)
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	90,267	32,056
Dental and health plan payable	23,512	23,044
Deferred contributions	<u>8,328</u>	<u>11,311</u>
	<u>\$101,154</u>	<u>\$ 4,202</u>

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

Notes to Financial Statements

March 31, 2011

NOTE 12--FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

For cash, short-term investments, accounts receivable, unitized endowment pool and accounts payable, the carrying amounts of these financial instruments approximate their fair values due to their short-term maturity or capacity for prompt liquidation.

The effective interest rate on the Guaranteed Investment Certificates varied during the year from 0.85% to 1.25% (2010--0.85% to 1.0%).

The Association does not believe it is subject to any significant concentration of credit risk. Cash is in place with a major financial institution. Accounts receivable are generally amounts receivable from the University of Alberta.

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

NOTE 13--CAPITAL MANAGEMENT

The Association's goal in managing capital is to safeguard its ability to continue as a going concern so that it can continue to provide services to the members. To accomplish this goal, policies have been established to preserve the financial condition of the Association and protect its assets. This is done by setting limitations on the expenditure of funds, incurrence of debt, use of any long-term reserves and investment of funds. During the year, the Council addressed capital management through the budget review, financial analysis and through long-term planning over expenditures and revenue to review the Association's financial position.

NOTE 14--FUTURE ACCOUNTING CHANGES

In December of 2010, the Accounting Standards Board of the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants approved the adoption of new accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations to be effective for fiscal years commencing on or after January 1, 2012. Management and the Council will ensure the Association complies with the new standards.

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

Schedule 1

Schedule of Revenue

Year Ended March 31, 2011

	2011	2010
<u>Academically Employed Graduate Students' Fund</u>		
Child care subsidy	\$ 51,773	\$ 59,957
Emergency bursaries	87,549	89,526
Graduate student assistance program	84,838	48,562
Graduate student recognition awards	10,180	11,889
Professional development grants	157,048	174,153
	<u>391,388</u>	<u>384,087</u>
<u>Administration and Services</u>		
Advanced Educational and Technology grant	8,000	0
Alberta Graduate Council	7,200	0
Awards night	7,000	7,000
CJSR fees	14,401	0
Graduate Students' Association fees	578,165	576,629
Investment and interest	14,024	10,324
Killam Centre for Advanced Studies	10,000	10,000
Miscellaneous	0	7,465
Orientation	5,850	4,300
Unrealized gain on short-term investments	8,178	15,336
	<u>652,818</u>	<u>631,054</u>
<u>Commercial Activities</u>		
Handbook	15,290	10,730
Other	302	1,095
Photocopying	4,157	8,694
	<u>19,749</u>	<u>20,519</u>
<u>Dental and Health Plan</u>		
Net fees	(3,722)	69,149
<u>Unitized Endowment Pool</u>		
Investment income	4,729	18,091
Unrealized gain	30,922	26,781
	<u>35,651</u>	<u>44,872</u>
TOTAL REVENUE	<u>\$1,095,884</u>	<u>\$1,149,681</u>

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

Schedule 2

Schedule of Expenses

Year Ended March 31, 2011

	2011	2010
<u>Administration</u>		
Advocacy	\$ 136	\$ 18
Alberta Graduate Council Conference director	8,000	0
Alberta Graduate Council membership	14,401	13,133
Amortization	35,658	38,727
Annual general meeting	546	0
Audit and accounting	7,560	7,491
Bank charges	224	718
Chief returning officer	1,000	1,500
Committees	2,288	392
Conferences	2,014	4,303
Consulting fees	59,749	0
Council secretary	1,500	2,000
Council security	2,428	2,625
Council speaker	2,100	2,000
Council	6,078	4,583
Elections	436	4,381
Executive expenses	2,822	2,263
Executive stipends and benefits	175,429	107,090
Executive transition	996	1,890
General	277	1,612
Government and external relations	1,712	204
Hiring costs	65	1,493
Insurance	2,018	1,659
Legal fees	76,023	21,982
Miscellaneous	5,345	2,011
Office supplies	6,214	3,849
Photocopier lease	3,357	3,429
Photocopier meter	1,473	728
Photocopier paper	352	845
Professional development	2,059	315
Promotion	851	0
Repairs and maintenance	1,269	595
Salaries	296,816	195,257
Staff benefits	23,350	19,583
Subscriptions	30	330
Telephone	5,495	5,189
	<u>\$750,071</u>	<u>\$452,195</u>

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

Schedule 2

Schedule of Expenses (continued)

Year Ended March 31, 2011

	2011	2010
<u>Academically Employed Graduate Students Fund</u>		
Child care subsidy	\$ 51,773	\$ 59,957
Emergency bursaries	87,549	89,526
Graduate student assistance program	89,160	53,719
Graduate student recognition awards	10,180	11,889
Professional development grants	157,048	174,153
	<u>395,710</u>	<u>389,244</u>
<u>Commercial Activities</u>		
Handbook	11,287	11,625
Photocopier lease	6,713	6,817
Photocopier meter	1,521	1,084
Photocopier paper	539	1,537
	<u>20,060</u>	<u>21,063</u>
<u>Services</u>		
Academic events	5,287	2,139
Awards night	8,339	8,389
CJSR fees	14,401	13,133
External grants	0	300
Food Bank	9,000	9,000
Lecture grants	11,840	15,790
Orientation	3,998	6,469
Socials	0	4,415
Student groups	1,171	3,000
Subscriptions and data collection	203	562
	<u>54,239</u>	<u>63,197</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>\$1,220,080</u>	<u>\$ 925,699</u>

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

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

YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2011

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

Re: **Audit of 2011 Financial Statements**

This report is presented in order to assist members of the Council in carrying out their responsibilities with respect to their review and approval of the financial statements of The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta for the year ended March 31, 2011. This report summarizes our significant findings arising from the audit and other matters which we believe should be brought to your attention. This report is a by-product of the audit and would not necessarily identify all matters that may be of interest to the Council in fulfilling its responsibilities. This report has been prepared solely for the use of the Council in discharging its responsibilities and should not be used for any other purposes.

a. **Significant Accounting Principles and Policies**

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

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

b. **Illegal Acts**

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

c. **Weaknesses in Internal Controls**

In the course of our audit, no serious weaknesses in internal controls came to our attention. We do not believe there are any matters that require the immediate attention of the Council, however, the more serious of the weaknesses will be communicated to the Council once we have had an opportunity to fully discuss the matters with senior management.

d. **Related Party Transactions**

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

e. **Difficulties or Disagreements**

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

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

Page Three

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

f. **Current Accounting and Reporting Developments**

We regularly monitor the potential impact of new accounting pronouncements on the accounting practices of The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta.

The following is a brief discussion of items that may be of particular interest since our last written report:

In December of 2010, the Accounting Standards Board of the Canadian Institute of Chartered Accountants approved the adoption of new accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations, to be effective for fiscal years commencing on or after January 1, 2012. We anticipate that The Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta will experience very little change.

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

Edmonton, Alberta
August 31, 2011



Chartered Accountants

August 31, 2011

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GRADUATE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION

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

Dear Sirs:

Re: Audit of 2011 Financial Statements

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

During the course of our audit of the financial statements for the year ended March 31, 2011, we identified certain matters which we have set out below. We did not identify any of the following matters: misstatements, other than trivial errors; fraud; misstatements that may cause future financial statements to be materially misstated; illegal or possibly illegal acts, other than ones considered inconsequential; or significant weaknesses in internal control.

REVIEW OF MATTERS RAISED DURING 2010 AUDIT**Comprehensive Review of Organizational Structure**

The Graduate Students' Association (the GSA) is a not-for-profit students' association that was established to represent the interests of graduate students before the University administration and the general public. An elected Council oversees the governance of the GSA; however, the membership of the Council changes as graduate students complete their studies and leave the GSA.

This is typical of not-for-profit organizations where their Board is comprised of volunteers whose tenure with the organization is limited. To this end, not-for-profit organizations that are successful apply the Carver model of board governance. Under the Carver model, the Board provides general direction on matters of policy (governance) and delegates the day-to-day management of operations to an Executive Director/General Manager who provides regular reports back to the Board.

Approximately ten years ago, the GSA had an office manager who was very experienced and knowledgeable with respect to the University's processes and a bookkeeper who was fairly knowledgeable with respect to accounting. Unfortunately, the office manager retired and the bookkeeper left to pursue other interests. Since then, the GSA has not had any continuity within its senior management.

We strongly urged the GSA to:

- review its structure and give serious consideration to the application of the Carver model of board governance so that the Council is working at a macro level; and
- ensure staff and management continuity by benchmarking positions to the market, offering competitive benefits package, and ensuring a clear distinction between management roles and the roles of elected officials. We understand that the GSA has hired a consultant over the summer who recommended these approaches and we are supportive of this effort to ensure the long-term viability of the organization.

2011 update: A comprehensive review has been completed and changes have been made.



The Graduate Students' Association
of the University of Alberta
August 31, 2011

Review of Risk Management Processes

As part of their ongoing operations, organizations face the risk of loss as a result of unexpected events such as:

- destruction of assets and records from fire, water damage, electrical failures, human error and/or disgruntled employees or officers who are dismissed or on extended leave;
- disruptions or destruction of records by computer viruses;
- disruptions as a result of unexpected illnesses, sabbaticals or resignations; and
- financial loss as a result of an unexpected lawsuit, e.g. for non-compliance with legislation.

Although it is difficult, if not impossible, to foresee every situation that may result in a loss, organizations need to be proactive. We therefore recommended that a comprehensive review be completed of the GSA's risk management processes. We subsequently learned that the GSA hired a consultant last June who has been leading the Association through a risk management review. We urged that the GSA continue along this pathway and that appropriate resources are assigned to carry out this function.

2011 update: The review has been completed and changes have been made.

Financial Stabilization Fund

The GSA has accumulated a fairly large unrestricted net assets balance to March 31, 2009. For control and planning purposes, the GSA should consider creating a Financial Stabilization Fund as a safeguard against *both* unexpected expenditures *and* future programs in order to modernize, professionalize and stabilize the GSA. Money should be transferred from unrestricted net assets into the Stabilization Fund. As a general rule of thumb, the Stabilization Fund should equate at least three months' operating expenditures. Some not-for-profit organizations maintain a fund equal to nine months or even one year's expenditures.

A transfer of \$500,000 was recommended to establish this Financial Stabilization Fund. We suggested that the GSA consider leaving at least \$240,000 in this fund as a contingency and then establishing a fund for the remaining \$260,000 as a bridging mechanism to begin to modernize its budget (e.g. benchmarking of positions) and to professionalize and stabilize the Association's staffing. Some of this bridge funding will need to be converted to hard dollars over a planned phase-in in order to securely fund initiatives related to stabilizing staffing.

2011 update: A Financial Stabilization Fund has been established.

MATTERS RAISED DURING 2011 AUDIT

Capitalization and Amortization

The Association should review its capitalization and amortization policies. Currently, equipment is being amortized on the declining balance method. More and more not-for-profit organizations are changing to the straight-line method for ease of accounting. As well, the Council should review the Association's capitalization policy and consider at what dollar level expenditures should be capitalized.

Page Three

The Graduate Students' Association
of the University of Alberta
August 31, 2011

Over the past year, the GSA has made significant improvements to internal controls and internal control policies and processes. It should be noted that maintaining internal controls is an on-going process and changes will need to be made as circumstances change.

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

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

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peterson Walker LLP". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chartered Accountants

TJG:cm



15 September 2011

Paul Walz
AGC President

RE: AGC Matters for Discussion Sept 17

Dear Paul,

I am writing on the assumption that you will be planning the agenda for our meetings on 17 Sept and hope the following suggestions are helpful. They are based on discussions by the GSA Board at the U of A and follow on the motion unanimously passed by the GSA Council on May 16, 2011 and subsequently discussed at AGC in May:

R20110516.2 That the GSA Council directs the President to negotiate, subject to Council's final approval, revisions to the structure of the Alberta Graduate Council at the upcoming 21 May 2011 AGC meeting, including provisions for incorporation as an legal entity, accountability to the GSA(s), a mandate limited primarily to lobbying and advocacy at the provincial level, and respecting, as much as possible, the principle of representation by population.

These are the suggestions from the GSA Board, which sees AGC as a critical entity in advancing the graduate student agenda in Alberta:

- The GSA Board invites you, as AGC President, to our Council meeting on September 26 to talk about the role of AGC. Amanda, Franco and other AGC Councillors are also most welcome to attend.
- The GSA Board asks that you explain to Council the legal nature of the AGC as a provincially-registered lobby group and the consequent structure that is required, if any (e.g., by-law, annual budget, method of fee collection, accountability back to the GSA Councils that have approved a fee assessment on behalf of AGC).
- The Board asks that you to discuss the structure/composition/governance of the AGC; they have asked if the old structure still prevails and by what authority the new structure was approved.
- The Board understands the role of AGC as a lobby group representing UofC, UofL, AU and UofA, and believes that those who serve on the AGC's governing body should not participate in partisan politics while serving on AGC.



- The Board is concerned about an appearance of bias on the part of the AGC, in particular when we are asked to send out information on behalf of leadership candidates for any political party. Our members have previously expressed a desire NOT to receive such political messaging. The AGC so clearly sponsoring such initiatives may create internal issues for the GSA that may affect our ability to participate in the AGC in the future.
- The Board also sees the AGC's role as relating primarily if not entirely to provincial lobbying, as envisioned in the referendum passed by our members in February 2000 when the AGC fee paid by the UA GSA was approved.
- The Board sees the following as some issues on the table: base funding; MNIF process; direct funding of graduate students (grants and bursaries). The Board also has questions about the Graduate Citizenship Award survey, and is concerned that the Students' Finance Board will not accept the word of the duly constituted representative students' associations (i.e. the GSAs).

I would be happy to meet with you beforehand to run through these questions in more detail. The Board has identified AGC in its Strategic Plan as one of the external bodies on which we want to focus on in coming years. We are also supportive of the Western Summit, GU15 and CAGS.

Finally, the Board is concerned about the letter that was sent to CASA on AGC letterhead and felt that the letter should have been signed only by those GSAs which were supportive of the letter. Having this letter sent on AGC letterhead indicated implicit U of A approval, which was not the case and which placed us in an awkward situation with our close partner, the U of A Students' Union. It may further complicate our relationships with other student groups across Canada.

Regards,
RC

CC: Amanda Nielsen, Franco Rizzuti

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**GSA VICE-PRESIDENT STUDENT SERVICES
REPORT TO COUNCIL FOR SEPTEMBER 26, 2011**

To: Council Colleagues
From: SAGAR N. LUNAWAT, GSA VP STUDENT SERVICES
Date: September 11, 2011

Dear Colleagues,

**Listening to the summer chimes,
of summer sounds of summer time,
Bringing all that nature is,
That shows and sounds like, Summer chimes.**

I hope you are doing really well and enjoying last few days of summer. I really enjoyed my first summer in Canada and am still enjoying the last few days. The fall semester started with lots of new students on campus and the Graduate Students' Association's **Fall Orientation** was a success and full of fun and enthusiasm with all GSA staff and elected officials participating. The last few weeks have been very busy at the GSA with September kick-offs and we were all busy, as well, with Departmental Orientations. I am really pleased to write that departments were happy to have a GSA representative at their Departmental Orientation to conduct a GSA presentation and to answer questions. I really enjoyed my several presentations -- lots of discussion and questions from graduate students.

There are many things going on currently, but the most important is PAW. I attended the PAW Centre design overview meeting and was amazed with the 3D design and structure for the new PAW Centre. We had a computerized 3D "fly through" of the new PAW facility that really gave us a realistic idea about the facilities in the new design. The **PAW Centre design work** is currently going through extensive discussion and we had the Steering Committee meeting to review all the data room sheets. This entailed discussion of each and every detail: furniture, equipment, other fittings, and how each room can be made perfect for all intended uses. I am really looking forward to the new PAW Centre with its many new facilities for students. I am encouraging all graduate students to come and visit the PAW floor plans placed in the Board Room at Triffo Hall and to ask questions and submit suggestions if they have any.

GSA has been involved in efforts to make graduate students' experiences and life better at U of A, and one of the initiatives is **Spring/Summer U-Pass**. The Spring/Summer 2011 U-Pass was really a success and graduate students supported it. A story about Spring/Summer U-Pass was published in *Gateway*.

After waiting for a long time for a tour guide, GSA elected officials finally had a **tour through the Power Plant** to have a look through our old office space. We discussed various issues about its use.

For the first time in my portfolio, I had a meeting with **University Protective Services**. I was amazed with the efforts they are taking to make U of A a safer place for students. Protective Services is considering many possible new initiatives for students.

So these are the current happenings in my portfolio as well as a summary of the beginning of fall semester. I am looking forward for some more new committees and working with all new people at University.

If you have any questions, you can write them to me at gsavpsse@ualberta.ca and I will be happy to answer them.

Sagar Lunawat

(GSA – VPSS)

Vice-President Student Services Meetings

August 11, 2011	PAW centre design overview
August 17, 2011	GSA Board meeting (Cancelled)
August 18, 2011	U-pass admin meeting
August 22, 2011	GSA Council meeting
August 23, 2011	PAW steering committee
August 23, 2011	F and O lunch
August 24, 2011	Departmental orientation – Physical Therapy
August 24, 2011	GSA Board meeting
August 25, 2011	GFC FDC (Cancelled)
August 26, 2011	SU-GSA breakfast
August 30, 2011	Power plant tour
August 31, 2011	GSA Board meeting
August 31, 2011	GSA Fall Orientation
September 1, 2011	Protective Services advisory committee meeting
September 2, 2011	Departmental Orientation – Music
September 6, 2011	Departmental Orientation – Sociology
September 6, 2011	Departmental Orientation – Elementary Education
September 6, 2011	Departmental Orientation – Lab Medicine
September 7, 2011	GSA Board meeting
September 8, 2011	Departmental Orientation – Drama
September 9, 2011	Meeting with SU - Space

**GSA PRESIDENT
REPORT TO COUNCIL FOR SEPTEMBER 26, 2011**

To: Council Colleagues
From: Roy Coulthard, President
Date: September 11, 2011

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome back everyone to the 2011-2012 academic year. I am happy to report that things at the GSA are functioning smoothly.

On August 31, we had a successful **Fall Orientation** for almost 400 new graduate students. Many thanks to our sponsors who supported this event, including the Office of the Dean of Students, the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, Alumni Council, U of A Bookstores, Studentcare.net/works, Tim Horton's, the Royal Alberta Museum and l'Express . I would in particular like to thank the GSA staff for their hard work. Alongside our Orientation activities, we have also handed out all 3800 **handbooks**. We were able to fundraise, through advertising, the cost of producing the handbook.

The work of the **Fall Reading Week Task Force** continues. The Provost will be receiving a report shortly. Depending on future conversations we will be looking at how to best implement the fall break. I will let you know once our proposal begins its journey through Governance.

Following on the Deputy Provost search, there has been **reorganization in the Office of the Provost**. The Vice-Provost Academic Colleen Skidmore has been promoted to the Associate Vice-President Academic, taking on many of the responsibilities of the former Deputy Provost. In addition, former Dean of Students Bill Connor is taking on the role of Vice-Provost Academic through the end of December when he will take on the role of Vice-Provost Teaching and Learning. As of January 1st, former Dean of Graduate Studies Murray Gray will be taking on the role of Vice-Provost Academic. With all of these changes, the GSA Board is working with the Provost to ensure the GSA's interests are not lost in the shuffle. In particular, we have met with Dr. Skidmore to ensure that the Graduate Student Supervision and Graduate Funding Task Forces continue to be a priority. Furthermore, the members of the Board are taking steps to ensure that productive working relationships continue with all members within the Provost's Office.

The **Provost's Budget Advisory Committee** has met for the first time of this year. Administration is pursuing a 1.45% tuition increase, the maximum allowed under the Provincial Tuition Regulation Legislation. I am currently gathering information to ensure we can better understand how this will affect GSA members. We will do our utmost to ensure supports are in place for any graduate students negatively affected by any tuition increase.

The GSA Board toured the **Power Plant** so that we will be better informed for upcoming discussions on the future of the Dewey's bar space and the larger restaurant space. Following the Tory decant project we will be engaging in dialogue with the SU and Facilities and Operations to ensure that graduate

student interests are preserved in any future redevelopment of the building. The GSA currently holds a 15% profit sharing interest in Dewey's coffee shop and bar; we are currently entering renegotiations of this contract for its continuation beyond August 2012.

We are working with the SU to expedite negotiations around the final agreement governing the **PAW Centre**. We will report on this more orally at the Council meeting.

I will be meeting with the **Alberta Graduate Council** on the 17th of September. I will report orally on the meeting, and on progress towards achieving the goals of the Council motion of May 16th. Motion was as follows:

GSA Council directs the President to negotiate, subject to Council's final approval, revisions to the structure of the Alberta Graduate Council at the upcoming 21 May 2011 AGC meeting, including provisions for incorporation as an legal entity, accountability to the GSA(s), a mandate limited primarily to lobbying and advocacy at the provincial level, and respecting, as much as possible, the principle of representation by population.

The GSA met with the University's **Web Strategy** people. We were pleased that they addressed a number of concerns we raised at prior meetings regarding the differentiation between undergraduate and graduate students. The early preview we had of the new U of A website that launched September 1st demonstrated their ongoing commitment to work with the GSA to ensure the graduate students and graduate studies are a visible part of the U of A's online identity. We are investigating migrating some of the GSA's website and other aspects of the GSA IT infrastructure to the University of Alberta servers. This would mitigate some of the capital and operating costs of the GSA.

I hope everyone has had a great start to the school year.

Roy Coulthard

GSA President

Date	Meeting
August 22	Meetings with the Executive Director and Director of Operations
	Council meeting
August 23	Lunch with the Vice-President Facilities and Operations
August 25	University Web Strategy meeting
August 26	Monthly SU/GSA Executive Breakfast
August 29	Budget Advisory Committee
August 30	Power Plant Tour
August 31	GSA Board meeting
	GSA Fall Orientation
September 1	Fall Reading Week Task Force
	Coffee with Provost Fellow Dr. Luth
September 6	Meeting with the Students' Union
September 7	Meeting with Dr. Skidmore
	GSA Board Meeting

September 9	Meeting with SU re: PAW
September 13	Meeting with VP Finance
	Coffee meeting with University Secretary
September 14	GSA Board
	GFC Academic Planning Committee
September 15	Fall Reading Week Task Force
	Meeting with VP SS and Director of Operations
	RO 101

**GSA Vice President Academic
Report to Council**

To: Council Colleagues
From: Nima Yousefi Moghaddam
Date: September 15, 2011

Once again, summer is over and with the beginning of the school year most of the committees are meeting more frequently. There are some structural changes in the administration that are affecting the VPA portfolio and I will report on some of these. I would also like to give you a few updates on other business that I've reported on previously.

Next week, we will have our first FGSR and GFC Council meetings with the newly appointed GSA representatives.

With this introduction, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our hardworking staff and volunteers who helped us in holding a wonderful orientation.

My special thanks goes to Vikki Northrop for her dedication in representing GSA on a number of committees.

GFC and GFC CLC

- **General Faculties Council Executive (GFC EXEC) Committee** met on August 29, 2011. Dr Amrhein (Provost) gave us updates on the Deans' Retreat (with the President and VPs also attending) where conversations about the future of the institution were entertained.

The GFC Executive Committee agreed with the FGSR New course designator: AGRMT, presented by Dr. Shirvani.

Team Provost: There has been a review of the Provost's portfolio – the report will be out in 2012. With the departure of Dr. Marshal (Deputy Provost), this position will be vacant until the review report is ready. Until then, Dr Colleen Skidmore is appointed as Vice-Provost and Associate VP Academic. Along with other changes, Dr Bill Connor is appointed as Interim Vice-Provost (Academic).

- **Committee on the Learning Environment (GFC CLE)** met on September 7, 2011. Dr Skidmore chaired the meeting and introduced Bill Connor as the new chair of the committee. Along with the other 2 co-chairs, I presented a progress report of the

Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies, and got the terms of reference and Membership of that subcommittee approved. There was also an oral report on the work of the joint Subcommittee on the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE)/Teaching, Learning and Technology (TLAT) Council Fostering Pedagogy of Technology Report.

- Roy and I had an interesting coffee meeting with Dr Skidmore, where we discussed her new role as the Vice-Provost and Associate VP Academic. She outlined the distribution of her past portfolio among the newly appointed people and also what is still left with her from her past portfolio.
 - Among those is **Provost's Advisory Committee on Quality in Graduate Supervision** where she would be still looking for a champion to lead the committee. Following up on VPAC August report, and with regard to this committee, we are still working closely on our search for the appointment of a provost fellow or a special advisor to Provost, and I will report to the council on this on a regular basis.
- The SU VPA and I had a joint meeting with Bill Connor (September 14, 2011). Bill gave us an introduction to the history of his collaboration within the University as the past Dean of Student Services, his role in developing the academic plan in 2001 and also the period of time he worked as the special advisor to Provost. He offered his support to both associations in pursuing our top priorities and the GSA will follow up with him once our strategic plan is approved.

Follow ups:

- **CLE Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies** is meeting today for the first time with the full membership. I am pleased to let you know that we have two additional graduate students on board: Anne Mcintosh (CLE member at large) and Ashlyn Bernier (appointed by GSA). Dr Skidmore will be giving opening remarks and there will be a presentation from Heather Kanuka (Center for Teaching and Learning).
- **Undergraduate Research Initiative (URI) Advisory Committee** met on September 14, 2011. We discussed the progress of the URI website and the draft funding proposal, with two lines of funding: one bigger pot (\$180K) for funding the research assistantship for undergrads and a smaller pot (\$20K) providing support for undergraduate research (shared by faculties, grad students, post docs and undergrads). We also were informed that \$10K was granted for the SU undergraduate research symposium, which is going to be held annually.

Background related to above committees:

- **Provost's Advisory Committee on Quality in Graduate Supervision.** In March 2011, the GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (CLE), whose mandate includes oversight of implementation of the university's academic plan, recommended establishment of an advisory committee to the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) to investigate and make recommendations concerning the quality of graduate supervision. The purpose of the committee is to research and report on the quality of graduate supervision, broadly defined, based on qualitative and quantitative data concerning both students and supervisors (excerpt from the TOR of the committee).
- **Undergraduate Research Initiative (URI) Advisory Committee.** The Undergraduate Research Initiative (URI) will bring students and opportunities together, supporting undergraduate students as they develop discipline-specific and interdisciplinary research skills and scholarly attitudes that prove useful for employment, research, and service in the community. The URI will fill a key interdisciplinary brokering role, and integrate with existing experiential learning and engagement initiatives across campus without duplicating activities and responsibilities. An Advisory Committee and Academic Director have been established to provide counsel, advice and direction in the planning and implementation of the URI. The day-to-day activities of the URI will be supported by staff from CAPS: Your U of A Career Centre.
- **CLE Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies.** Following the approval of the University of Alberta's 2011-2015 Academic Plan entitled Dare to Deliver, graduate attributes have become a subject of thoughtful discussion across campus. On April 7 2011, the Committee on the Learning Environment Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies was struck at a joint CLE-TLAT meeting. The committee will work in accordance to the statement pertaining to graduate attributes in the Academic Plan: "Attributes and Competencies Upon Graduation: *Articulating and supporting the development of core sets of skills, attributes and values* to be incorporated into graduate and undergraduate programs, while recognizing that each Faculty will best decide how to move in this direction, which could include reviewing and updating the curriculum." (Excerpt from the TOR of the committee).

**GSA VICE- PRESIDENT LABOUR
REPORT TO COUNCIL FOR SEPTEMBER 26, 2011**

To: Council Colleagues
From: Tamara Korassa, VP Labour
Date: September 11, 2011

Hello Councillors!

I hope the new academic term and the beginning of fall is going well with everyone.

Since the last Council meeting, my calendar has been filling up as meetings and committees start up again after their summer breaks.

I attended the **GSA Orientation** and it is my opinion that it was a great success. My thanks go out to the office staff for the excellent job that they did in organizing and executing the event.

LRC has not met as we are waiting to have our new LRC members confirmed at the September Council meeting. Once these members are confirmed, we will begin meeting and make finishing touches to the **Labour Liaison Program** and seek to implement the pilot project in the coming months.

The Negotiations Committee will not be meeting this year to discuss negotiations as the CPI the university is using is 1.45%. The total **compensation increase** for graduate students in the 2012-2013 year will be 2.0%. This means that the compensation above the increase of what will likely be the approved tuition increase (will not be done until the Board of Governors votes later this fall) will be 0.55%. This is good news for graduate students.

I have spent some time meeting with students as the beginning of a new term often brings new questions about the Collective Agreement and pay entitlements. I remind Council that if you hear of any issues in your departments to send your students to me if they need any help.

I have followed up with Mazi Shirvani, Dean of the FGSR, about the Graduate Student Funding Task Force. Mazi assured me that the task force was a priority and we look to be meeting again sometime in the coming fall days.

The next couple of weeks are filled with new committee meetings and relationship-building with various units on campus. I look forward to updating you on the progress of those meetings in October.

Cheers!

Tamara Korassa

Meetings attended between August 12 and September 15

Date	Meeting
August 17	GSA Board
August 24	GSA Board
August 31	GSA Fall Orientation
September 7	GSA Board
	Meeting with Student
September 8	Departmental Orientation (Law)
September 9	Meeting with a student
September 13	Meeting with Vice-President Finance
September 14	GSA Board
September 15	RO 101

**GSA VICE-PRESIDENT STUDENT LIFE
REPORT TO COUNCIL FOR SEPTEMBER 26, 2011**

To: Council Colleagues
From: Hillary Sparkes, VP Student Life
Date: September 11, 2011

Dear Council Members,

Welcome back! I hope that your term is off to a good start and that you aren't getting too frustrated with our busy, noisy and energetic campus. I attended the Alumni Council Pep rally in Hawrelak Park during frosh week so I got to experience all that first year energy up close!

The following are a few items I'd like to highlight that have happened over the past month:

The **GSA Orientation** was a HUGE success. Thank you to all our volunteers on that day and leading up to it. We had approximately 400 students attend and many University services were there to help introduce our new students to the U of A. Katie Biittner, one of our office staff, did an amazing job organizing it and making sure that it went off without a problem.

Departmental Orientations have been going along very well. We have 37 departments who have requested we come and talk to their students. Again, a big thank you to those who volunteered to help deliver the GSA message to new students at various departments across campus. We really could not have done all of these orientations without your help!

I am still in contact with PhD Comics and we are just going through the Terms or Agreement to make sure that we are ok to show this movie here on campus. I am very excited to bring this to our campus and think it will be a great event. I will need your help to make sure we get a great turnout at the event.

My portfolio is moving along nicely and I am looking forward to the work that needs to be done this term.

Hillary Sparkes
VP Student Life
Graduate Students' Association

August 18	New Student Experience Working Group
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	Meeting with office re: student groups
August 19	Meeting with Residence Services re: orientation
August 22	Council
August 23	Lunch with Vice-President Facilities and Operations
	Meeting with student re: school bus service at Michener Park
August 24	GSA Board
August 26	Monthly SU/GSA Exec Breakfast
	GSA Departmental Training
August 30	Power Plant Tour
	Graduate House Residence Council meeting
August 31	GSA Board
	Fall Orientation
September 2	UAI InfoMart
September 3	Block Party at East Campus Village
September 6	Departmental Orientation (Library and Information Studies)
	Alumni Council/ Pep rally
September 7	GSA Board
September 13	Meeting with Vice-President Finance
	Residence Budget Advisory Committee
September 14	Health Promotion Advisory Committee
	GSA Board
	Undergraduate Research Initiative

**GSA SENATOR
REPORT TO COUNCIL FOR SEPTEMBER 26, 2011**

To: Council Colleagues
From: Tamara Korassa, Senator
Date: September 11, 2011

I have had my first few Senate meetings: Senate New Member Orientation and Senate Executive Committee. The Senate is looking at some interesting discussion and projects throughout the next year. One of these will include the appointment of a new Chancellor. I will also be sitting on the Chancellor Selection Committee. Stay tuned for exciting updates from Senate in the next few months.

Senate U School is currently looking for volunteers. This would involve a full morning or a full afternoon of your time. You would work with elementary and junior high students in small groups and assist them as they learn here on the University Campus. If you are interested in volunteering please send me an email at gsa.vplabour@ualberta.ca, and I can forward you all the information and dates. Alternatively, you can contact Lisa Brunelle at the Senate Office (lisa.brunelle@ualberta.ca) and she will be able to provide you more information.

Cheers!

Tamara Korassa

Date	Meeting
September 8	Senate Orientation
	Senate Executive Committee Meeting

GSA Board
Report to Council for the September 26 Meeting

To: Council Colleagues
From: Ellen Schoeck, Executive Director and Coordinator of the GSA Board
Date: September 15, 2011

Dear Council Members,

The Board reports regularly to Council by listing its agenda items, Motions/agreements and main items of discussion. Motions on Agenda approval and approval of the Minutes are not included unless there were amendments made. Closed session items are not minuted.

The President, Vice-Presidents, Director of Operations, Financial Manager and I will be happy to answer any questions or provide more information at the Council meeting.

August 24 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda items: The Board heard a report from the President about a meeting elected officials had with Vice-President Hickey (Facilities and Operations) and his staff to discuss graduate student space. Other matters discussed were representation on the GFC CLE Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies, a student complaint about office, and the Physical Activity and Wellness Centre (PAW).

Council Remuneration Proposal: Motion to Reserve Monies

Members discussed the proposal at length.

MOTION: THAT the GSA reserve \$350 from the Student Group Grant for two student groups in case of successful appeal. Carried.

MOTION: Board moved into closed session to discuss emergency bursary issues.

August 31 GSA Board Meeting

This was a joint meeting with the GSA Budget and Finance Committee regarding audit, with auditor Tom Gee present. Mr Gee explained the audit statements line by line. The GSA is in good shape financially and has made excellent progress in assessing its operations and risks. Final audit will go to Council.

The Board had before them the draft audit. **MOTION:** that the draft audit be accepted and then finalized by the GSA auditor with the editorial changes identified.

Given the inability of BFC to meet quorum, using the administrative authority of GSA Board under Bylaw, the draft audit report will be sent to Council for approval. Auditor Tom Gee will be present at September Council meeting.

September 7 GSA Board Meeting

Main agenda items: Board members discussed meetings with senior administrators, the Labour Liaison Manual, status of the CLE Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies, PhD Movie screening, office space complaints, the NASA agreement, and AGC.

MOTION: The GSA Nominating Committee members present at the Board meeting **AGREED** to waive advertising for the GFC CLE Subcommittee on Attributes and Competencies as it was deemed urgent to fill the one additional graduate student vacancy.

MOTION: THAT the GSA Board readopt the old GSA logo. **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.**

September 14 GSA Board Meeting

Main agenda items: debrief from all elected officials on their many meetings; interpretation of child care subsidy issue; U-PASS, fall reading week; Vanier scholarships; Senate; PhD Comics movie showing.

Members **AGREED** that with respect to child care subsidy regulations, the second parent must indeed be a student in a credit course.

**GSA Nominating Committee
Report to Council September 2011**

Dear Council Members,

As provided for in its terms of reference, the GSA Nominating Committee (NoC) has been conducting business via e-mail, and I have met regularly with Ellen Schoeck and Joanna Chan since my last report to Council.

GSA Committees

As councillors may recall, Council has retained its authority over electing graduate students to all GSA committees. **For the slate of nominees for GSA Elections and Referenda Committee, GSA Labour Relations Committee and GSA Governance Committee, please refer to Item 6a.**

The remainder of the report is for your information.

EXTERNAL BODIES

Council has delegated to the NoC the responsibility of filling positions on all committees external to the GSA. Normally, all vacancies are advertised. The NoC may waive advertising under certain conditions specified in its term of reference.

General Faculties Council (GFC): According to the GFC Policy, the GSA is charged with the responsibility of appointing 14 graduate students to the GFC. The GSA NoC has filled all 14 seats with the following students:

1. Rahul Agrawal (Biomedical Engineering)
2. Nathan Andrews (Political Studies)
3. Behnam Berahman (Chemical Engineering)
4. Khashayar Ebrahimi (Mechanical Engineering)
5. Erika Anne Elves (History)
6. Tamara Korassa (Business and Law)
7. Sagar Lunawat (Chemical and Materials Engineering)
8. John Meston (Educational Policy Studies)
9. Nesrine Mostafa (Dentistry)
10. Nikki Nosworthy (Psychological Studies in Education)
11. Andy Rathbone (Educational Policy Studies)
12. Hillary Sparkes (Anthropology)
13. Minhao Zeng (English and Film Studies)
14. Michal Zielinski (Materials Engineering and Medical Sciences)

Green and Gold Student Leadership and Professional Development Grant Adjudication Committee: As the appointment to this Committee was deemed urgent, advertising was waived by the NoC. The Vice-President Student Services has been appointed by the GSA President to serve on this Committee.

GFC Committee on the Learning Environment (GFC CLE): As the appointment to this Committee was deemed urgent, advertising was waived by the NoC. The vacancy will be filled by Ashlyn Bernier (MBA).

For information of Council, the NoC is actively seeking nominees for the following committees/councils and in most instances, already has nominees for the GSA NoC to consider:

Council on Student Affairs (COSA)- one seat

Science Faculty Council- two seats

Arts Faculty Council- three seats

Faculty of Arts Academic Appeals Committee- one seat

Senate Campus Engagement Committee- one seat

GSA Student Affairs Advisory Committee (SAAC): The NoC is actively searching for nominees to serve on SAAC. Currently, one graduate student has indicated he would like to serve on the SAAC.

SEARCH FOR NEW ELECTED OFFICIALS:

I will report orally on this matter.

Respectfully submitted,
Vijay Kandalam, Vice-Chair, GSA NoC

GSA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
REPORT TO COUNCIL FOR SEPTEMBER 26, 2011

Dear Council,

This report has the support of my management colleagues Heather Hogg (Director of Operations and Bernadette Elliott (Financial Manager). We have spent a great deal of time this spring and summer reviewing and revising all the documents that define the GSA as a corporate entity. Here are the main ones:

NAME	SUMMARY	STATUS
Personal Information Sharing Agreement with the U of A	Allows the GSA access to graduate students' personal information for strictly defined purposes, eg emailing the newsletter.	Under review with minor changes expected; ensure that we are compliant with PIPA.
Transit Agreement with the U of A and U-Pass Agreement with the City of Edmonton	Governs U-PASS.	Review of spring/summer U-PASS.
Power Plant and Dewey's	The GSA has four agreements with the U of A and/or the SU.	All under review.
Studentcare Agreement	Provides for health and dental plan.	Re-signed to 2015.
GSAP	Provides for a wide range of personal counseling.	Reviewed this summer and extended.
TDMM	Provides for group auto and home insurance.	Under review, almost complete.
PAW Centre Agreement	Will set out terms of operation of PAW	Negotiations ongoing.
Collective Agreement (AEGS)	Sets out terms of employment for certain graduate students and terms for use of AEGS funds.	2-year agreement in effect.
Collective Agreement with NASA covering office staff	Sets out terms of employment for GSA staff.	Under review.
Management contracts/letters of appointment	Sets out terms of employment for ED, DO and FM.	Finalized.
CAPS	Provides for subsidy of certain CAPS courses for	Under review.

	grad students.	
UBEF	UBEF administers the GSA's emergency bursary funds.	Oral agreement.
Campus Food Bank	Regulates GSA involvement with Food Bank.	Stable.
U of A Financial Services	Stipulates when GSA receives fees collected by the U of A on our behalf.	Reviewed this summer.
Banking	Operating account, GICs, investments.	Under review.
Liability and Officers/Directors' Insurance	As a separate corporation from the university, we carry our own insurance, including the equivalent of workers' compensation.	U of A will review for us to ensure coverages are adequate.
Triffo Lease	Detailed lease covering our use of Triffo office space.	First-ever lease being drafted.
Audit	As a separate corporation from the university, we hire our own auditor.	Final audit is before Council.
Council By-laws and policies	Regulated by the <i>Post-secondary Learning Act</i> .	Comprehensive review to occur 2011-12.

Best,
Ellen, Heather and Bernadette

GSA COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

The GSA Nominating Committee (NoC) is charged with bringing to Council nominations to fill vacancies and GSA Board and GSA committees. The NoC therefore presents the following nominations for consideration by the GSA Council. Upon receipt of this report, members of Council may submit additional nominations to Joanna Chan, Executive Assistant, extension 2-5217 (gsa.execadmin@ualberta.ca). In accord with GSA policy, should there be any additional nominations they must be received by **3:30 PM, September 23, 2011**. **The nominees must be both willing and eligible to serve. A brief biographical sketch should accompany any nominations. If no additional nominations are received by the deadline, the nominees noted below will be declared elected.**

GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (ERC): The GSA Nominating Committee presents the following nominees for service on ERC.

1. Richard Kanyo (Councillor from Physiology)
2. Yasmin Garad (Councillor from Public Health)
3. JD Crookshanks (Political Science)

This will complete the membership of this Committee.

GSA Labour Relations Committee (LRC): The GSA NoC presents the following nominees for service on LRC.

1. Senthilkumar Sirchabesan (Councillor from Business)
2. Misty Underwood (Alternate Councillor from Educational Policy)
3. Yasmin Garad (Councillor-at-Large, Public Health)
4. JD Crookshanks (Political Science)
5. Savenaz Hatami (Educational Psychology)

This will complete the membership of this Committee.

GSA Governance Committee (GC): Please note the GC's composition includes three councillors or alternates. The GSA Nominating Committee prefers the following nominees for service on GC.

1. Lacey Fleming (Councillor from Anthropology)
2. Emily Klomps (Councillor from Library Information Studies)
3. Nikolai Sinkov (Councillor from Chemistry)

This will complete the membership of this Committee.

BFC Terms of Reference

Background

In 2010 the Board struck an *ad hoc* committee to completely review the GSA budget; this work has been completed and the new budget passed Council unanimously. The *ad hoc* committee had two remaining tasks: to develop a five-year Capital Plan and draft new terms of reference for BFC. The Capital Plan was developed in the office and approved by President Roy Coulthard, and feedback sought from the *ad hoc* committee by email. One received suggestion has been incorporated. GSAB notes that Part XII item 2 of Bylaw (concerning BFC’s role with respect to the budget) remains unchanged and will be reviewed later this year.

The Capital Plan, as it requires no new money, was approved by the GSA Board on August 10 as a rolling plan, and the Board has asked for one amendment concerning long-term replacement of the office printer.

Motion

BIRT Council, upon the recommendation of the GSA Board, approve the following changes to Part VII of GSA Bylaw.

Current	Proposed
<p>PART VII STANDING COMMITTEES [...] 3 Budget & Finance Committee 3.1 Composition 3.1.1 The Budget & Finance Committee (BFC) is under the jurisdiction of the President, who chairs the committee. 3.1.2 The Executive Director and Director of Finance and Operations are non-voting members on the BFC. 3.1.3 Each Vice President has a standing invitation to attend meetings of the BFC. 3.1.4 In the absence of the chair, the line of succession established in V.1.6 of these Bylaws for meetings of the GSA Board will apply to the BFC.</p>	<p>PART VII STANDING COMMITTEES [...] 3 Budget <u>and</u> Finance Committee <u>3.1 Mandate</u> <u>3.1.1 The overall mandate of the Budget and Finance Committee (BFC) is to advise the President and management on the financial affairs of the GSA and to provide for the long-term financial health of the organisation. Members are expected, by Council, to rise above any local/departmental views or issues and to take into account the needs of the GSA as a whole.</u> 3.1.2 BFC shall fulfill the following advisory functions: <u>3.1.2.1 Advising the President, GSA Board and management on the long-term planning</u></p>

Current	Proposed
<p>3.2 — Mandate</p> <p>3.2.1 — The mandate of the BFC is to advise the Director of Finance and Operations and President on the financial affairs of the organisation to ensure that the needs and priorities of graduate students are observed.</p>	<p><u>and priorities of the GSA in light of the GSA’s strategic plan;</u></p> <p><u>3.1.2.2 Advising the President and Council on budget principles, policies and procedures and on any other related financial policies;</u></p> <p><u>3.1.2.3 Receiving information and advice from the GSA auditor with respect to any information and recommendations the auditor wishes to present; and</u></p> <p><u>3.1.2.4 Reviewing the investment portfolio and advise the President and management on long-term investment strategies and on any overarching, macro, planning or long-term financial/budgetary issues.</u></p> <p><u>3.1.3 BFC shall review and discuss quarterly reports on expenses and revenues; these reports will present comparative information from previous years in a way that shows, in transparent fashion, the percent of the annual budget spent in each quarter, by budget division.</u></p> <p><u>3.1.4 BFC shall review and advise on the rolling 5-year capital plan.</u></p> <p><u>3.1.5 BFC shall make recommendations to Council on the annual operating and capital budgets.</u></p> <p><u>3.1.6 BFC shall consider any matters referred to it by the Council, the Board, the President or management.</u></p> <p><u>3.2 Composition</u></p> <p><u>3.2.1 The voting membership of BFC is:</u></p> <p><u>3.2.1.1 The President or delegate, as chair;</u></p>

Current	Proposed
	<p><u>3.2.1.2 The Vice President Labour, Vice-chair;</u> <u>3.2.1.3 One Councillor, elected by Council; and</u> <u>3.2.1.4 Two members of the GSA, elected by Council.</u></p> <p><u>3.2.2 Additionally, BFC has the following non-voting members:</u> <u>3.2.2.1 The Director of Operations / BFC Coordinator;</u> <u>3.2.2.2 The Financial Manager; and</u> <u>3.2.1.3 The Executive Director.</u></p> <p><u>3.2.3 All directly-elected Officers are welcome to attend BFC meetings.</u></p> <p><u>3.2.4 Quorum of BFC is three voting members, including at least one directly-elected Officer.</u></p>