

**GSA President**  
**REPORT TO COUNCIL for December 16, 2013 Council Meeting – CANCELLED**

To: GSA Council  
From: Brent Epperson  
Date: December 13, 2013

Dear Council Colleagues,

November has been a very busy month for the GSA and for me, and I am currently writing to you from the Board of Governors meeting where tuition for next year (and the proposed increases to the IDF for undergraduate students) is being voted on. I am providing the highlights since our last meeting in November, and will report orally on some of these points at our January 20 meeting of Council.

- **International Graduate Student Tuition Increase** - As I am sure you are all aware by now, the University has decided **NOT** to raise the International Differential Fee beyond CPI for international graduate students; unfortunately, MBA and undergraduates are still facing an increase. The GSA continues to oppose these increases. **This is a big win for the GSA**, but we will continue to discuss the need to improve funding opportunities for international graduate students with Dean Shirvani of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, Acting Provost Ferguson-Pell, Vice-President Advancement O'Neil Outar, and President Samarasekera. We are optimistic that the University will take substantial steps to address this challenge in the coming year.
- **Interfaith Prayer and Meditation Space** - We are continuing to work on multiple fronts, meeting with various stakeholders, to find solutions for both short- and long-term goals for interfaith prayer and meditation space on campus.
- **Physical Activity and Wellness Centre** - We are working hard with the Students' Union to lower the fee that students will have to pay once PAW is open, and to shorten the duration of time that the fee is collected for. We will have an update on PAW at Council in the new year.
- **Post-Secondary Education in Alberta** - The GSA continues to play a public role in keeping the key issues concerning post-secondary education in Alberta in the public eye. I recently had an Op-Ed on this topic published in the Edmonton Journal - you can read it here:  
<http://www.edmontonjournal.com/Opinion+need+reframe+Alberta+post+secondary+debate/9275256/story.html>
- **Renaissance Report** - We are working hard on analyzing the 200 page report produced by the Renaissance Committee. There is much to support in the report, however, we will be publically expressing our opposition to FGSR becoming a 'services office' as proposed in the report.

- **Audited Financial Statements** - The GSA Audited Financial Statements were presented to GSA Council in July. Today they have been submitted for information to the Board of Governors. It will be clear to Board members from these statements that the GSA is in excellent shape after three years of rebuilding.
- **Compliance with the Collective Agreement** - As you will read in the VP Labour's report, we have also been continuing to work hard to ensure that all departments across campus are complying with our Collective Agreement.

Happy Holidays,

Brent Epperson, President

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between November 18, 2013 and December 13, 2013:*

November 18	Phone Meeting Lisa Collins
November 18	GSA Executive
November 18	Pre-Council Dinner
November 18	GSA Council
November 19	Meeting with Dean of FGSR
November 19	Fall Convocation
November 20	Meeting with Dr. Horowitz
November 20	Meeting with Rod Loyola (Academic Program Coordinator)
November 20	FGSR Council
November 20	Early Call for Talent Dinner
November 21	GSA Departmental Presidents' Meeting
November 22	Rent Increase Meeting
November 22	Graduate Students Professional Network
November 22	Phone Meeting with Lorne Babiuk
November 25	Meeting with Dean of FGSR
November 25	GFC
November 25	BoG Dinner
November 26	Meeting with Fern Smart ( Dean of Education)
November 26	BFPC
November 26	Dinner with Nathan
November 27	BoG Teleconference Meeting
November 27	Meeting with Leslie Cormack
November 27	Facilitated Learning and Coaching Process
November 29	Professional Development Advisory Council
December 2	Meeting with Emerson Csorba (SU VP Academic)
December 2	O'Neil Outar Meeting
December 4	GSA Board Meeting
December 4	Facilitated Learning and Coaching Process
December 5	Acting Provost/Dean of Students Workshop

December 5	PIA Meeting
December 6	Chaplain's Meeting
December 9	Meeting with the Dean of FGSR
December 9	President's Holiday Party
December 10	M-BAC/T-BAC
December 11	Meeting with Dean of Students
December 11	GSA Board Meeting
December 11	GFC APC
December 12	Meeting with Bob Rosen
December 12	Meeting with SU President
December 12	Meeting with Elementary Ed Councillor
December 12	Phone Meeting with Anne Georg (AUPE)
December 12	Muslim Prayer Space Meeting
December 12	BoG Annual Holiday Dinner
December 13	BoG
December 13	Mandela Memorial
December 13	Parkland Institute Open House

**GSA Board**  
**REPORT TO COUNCIL for December 16, 2013 Council Meeting – CANCELLED**

To: GSA Council

From: Ellen Schoeck, Executive Director and Coordinator of the GSA Board; Heather Hogg, Director of Operations; and Courtney Thomas, Associate Director

Date: December 13, 2013

The Board reports regularly to Council by listing its agenda items, motions/agreements, and main items of discussion. Motions of Agenda approval and approval of the Minutes are not included unless there were amendments made. Closed session items are not minuted. The President, Vice-Presidents, Director of Operations, Director of Services and Governance, Financial Manager, and I will be happy to answer any questions or provide more information at the Council meeting.

**20 November, 2013 GSA Board Meeting**

Main Agenda Items:

Expenses Associated with Attendance at Parkland Institute 17th Annual Fall Conference; International Week 2014 - Request for Sponsorship; Indirect Research Costs; Student Groups Policy changes; *and* Facilitated Coaching and Learning Session.

Motions and Agreements:

MoB **MOVED** that the GSA Board approves the estimated expenses for two representatives of the GSA to attend the Parkland Institute's 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Fall Conference to be held November 22-24, 2013 at the University of Alberta, as shown in the attached proposed budget.

MoB **MOVED** that the GSA Board approves an external grant of \$500 for International Week 2014 Sponsorship, as requested by Nancy Hannemann, Director of Global Education, University of Alberta International, in the attached letters of request.

MoB **MOVED** that the Board Members **AGREE** to be a signatory to the letter to Honorable Greg Rickford concerning indirect costs of research.

**27 November, 2013 GSA Board Meeting**

Main Agenda Items:

Parkland Institute Conference; Senate Task Force; GSA Tuition Forum with Departmental Representatives; U-Pass Admin Meeting; Indirect Research Costs; ARFAC proposed fee increases; *and* Academic Integrity Council.

Motions and Agreements:

None at this time.

**4 December, 2013 GSA Board Meeting**

Main Agenda Items:

CASA; Mental Health Report; Flexible leases for residences; Prayer space in Michener Park; Proposed

UAI programming for International Students; Renaissance Committee Report; Adding dependants to GSAP; *and* Graduate Student Professional Development Advisory Council.

Motions and Agreements:

MeB **MOVED** that the GSA VP Student Life serve as Acting President from December 19 until December 20. BE Second. **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**11 December, 2013 GSA Board Meeting**

Main Agenda Items:

APIRG Referendum Proposal; Nelson Mandela Memorial; Donations to Myer Horowitz Scholarship Fund & Lou Hyndman Graduate Student Service Bursary; Provincial Advocacy and Early Call; PAW furniture and length of student fee; *and* Governance procedures.

Motions and Agreements:

BE **MOVED** that the GSA Board **determine** the request for a proposed referendum made by APIRG **to be urgent**, thus allowing the referendum process to be initiated after the November Council deadline as provided for in GSA bylaw. Seconded CM. **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.**

BE **MOVED** the GSA Board extend an invitation to APIRG to present a proposed referendum question at the next meeting of GSA Council. Seconded MoB. **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.**

MoB **MOVED** that the GSA donate \$250 to the Myer Horowitz Scholarship Fund and \$250 to the Lou Hyndman Graduate Student Service Bursary. Seconded MeB. **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.**

**GSA NOMINATING COMMITTEE (NoC)  
REPORT TO COUNCIL for December 16, 2013 Council Meeting [CANCELLED]**

To: GSA Council  
From: Lacey Fleming, Vice-Chair of the NoC  
Date: December 13, 2013

Dear Council Members,

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

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

### **Early Call for Talent and Training**

GSA Policy states "The NoC will actively seek out potential candidates for all GSA Directly-Elected Officers and Council-Elected Officers positions." 2013 is the **third year** of the NoC Early Call for Talent Training program. The advertisement went out through the GSA Newsletter on **November 1, 2013. 14 responses were received** and Early Call for Talent students have been participating in various Early Call for Talent Sessions: Governance and GSA 101, Collective Agreement 101, GSA Services 101, GSA Health and Dental Plan 101, and GSA Board, Council, and Budget 101.

### **Bodies External to the GSA**

As noted above, Council has delegated to the NoC the responsibility of filling positions on all committees external to the GSA. Normally, all vacancies are advertised. According to the Policy Manual, "advertising may be waived in instances where, in the NoC's view, it is urgent to fill a vacancy" (GSA Policy **Manual**, Nominating, 5.2).

#### **1) Leadership Academic Coordinating Committee**

One graduate student was needed to serve on this committee. The request for a representative was received a day and a half before the first meeting. The NoC determined it was urgent to waive advertising, and selected a student from the NoC Bank of Names. **Susan Cake (PhD, Sociology)** was selected to serve on this committee.

#### **2) Human Rights Lecture Selection Subcommittee**

This opportunity was advertised in the GSA Newsletter for one graduate student vacancy. **Three** outstanding bios and resumes were received from students with

extensive experience in human rights issues. **Rochelle Starr (PhD, Educational Policy Studies)** was elected to serve on this subcommittee.

**3) Information Technology Advisory Committee**

An opportunity for one graduate student to serve on the Information Technology Advisory Committee was advertised in the GSA Newsletter. No applications were received. The NoC approached students from the Bank of Names for this position and **Ali Utku Akkoc (PhD, Business)**.

**GSA VP Academic**  
**REPORT TO COUNCIL for December 16, 2013 Council Meeting – CANCELLED**

To: GSA Council  
From: Colin More  
Date: December 13, 2013

Hello everyone,

Well, Christmas is just about here, and I am even more unprepared than usual. Hope you're more organized!

As usual, this month has been mostly spent dealing with the **internal issues of the budget and the Peter Lougheed Leadership Initiative**. As you may or may not have heard, the province has restored \$14.4 million in base budget for both this year and (theoretically) subsequent years. Planning for how best to spend this money is occurring at the highest levels of governance, and we expect to hear their plans soon.

One positive, just announced this week, is the **return of "a substantial portion" of the \$5 million in TA/RA funding which was cut from the budgets of Arts and Science**. My understanding is that these faculties have not yet figured out how they will dole out the money, but no doubt there will be news over the next several weeks.

The **Peter Lougheed Leadership Initiative** is grinding forward, though it still lacks a clear academic plan. In addition, emphasis from its key drivers seems to be shifting away from a college dedicated to 144 undergraduates, and towards a broader rethink of leadership training on campus. It is unclear whether this shift is real or merely being done for optics, but if there really *is* a rethink occurring, there is certainly a lot of potential. The most prevalent criticisms of an exclusive college include its embrace of only one type of leadership, and a lack of accessibility of many groups (people with families, disabilities, lack of money, etc). The initiative still appears to be in its formative stages, but we expect a full discussion of its progress, led by President Samarasekera, at the February GFC meeting. Interesting times ahead!

Finally, allow me to take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy holiday season, ideally filled with a blend of friends, family, and food in whatever proportion is most enjoyable to you!

Cheers,

Colin



## 2.1

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between November 18, 2013 and December 13, 2013:

November 18	Meeting with SU VP Academic
November 18	FGSR Caucus
November 18	GSA Executive
November 18	GSA Council
November 20	Meeting with Dr. Horowitz
November 20	GFC Caucus
November 20	GSA Board
November 20	FGSR Council
November 20	Early Call for Talent Dinner
November 21	A&C Presentation to ASC
November 21	Coffee with Sean Robertson ( Native Studies Faculty)
November 21	GSA Departmental Presidents' Meeting
November 22	Graduate Students' Professional Network
November 22	Phone Meeting with Lorne Babiuk
November 25	Meeting with the Dean of FGSR
November 25	GFC
November 27	Meeting with Leslie Cormack (Dean of Arts)
November 27	GSA Board Meeting
November 29	Professional Development Advisory Council
December 2	GFC Exec
December 4	GSA Board Meeting
December 4	GFC CLE
December 5	Acting Provost/Dean of Students Workshop
December 9	Meeting with the Dean of FGSR
December 10	M-BAC/T-BAC
December 11	Meeting with Frank
December 11	GSA Board Meeting
December 12	BoG Holiday Dinner

**Vice-President Student Services**  
**REPORT TO COUNCIL for December 16, 2013 Council Meeting – CANCELLED**

To: GSA Council  
From: Megha Bajaj  
Date: December 13, 2013

Dear Council Colleagues,

Hope you are well and are keeping warm in this weather.

I attended a number of meetings since last council and below are the highlights from some of the meetings:

**GSAP Meeting with the Manager, Health Promotion and Work Life Services:**

I met with this GSAP representative along with the GSA management to discuss the possibility of including dependants and partners of graduate students in the GSAP program. I am happy to inform you that **GSAP is now available to partners and dependants** of all graduate students **at no extra cost to us!** In order to access these services all graduate students and their partners and dependents are required to **register and create a profile with Homewood Human solutions**. Detailed information on this is available on the GSA website. All graduate students continue to pay the non-instructional GSAP fee for the program.

**U-Pass Admin Meeting:**

As a group we discussed the issue of **cost of replacement of U-Pass stickers**. Currently students pay the full cost of U-Pass in case they loose their sticker. We want to work towards having a **lower cost for a replacement sticker for all students**. The GSA and SU have decided to take a lead on this and will be working towards **drafting a proposal to be submitted to ETS** for consideration. We will also partner with student associations from other participating institutes in Edmonton and present our proposal to ETS in the new year.

**Professional Development (PD) Advisory Meeting:**

This was the first PD advisory meeting where **professionals working in Industry, government and non-profit sectors** were present along with **members from FGSR and university**. Since this was the first meeting with all the 'external' people, we discussed the need for such a program and an overall culture change within the university. I think this was an interesting first meeting where we had a good discussion about what professional development means for graduate students. The next meeting is scheduled for January and we hope to discuss our ideas on the form the PD program could take.

**Proposed Increases to the Athletics and Recreation Fee**

Hasin and I have also been following up with Dean Mummery and the committee about the **proposed increase to Athletics and Recreation fee**. However, we have **not received any further details** from them and **we are still waiting to hear answers to the questions** that were submitted by all the student members of ARFAC. I will update you once we get more information on this.

This is all for now. I hope you can take a break from work and enjoy the festive season with family and friends. Happy holidays and see you in the new year!

Sincerely,

Megha Bajaj, VP Student Services

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between November 18, 2013 and December 13, 2013:*

November 18	GSA Executive Meeting
November 18	GSA Council
November 20	Breakfast with Dr. Horowitz
November 20	U-Pass Advisory Group Meeting
November 20	GSA Board Meeting
November 20	Early Call for Talent Dinner
November 21	U-Pass Admin Meeting
November 22	URPC
November 22	Phone Meeting with Lorne Babiuk
November 26	PAW Steering Committee
November 26	Academic Integrity Council
November 27	GPAC
November 27	ARFAC
November 27	GSA Board Meeting
November 28	GSAP Pre-Meeting
November 28	Meeting with Melanie Goroniuk (Mgr/Hlth Prom & Work Life Services)
November 28	HCAG
November 28	North Campus Open Space Open House
November 29	Meeting – Local Community Engagement with GSA
November 29	Professional Development Advisory Council
November 29	Graduate Professional Development Advisory Council Meeting
December 4	GSA Board
December 5	Acting Provost/Dean of Students Workshop
December 6	Bioscience Town Hall
December 10	PAW Steering Committee
December 11	GSA Board Meeting
December 12	BoG Annual Holiday Dinner

**GSA Vice President Student Life  
Report to Council**

To: GSA Council  
From: Hasin Haroon  
Date: December 13, 2013

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope you are all doing well. I personally have been finding it very cold this year, which came as a bit of a surprise because I got through last winter just fine and thought I had seen and experienced it all. Clearly I was wrong. Anyways, this is what I have been up to this past month:

- **Flexible Leases for Graduating Graduate Students in Residences – Done!** This is an issue that the GSA has been working on for the last few years, and at the start of our term, we identified this as a priority (and made this point 7 on our Strategic Work Plan, as you are all well aware). In my last report to Council I mentioned that I would be meeting with Residence Services to try and get a formalised flexible lease policy in the works. I am delighted to let you know that the meetings went well, and we have reached an agreement regarding flexible leases for graduate students in residences. I will bring you more details regarding the agreement in our next Council meeting in January.
- **Canadian Alliance of Student Associations Advocacy Week** – Last month I attended CASA's advocacy week in Ottawa. It was a great week filled with lots of interesting meetings and discussions. I will report further orally in closed session in January.
- **Athletics and Recreation Fee Advisory Committee** – Megha Bajaj and I are working on this issue, and hope to be able to bring you more details next month. In our last meeting we agreed on a timeline and a framework for the discussions to follow.
- **Prayer Space** – Brent Epperson and I met with the Interfaith Chaplains' Association and the Muslim Students' Association in order to get feedback and try and find a solution that would provide accessible and adequate prayer space.

If you have any questions regarding anything in my report, feel free to drop me an email.

Sincerely,  
Hasin Haroon, VP Student Life

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between November 18, 2013 and December 13, 2013:*

Nov. 18-24	CASA Conference
November 27	ARFAC
November 27	GSA Board
November 28	COSA
November 28	Stewardship Meeting for Research
November 29	Professional Development Advisory Council

## 4.1

December 2	Flexible Leases Meeting
December 3	Residence Advisory Committee
December 4	GSA Board
December 5	Acting Provost/Dean of Students Workshop
December 6	Chaplain's Meeting
December 11	SACIE
December 12	Muslim Prayer Space Meeting

**Awards Selection Committee (ASC)**  
**REPORT TO COUNCIL for December 16, 2013 Council Meeting – CANCELLED**

To: GSA Council  
 From: Hasin Haroon, Chair  
 Date: December 13, 2013

Dear Council Colleagues,

The Awards Selection Committee (ASC) is responsible for selecting the recipients of the Government of Alberta Graduate Citizenship Award. Adjudication training was provided to members of the ASC on 01 October 2013. The deadline for applications was October 15, 2013. The GSA received 118 applications, down from the 158 received in 2012. Over thirty hours were spent adjudicating the applications by Committee members from October 22 – 31, 2013.

The members of ASC then met via email to select the twenty nominees. The following list was approved by ASC on 5 November 2013:

Lauren Alston	Nathan Andrews
Gary Barron	Auralia Brooke
Harneet Chahal	Tara Chisholm
Katherine Evans	Isaac Odoom
Babatunde Olateju	Van Ortega
Shakib Rahman	Travis Schoepp
Caroline Sheppard	Jodie Stearns
Jacqueline Torti	Kimberly Wiens
Karen Willsher	Yu Wong
Eri Yamamoto	Ryan Young

The list of nominees was provided to the Government of Alberta on November 15, 2013. The nominees will be congratulated on the GSA website and in the GSA Newsletter shortly.

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

Best,  
 Hasin Haroon

**Vice-President Labour**  
**REPORT TO COUNCIL for December 16, 2013 Council Meeting – CANCELLED**

To: GSA Council  
 From: Monty Bal  
 Date: December 13, 2013

Dear Council Colleagues,

Three major issues have been the focus of my work since the November VPL report:

- **Preparation for Bargaining:** Meetings will not begin until after February 26, 2014, when the Board Human Resources and Compensation Committee is scheduled to meet and the university's negotiating team will receive its mandate on bargaining. In the meantime we will begin to review the collective agreement itself and consider proposed revisions.
- As mentioned in the President's report, I have been working on array of issues related to **compliance with the Collective Agreement** and will continue to push hard on compliance in the new year.
- Working with Heather Hogg, GSA Labour Professional on **several individual labour cases**.

Each of these areas involves confidential matters/issues which are not appropriate for a public report, and I will address each of them with Councillors in closed session on January 20.

Enjoy the break!

Monty Bal, VP Labour

*Please find below a list of meetings I attended between November 18, 2013 and December 13, 2013:*

November 18	GSA Executive Meeting
November 18	GSA Council
November 20	Meeting with Dr. Horowitz
November 20	GSA Board
November 20	FGSR Council
November 20	Early Call for Talent Dinner
November 21	GSA Departmental Presidents' Meeting
November 22	Call with Lorne Babiuk ( Vice-President Research)
November 26	Biological Science & Budget Cuts Meeting
November 27	GSA Board Meeting
November 27	Meeting with MEAE
November 28	GFC Campus Law Review Committee
November 28	Final Judging for the U of A's Human Rights Education Recognition Awards
December 3	Labour Case
December 4	GSA Board Meeting

## 5.1

December 5	Labour Case
December 5	Acting Provost/Dean of Students Workshop
December 11	GSA Board Meeting
December 12	BoG Holiday Dinner



**Elections and Referenda Committee**  
**REPORT TO COUNCIL for December 16, 2013 Council Meeting – CANCELLED**

To: Council Colleagues  
From: Isaac Odoom, Chief Returning Officer  
Date: December 13, 2013

Dear Council Colleagues,

According to ERC mandate, “the ERC shall advise the CRO on all matters pertaining to elections, referenda and by-elections. **At least one (1) month prior to the opening of nominations for the General Election**, ERC shall meet to assist the CRO in the planning of election events” (GSA Policy Manual, Standing Committees Section 9 Elections and Referenda Committee).

At its December 05, 2013 meeting, the ERC main agenda items were:

- Elections bylaw and policy review and refresher.
- Proposed workplan and timeline for the 2014 General Election.
- Detailed review of the Directly-Elected Officer and Councillor-at-Large nomination forms for 2014, and bio and resume form for 2014.
- Proposed forum at GSA Council for Directly-Elected Officer Candidates.
- Discussion of potential APIRG referendum.

ERC will continue its work in January to plan the 2014 General Election. Nominations will open at the end of January (exact date to be announced).

Feel free to contact me with any questions: [gsa.elections@ualberta.ca](mailto:gsa.elections@ualberta.ca).

Best,

Isaac Odoom, Chief Returning Officer

**GSA Executive Director  
REPORT TO COUNCIL for December 16, 2013 Council Meeting – CANCELLED**

To: GSA Council  
From: Ellen Schoeck, GSA Executive Director  
Date: December 13, 2013

Dear Council Colleagues,

**The office has taken stock of 2013. We support the President and VPs in achieving their goals, and we support the IT, advisory and corporate infrastructure. Here is a one-page digest of quotes from us all:**

“DLI Initiative and getting 29 new Councillors over the summer... Council is more robust!”

“Engagement of graduate students through social media.”

“Competition in the GSA General Election was great – having two full slates shows I think both success of Early Call for Talent as well as graduate student interest in the organization...”

“Elections and Referenda Bylaw and Policy Review! Huge!!!”

“...the NoC work plan is pretty solid – for most vacancies we are able to anticipate them in advance, fewer last minute scrambles...” [up from some 40 to a cumulative 170 committee reps]

“Setting up the online reporting system for GSA Front Desk ... gives us ...comparable data...”

“Awards streamlining.”

“Grants (still in progress but a lot of work has gone on already and I'm really excited about it).”

“Bylaw and Policy and Board Policy – the editorial rehaul was a huge step...”

“Awards Night and Orientation – I think these have been massively improved.”

“Rewrite of the CA and info sheets; more students coming to us with labour problems.”

“Google drive.”

“Dynamic office team that is cross-trained, feels a sense of purpose to their work.”

“Supportive, humane environment which allowed transformation of support staff positions.”

“Elected officials operating at peak; first off-campus transition.”

“Solid financial team with varied experience (accounting, departmental, financial, smart forms).”

“Excellent UA contacts over a cumulative 90 years experience.”

Best, Ellen

**Meeting Minutes  
18 November, 2013  
GSA Council Meeting**

*[Note: All materials referred to in these Minutes are stored in hard copy in the Official File, as well as electronically]*

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Brent Epperson (President)	Shamandeep S Pawar (Business MBA)	Luciana Cavalcante (Lab Med & Pathology)	Burkhard Ritter (Physics)
Colin More (VP Academic)	Dominic Strickland (Business MBA)	Solomon Aomateng (Law)	Rhona Rogers (Poli Sci)
Monty Bal (VP Labour)	Claire Deng (Business PhD)	Keitha Langston (SLIS)	Jiyun Chung (Psychiatry)
Megha Bajaj (VP Student Services)	Navjot Sandhu (Chem and Materials Eng)	Rebekka Puderbaugh (Linguistics)	Allison Hahn (Psychology)
Daniel Prins (Speaker)	Jeremy Wohland (Civil and Enviro Eng)	Chunendra Kr Sahu (Mech Eng)	Jessica Laubach (Psychology)
Roy Coulthard (Senator/Deputy Speaker)	Pengfei Wang (Comp Lit)	Igor Pravdivyi (Medical Genetics)	Jaqueline Torti (Public Health)
Nathan Andrews (Councillor-at-Large)	Brendan Nearey (Drama)	Ninad Mehta (Med. Microbiology & Immunology)	Arnold Wong (Rehab Med)
Qiang Li (Councillor-at-Large)	Leanne Labossière (Earth & Atmos Sci)	Laura Zenith (Medicine)	Yasmin Merchant (Religious Studies)
Richard Zhao (Councillor-at-Large)	Blake Fensom (Economics)	Axel Trujillo (MLCS)	Alison Murata (Renewable Resources)
Dulal Paul (AFNS)	Connie Yuen (Ed Psych)	Micaela Santiago (Nursing)	Kyle Kipps (Renewable Resources)
Michelle Borowitz (Anthro)	Sulya Fenichel (Elementary Ed)	Oksana Zimka (Nursing)	Curtis Rollins (Res Eco and Enviro Sociology)
Lacey Fleming (Anthro/Vice-Chair Nominating Cmte)	Amanda Lim (English & Film Studies)	Sudip Subedi (Oncology)	Kerry Rose (Secondary Ed)
Aaron Veldstra (Art and	Eve Robidoux-Descary	Geetha Venkateswaran	Susan Cake (Sociology)

Design)	(Faculte Saint-Jean)	(Pediatrics)	
Jennifer Wang (Biochem)	Sumit Mandal (Human Ecology)	Emily Douglas (Philosophy)	Kelsi Barkway (Sociology)
Michele DuVal (Bio Sci)	Sarah Vela (Hum Computing)	Jennifer Crawford (Phys Ed and Rec)	M Bernier (Speech Path and Audiology)
Syed Shakeeb Ahmed (Business MBA)			

**GUESTS:** Robin Overall (Associate Dean of Students), Kristin Foster (Pacific & Western Director, Studentcare), Kerry Mummery (Dean, Faculty of Education & Recreation)

**REGRETS:** Hasin Haroon (VP Student Life), Isaac Odoom (CRO & Councillor-at-Large), Qian Tang (Councillor-at-Large), Chelsea Gordon (Occ Therapy), Gina Hargreaves (Occ Therapy)

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

**Approval of Agenda**

**1. Approval of the 18 November, 2013 Agenda**

Members had before them the 18 November, 2013 Consolidated Agenda, which had been previously distributed on 15 November, 2013.

**B Epperson MOVED to approve the agenda. SECONDED by S Vela.**

**Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Approval of Minutes**

**2. Minutes**

**i. Minutes from the 18 October, 2013 GSA Council meeting**

Members had before them the 18 October, 2013 GSA Council Minutes, which had been previously distributed on 7 November, 2013.

**M Bajaj MOVED to approve the minutes. SECONDED by S Vela.**

**Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**Changes in Council Membership**

**3. Changes in Council Membership**

**i. Introduction of New Councillors**

This was the first meeting for a number of Councillors: SS Ahmed (Business MBA), S Pawar (Business MBA), S Subedi (Oncology), K Kipps (Renewable Resources), M Bernier (Speech Path and Audiology), K Barkway (Sociology).

ii. **Farewell to Departing Councillors**

None.

**Presentations and Councillor Announcements**

**4. Student Mental Health Report: Presentation of Report**

B Epperson introduced the item and the guest, R Everall (Associate Dean of Students). Members had before them the Student Mental Health at the University of Alberta Executive Summary and Student Mental Health at the University of Alberta Final Report, both as submitted by R Everall.

B Epperson noted the following:

- Mental health is a top GSA priority, and at the conferences he attended since last GSA Council, he learnt that mental health is a priority for graduate students across Canada. Further, the University of Alberta is leaps and bounds ahead of other universities in Canada, both in terms of what they have already accomplished and what they hope to accomplish over the next year with R Everall's efforts  
*and*
- The latest version of R Everall's report with some minor editorial changes is available now on the Dean of Students' website.

R Everall then spoke about the Student Mental Health Final Report, and raised the following points:

- This is the third time she has been to GSA Council in two years, and Council is thanked for its interest in the topic;
- In January 2012, she began as Provost's Fellow of Student Mental Health and she looked at mental health services at the University of Alberta, and at other North American institutions. She found that not all initiatives will work on all campuses the same way. The U of A is a large, publically funded research intensive university with limited or restricted funds and therefore cannot implement the same programs and initiatives as smaller private institutions;
- The Student Mental Health Final Report is intended to provide a strategic framework to identify what the U of A has and what its mental health landscape looks like;
- The report also addresses how the U of A should communicate its hidden mental health resources, how it should deal with mental health in the short term, and what mental health on campus will look like in five years;
- Students are at the centre of the research (talking to students through focus groups, individual and departmental meetings, etc);

- Important to look at what the U of A has, what it offers and how it might change what is offered based on what students say, not what administration thinks the students need;
- When talking about mental health it is important to not just think about the clinical end of the spectrum. Mental health follows the full spectrum, from people who are functioning well to people who are struggling, and there are a variety of services at the University that are appropriate along the entire spectrum;
- The University has services and support in place all over the campus, but many are invisible. There are mental health services not housed specifically within the University Wellness Centre - there are satellite offices for psychologists and social workers all over campus. Some faculties have had psychologists housed within them for many years;
- The University is also working on building support for the needs of students both on and off campus, including housing, food, financial, and other needs;
- Graduate students have expressed concern about going into the Mental Health Centre and seeing one of their own students there. This prompted discussions with the GSA about how to address the needs of graduate students, and there is now a full-time psychologist working in Triffo Hall solely to meet with graduate students;
- The funding to support new mental health initiatives at the U of A came from the provincial government, and lasts until 2016. Hopefully it will be renewed after that point;
- Orientations are critically important places for getting information about mental health services on campus to new students, and R Everall offered to work with departments, faculties, and student associations on orientations;
- Working on augmenting the Helping Individuals at Risk program by putting together a software package for reporting, so that it becomes a connect-the-dots process to identify individuals who are struggling early, and get them help while their problems are still small and easily fixed, and before they become magnified and difficult to deal with; *and*
- R Everall concluded by challenging Councillors to think about how the U of A thinks about these issues critically outside the culture of student care. R Everall also encouraged them to engage in a broader way with how the University might change the culture on campus and noted that she is always open to being contacted by students to discuss mental health.

Following the presentation, there were a number of questions:

- L Labossière asked if instead of just orientations it was possible to have someone come speak further on in the semester. R Everall responded that either herself or the outreach psychologists and social workers can come and discuss mental health with groups of students any time;

- N Andrews asked that, if the office in Triffo Hall was established due to the specific needs of graduate students, could R Everall give a sense of how effective it has been, and what plans there might be to expand it? R Everall responded that the Triffo Hall office is too new to talk about its effectiveness, but she would be happy to report back in a year on that. In terms of expanding services, she stated that it is important to keep offering more services, but it is also important to look at how that expansion takes place. It might be offering more of the same, or coming up with other ways of addressing mental health; her office will monitor the usage of the office and look for more resources for graduate students;
- S Vela asked if there was any career counseling available. R Everall replied that there is career counseling available through CAPS, and that there are other resources available through faculties;
- N Metha asked if she could give a rough estimate on numbers at Triffo Hall versus the main Mental Health Centre? R Everall responded that they do not yet have those numbers. N Metha also asked if she had contacted departmental coordinators about having mental health be part of departmental orientations since many graduate students miss the general orientation. R Everall responded that the goal is to get the information out in so many different ways that it does not matter which orientation a student goes to, they get the information they need. N Metha also asked if medical students can access mental health resources on campus. R Everall responded that yes, these are for everyone; *and*
- M Santiago stated that she had looked at the charts for last year and this year about where there are in-faculty psychologists, and noticed there are more this year. She asked where Nursing fits in, and if the faculties that gained psychologists expressed need and that is why they got a psychologist? R Everall responded that the faculties that received psychologists were chosen based on the number of students in them.

**There were no further questions.**

B Epperson thanked R Everall.

##### **5. "Health and Dental 101"**

B Epperson introduced the item and the guest, K Foster (Pacific & Western Director, Studentcare). B Epperson noted that if any Councillors had specific questions about coverage or other matters, this was not the time to raise those. Case specific questions can be directed to Studentcare.

K Foster then spoke about Studentcare and raised the following points:

- The GSA management and staff are to be commended on their high level of organization and professionalism and noted that the GSA has gone through a lot of changes and that there is not another graduate student group that has the same amount of accountability;
- The GSA is one of the first graduate student organizations in Canada to have a health and dental plan; the plan has a travel component that covers up to 120 days per trip and the complete duration of any academic exchange;
- Studentcare represents the GSA in third-party negotiations so students do not have to talk to anyone other than Studentcare. They also conduct member priority surveys to make sure that the plan that gets designed is the best for students. The last survey for the GSA was in March 2013;
- Studentcare created a network of service providers for students to save money. If a doctor or therapist is a member of the network, the student will get 20%-30% off, in addition to the amount covered by the plan;
- 83% of GSA members are enrolled in the plan. Of all the graduate student associations Studentcare represents, the GSA has the highest number of dependants enrolled; last year just over \$900,000 was spent on prescription drugs, and over \$700,000 was spent on dental claims, most of it on preventative services;
- GSA staff is often the first point of contact for a student who has questions about the health and dental plan. Studentcare works closely with GSA staff to help students find the resources that they need. The GSA takes the lead in reviewing any material that is then brought to Council. Council's role is to review the actions of the board and familiarize themselves with the information Studentcare provides, and then take that information back to their departments; *and*
- There is a new Student Health and Dental Plan Office location on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of SUB.

Following the presentation, there were a number of questions:

- M Borowitz asked why the switch was made to Desjardin. K Foster responded that the best way to get a competitive quote is to shop around, and sometimes that leads the existing provider to make a better offer, and sometimes it leads to a switch in providers. The offer from Desjardin was really good, so the switch was made  
*and*
- S Fenichel asked why some things require a doctor's referral, while others do not? K Foster responded that insurance companies have prices for everything, and place more restrictions on things like massage therapy because it is more enjoyable. The more restrictions that are placed to limit accessibility, the cheaper your bottom line will be. All decisions have a price tag attached to them and are negotiated when establishing the plan -



removing the doctor's note for massage therapy has never made it to the top of the priority list, but it could if students asked for it.

**There were no further questions.**

B Epperson thanked K Foster, and noted that the GSA has built an excellent working relationship with Studentcare. Members were encouraged to contact Studentcare with any specific questions they may have.

#### **6. Athletics and Recreation Fee: Information Session on Proposed Increase**

B Epperson introduced the item and the guest, K Mummery (Dean, Faculty of Physical Education & Recreation). B Epperson noted the following:

- K Mummery is here to discuss a fee request for his faculty. The GSA position on this matter is that it opposes across-the-board graduate student tuition increases beyond the Consumer Price Index (CPI), international student tuition differential increases beyond CPI, the introduction of new market modifiers that are not part of a clear regulatory framework, and the introduction of new mandatory non-instructional fees that do not result from a new regulatory framework negotiated between University administration and the GSA;
- This stance is based on feedback from Council and the tuition forums the GSA held over the summer. We are asking for a new regulatory framework from the government, or possibly the institution, around MNIFs, but these are ongoing discussions;
- We see this presentation from K Mummery as the beginning of a dialogue; if students want a service and want to pay for it, the GSA will not oppose it, so K Mummery is here to explain why his faculty needs the fee and what it will provide to students; *and*
- We will have more feedback from the Dean coming shortly related to a series of questions presented to him by student representatives on ARFAC.

K Mummery spoke about the Athletics and Recreation Fee and raised the following points:

- The Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation (FPER) is an integrated faculty, that has a high service component. K Mummery oversees after academics, operations, recreation services, and varsity athletics; not all universities in the country seat the non-academic parts under an academic dean. It is popular in western provinces to do it this way, but not in the east, and this provides FPER with interesting and exciting opportunities for services, teaching and research;
- FPER's costs have escalated over cost of living in the past 10 years. FPER is accruing debt which affects the services they can offer to students;

- FPER's athletics programs are the most successful in the country and they take athletics very seriously, producing athletes at national and international levels of competition; varsity sports provide opportunities for over 500 athletes to participate in elite athletic programs and pursue their passions and FPER wants to build a sense of community around athletics teams such as that which is seen at major universities in the US;
- The request for a fee increase is independent of the current budget crisis. FPER has been working on the timing of asking for a fee increase since before the budget was cut; the fees that FPER gets pay only a portion of the support for everything they provide and offset their other costs through additional fees to students over and above the Athletics and Recreation Fee. Income is also brought in through facility rentals on south and north campus to external users;
- FPER is currently running a deficit in excess of \$400,000 this year. \$380,000 of that comes from athletics and recreation overages; both the services offered to students and the athletics programs have seen growth above the cost of living since the last increase in the fee 20 years ago;
- FPER does have the option to curtail services to cut costs, but do not want to do that. There is an agreement in place that a portion of the athletics costs are attributed to an Athletics and Recreation Fee and they are not asking to be funded 100% through the fee;
- FPER is meeting with the GSA and SU Councils because they want to have a discussion about the fee, and because they believe that they have a close relationship to the student associations because of the services they provide; *and*
- Part of the increase in fees is to match the programming available with the excitement of the new PAW Centre.

Following the presentation, there were a number of questions:

- S Vela asked that K Mummery include what percentage of hours are facilities available for students vs athletics vs rentals. K Mummery replied that they should be able to break down the usage into those types of numbers, and noted that students are able to rent facilities as well;
- M Bajaj asked if K Mummery could talk about the source of the budget deficit. K Mummery responded that the deficit started around 1993, when they had their last major fee increase. Since then they have had cost of living increases but the costs related to operating and running programs have increased beyond cost of living. The budget deficit has come from uncontrollable costs, not increases in salaries, but operation costs, travel, etc. Have covered a lot of it through external fundraising;

- M Bajaj also asked what proportion of graduate students participate in varsity sports? K Mummery responded that it is generally a low number. Support of athletes is generally five years, so many graduate students have used up their eligibility to play on varsity teams during their undergraduate years. However, they believe that varsity sports are a source of student engagement and all students should be involved with them, and with recreation services;
- M Bal asked if the deficit could be broken down into what is for athletics and what is for recreation. K Mummery said that those numbers are not available yet, but will be included in the report up to and including the current year that is being prepared. They are dealing with the current year now because of the budget pressures, but would be looking for a fee increase regardless;
- R Coulthard asked if K Mummery could give an idea of what would happen five years out if the increase did not get approved. Would there be incremental losses of teams, shortened hours of access or something else? K Mummery replied that the problem is that FPER tries to maintain services by generating revenue. About 50% of their total budget is raised from external sources. So if the fee is not increased, they would have to raise more money from external sources. FPER is currently looking at additional sources of revenue generation, such as putting a bubble over Foote Field to be used year round. Although it would cost \$3M, it would raise \$340,000 in revenue every year. Without a fee increase FPER would have to become much more businesslike in their operations. Right now they do a lot of things outside of their academic mission and mandate to support the community broadly. Without the fee increase there would be cuts in programs and more rentals to facility growth and demands on the program;
- B Epperson asked K Mummery to address the consultation process governing the fee increase, and what kind of accountability is envisioned regarding the use of the fee? K Mummery replied that everything is transparent, but they will have to determine how the funding is used and how they communicate that. Although FPER is entering into the process to secure a fee increase, they wanted to discuss the issue with the GSA and SU Councils before going to MBAC with a dollar figure or proposal;
- N Metha said that his stipend hasn't kept up with costs of living either. Seventy percent of his department do not go to the University gym because it lacks equipment, space, and the timing of use does not make sense for them. Instead, they pay out of pocket to use the hospital gym. How can he go back to his department and justify to them paying more for services they do not use? Eighty percent of his department do not watch varsity sports either. Will there be increases or improvements in the facilities currently present? K Mummery replied that by this time next year the PAW Centre will be opening, with some

increases in programming and equipment. He also stated that regardless of what facilities and events are being looked at, the majority of students will not use them. He believes in working with groups to provide the equipment and services people want and need.

Something has to be done to continue to bring students to campus for campus life, to work out and to watch sports. No mandatory fee covers one hundred percent of people. N

Metha further asked how he can justify the increase to his department? Is there a one-line statement to give to advisors, who pay the fees, about the increase? K Mummery responded that he thinks it speaks to the quality of life, and the quality of campus life. The GSA, SU and FPER work hard together, and the PAW Centre is an example of how we are trying to increase services to the student body. Want to increase campus life because we can see the value of that at US schools, and we are trying to show the value of that here;

- C More asked how K Mummery would respond to criticism that student athletics shouldn't be funded through a MNIF? K Mummery replied that this is the model of funding that has been used at the University for decades. Athletics are partially funded through that fee. Taking that away would be a fundamental change to the funding model used for decades, and used at other universities for decades, to fund athletics. It is a touchy subject because it is funding a small 500 athletes devoted to sports out of a student body of 40,000. But it was established many years ago, and they do not want to establish a new model, they just want contribution to catch up with costs. They are not looking for one hundred percent contribution. It is part of the student experience, something decided long ago, and they are not asking to come to a new agreement, just for fees to be increased;
- M Santiago asked what percentage of student fees is used to fund the varsity athletics travel budget? K Mummery replied that he does not have that figure but will have it in response to the GSA and SU questions. He further stated that the fees that do go towards travel are used for regular season travel only. Any travel for championships or exhibition games comes from fundraising;
- R Zhao asked K Mummery to elaborate on how current budget cuts have affected the faculty and the decision to increase the fee. K Mummery responded that they are separate. Any cuts to budget have not been to athletics or recreation programs, they have been to the staff and professoriate of FPER. In three and a half years they have lost thirteen percent of their professoriate due to budget cuts. But the cuts do not affect Athletics and Recreation because they are funded separately from the base budget except for their support services. He says he would not tie the request to the budget cuts, as it is coming separately from those cuts. He also wanted to remind the GSA that it is not the faculties that are cutting the budget or services, or increasing costs to students, he feels personally

that it is the government that has cut us, and it is the government that the SU and GSA are working with against the University;

- M Bal asked what K Mummery's long-term vision was in using examples of the US model of alumni relations and student engagement with athletics in light of their much larger budgets. K Mummery responded that there are a few things that the model does that FPER aspires to, such as the strong aspect of student life, and students involved with the success of their teams. There are also many things they do not aspire to, such as the budget being driven by two main teams (men's football and men's basketball) and everything else riding on their coattails. The long-term goal for athletics in a Canadian university is to allow Canadian athletes to reach their maximum potential staying in the Canadian system. Not all sports follow this model, for example basketball wants them to go to the NCAA, but swimming wants them to stay in Canada. FPER wants to continue the long tradition of sports, maintain a high level of performance, and to grow engagement of the study body and general population in its success. He does not aspire to a true American model because there are so many horror stories; *and*
- B Epperson stated that K Mummery's comment was controversial. The GSA and the SU are not working with the government against the University. The GSA represents the interests of graduate students based on consultation, and are a soft power organization. Sometimes the GSA works with the government, sometimes with the institution, and sometimes with both at the same time. The GSA sees administration as a partner, but also sometimes, and simultaneously, an adversary. The GSA is careful to differentiate the issues. K Mummery responded that as a dean, he maintains an administrative position, but oversees a faculty with graduate students in it. Those graduate students are their elite athletes in terms of academics. He works for the benefit of athletes, undergraduate students and graduate students in the faculty. B Epperson responded that he has a colleague from the University of Calgary who believes students were not hurt by the budget cuts because they were protected by the tuition freeze. However, the GSA opposes both the budget cuts and the tuition freeze. The GSA does counter government, and has a similar relationship with them as they do with administration.

**There were no further questions.**

D Prins thanked K Mummery.

## **7. FGSR Update**

**B Epperson MOVED to go into closed session. SECONDED by M Bajaj.**

**Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**C More MOVED to go into open session. SECONDED by B Epperson.**

**Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

#### **8. Councillor Announcements**

None at this time.

#### **Action Items, Elections, Appointments, Special Business**

##### **9. GSA Elections and Referenda: Proposed Changes to GSA Bylaw - Second Reading (unanimously passed at first reading in October 2013)**

E Schoeck presented the item. Members had before them the outline of issue, cover letter from the GSA CRO, proposed changes to GSA Elections Bylaw, and proposed changes to GSA Referenda Bylaw, which had been previously distributed on 7 November, 2013. In addition, E Schoeck noted that last Council the first reading of the changes to bylaws passed unanimously. Policy was also passed at that time and took effect immediately. There is a much shorter document today. It is our Speaker who initiated many of these changes when he was CRO.

**B Epperson MOVED that the GSA Council approve, on the unanimous support of the GSA Board and the unanimous advice of the GSA ERC, the proposed revisions to GSA Bylaws, Part VIII: Elections, and GSA Bylaws, Part XI: Referenda, as outlined in the attached three-column documents, effective immediately. Seconded by R Zhao.**

**Motion UNANIMOUSLY PASSED. 0 opposed, 1 abstention (Qiang Li).**

#### **Reports**

##### **10. President**

###### **i. President's Report:**

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 15 November, 2013. In addition, B Epperson noted the following:

- Recently attended the CAGS, CBoC and Royal Society of Canada symposium. H Haroon is currently attending the CASA conference to see if the GSA wants to pursue membership in the future;
- The four provincial GSA presidents were at CAGS. The conference highlighted the need for a strong provincial voice and association that we can leave in place for future graduate students. We have not set the date yet, but will be meeting to form a new organization and there will be three GSA representatives there. We want to leave a strong organization behind;
- In Alberta, students have more access to their government than in other provinces and sometimes, depending on who is Minister, we can actually have influence;
- CAGS is one of two major events where students from across Canada can talk to each other. The main issues facing GSAs across Canada are funding, mental

health, graduate supervision, and professional development, and we are doing better at addressing these than most other GSAs;

- There isn't another GSA in the country that's trying to do as much as we are for improving professional development for graduate students;
- The staff of the GSA has helped a great deal in the transformation of the GSA over the last few years;
- The University of Calgary is also doing well. As is the Université de Montréal, but it is difficult to compare with them because their GSA is grouped into the students' union with shared fees with undergraduates that we do not get at the University of Alberta;
- Instead of increasing tuition on international students, the University really needs to be fixing their indirect cost issues. The Université de Montréal have asked us about signing a letter to give to the federal government because they are not putting enough into Tri-Council grants for indirect costs;
- B Epperson asked M Bal to speak to the indirect costs issue, and M Bal noted that a comparison of the University of Alberta's indirect costs with other institutions shows that our intake is significantly lower than elsewhere in Canada. If the University were collecting as much as other institutions, the administration would say that it would not go towards reducing tuition. But a lot of the budget problems we have are related to not getting enough for indirect costs. The University has to stop using the excuse that no one else does it or that it's not in the culture. The university needs to start collecting these kinds of fees;
- B Epperson also attended the Conference Board of Canada Post-Secondary Education Summit, which is an entirely new undertaking. The GSA was invited to participate by the Provost (currently on leave) Carl Amrhein. We were lucky to be able to participate since we no longer have a provincial graduate student body;
- The conference had four goals: 1) to create a skills and post-secondary education strategy for Canada; 2) to track and report on the system's performance in achieving the strategy's vision and goals; 3) to build a strong empirical base and foster dialogue among skills and PSE stakeholders; and 4) to raise public awareness of the nature and importance of the skills and PSE sector to Canada's economy, society, and culture;
- If you look to where universities are recruiting graduate students moving forward, they are recruiting from China, India and Brazil. China, for example, is looking more to Australia, because there is one person they talk to there about setting up a graduate scholarship. In Canada, they have to talk to each university separately and it is becoming a hassle to deal with. Canada needs a national strategy for post-secondary education to deal with this and other issues;

- Our educational system is not meeting the needs of the economy in the ways that it used to. There needs to be more people in trades, and there are not enough academic jobs for all the PhDs we are creating. It is a popular myth that PhD students won't get work, and it is true that most will not get jobs in the academy, but we are succeeding as leaders in business and non-profit sectors. PhD programs need to be reformed to train students for the jobs they will actually do, not for going into the academy;
- CBoC needs to have regional conferences with GSA participation and the conference needs to be expanded outside of Ontario. As well, B Epperson noted some issues with the conference, including that there was only one group there to represent First Nations, that it was not bilingual, and that CBoC needs to have involvement from all post-secondary institutions. The GSA intends to participate in the conference for the next five years and hopefully whoever from the GSA attends next year will see these changes;
- The Royal Society of Canada symposium brought what was missing at CAGS and CBoC. It focused on First Nations as the fastest growing demographic in Canada and the need to increase First Nations enrolment in post-secondary institutions;
- There was good discussion around student debt at CBoC, although the keynote speaker said that student debt is a myth, but he believes costs affect access and students are afraid of debt. These issues should be brought forward at future CAGS and CBoC meetings;
- Conversations are happening around compensation. The idea is that to compete with the best universities in the world, they have to pay administrators competitive salaries to retain talent. On the other hand, to keep education affordable, public support of post-secondary institutions is necessary. All of these need to be combined into a single broader dialogue; *and*
- Councillors were reminded about the upcoming Tuition Forum and that it was not too late to sign up. Councillors-at-Large were also invited to attend.

**ii. GSA Board**

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 15 November, 2013. The report stood as submitted.

**iii. Budget and Finance Committee**

No meetings this reporting period.

**iv. Governance Committee**

No meetings this reporting period.

**11. a) Nominating Committee**



**i. Nominating Committee Report**

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 15 November, 2013. The report stood as submitted.

**12. Vice-President Academic**

**i. Vice-President Academic's Report**

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 15 November, 2013. The report stood as submitted and, in addition, C More noted a new task force has been created to examine the role of GFC committees. It has one graduate student and one undergraduate student representative.

The following questions were asked:

- Q Li asked about the discussion that took place at MBAC/TBAC and GFC regarding the proposed tuition increases. B Epperson responded that he opposed the tuition increases at those meetings. He further stated that some remarks by committee members towards student representatives were not respectful. The general sense of the committee is that this a reasonable fee and students should not be upset about it, and they did not understand why students would vote against this. The committee is coming from a position of privilege compared to international students. For international students with limited access to employment and funding, the tuition increase is not fair. Unfortunately, it passed. Q Li followed up asking if the GSA has a consultation process planned before the Board of Governors meeting and if there was any way to stop it? B Epperson replied that the GSA will be consulting later this week at the Tuition Forum. He also stated that the tuition increase is a lazy, unimaginative solution and administration should be ashamed for pushing it through. The GSA can and will vote against it but, unfortunately, might not be able to stop it;
- L Labossière asked if there was an avenue through which concerned students could express themselves? B Epperson said they should send emails to M Ferguson-Pell's and P Clark's offices to express their discontent, and if they pass their letters along the GSA, we will also forward the letters for them;
- N Metha asked if professors or departments where tuition is paid from operating grants have shown concern? B Epperson responded that the GSA has not heard directly from any faculty members. L Labossière stated that the faculty in her department had not heard of the tuition increase until she passed the information on to them; *and*

- R Zhao stated that there is a group of international students who are concerned about the tuition increase and have been meeting to form an International Students Union for consultation and discussion of issues affecting International Students. R Zhao will forward the information to Council via the GSA Office.

### **13. Vice-President Student Services**

#### **i. Vice-President Student Services' Report**

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 15 November, 2013. The report stood as submitted and, in addition, M Bajaj noted the following:

- We have been meeting to make decisions about what to do with the North Power Plant space, and will be meeting with Startup Edmonton and ABCampus to collaborate with them on turning the North Power Plant into a venue for hosting events and workshops for student development  
*and*
- The GSA will be sponsoring University of Alberta International's International Week 2014. Students will have a lot of opportunity to attend a lot of different events during I-Week including cultural events, workshops and lectures. We will be advertising it through the GSA Newsletter.

#### **ii. Student Affairs Advisory Committee (joint chair: Vice-President Student Life)**

No meetings this reporting period.

### **14. Vice-President Student Life**

#### **i. Vice-President Student Life's Report**

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 15 November, 2013. The report stood as submitted. There was no oral report as H Haroon was absent from Council.

#### **ii. Awards Selection Committee**

No report at this time, report to follow in December.

### **15. Vice-President Labour**

#### **i. Vice-President Labour's Report**

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 15 November, 2013. The report stood as submitted and, in addition, M Bal noted the following:

- The GSA has been working with departments and HR to figure out issues with student pay. There is a communication issue, and we want to make those communication channels better through better training and better information

provided at Orientation. The Provost's Office will be working with us to obtain contracts for graduate students

*and*

- The GSA is also seeing departmental issues in light of the budget cuts and attempts to change policy as a result of these budget cuts. The GSA is working with students to make sure that any changes are not in violation of the Collective Agreement.

**ii. Negotiating Committee**

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 15 November, 2013. The report stood as submitted.

**iii. Labour Relations Committee**

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 15 November, 2013. The report stood as submitted.

**M Bal MOVED to go into closed session. SECONDED by Q Li.**

**Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**C More MOVED to go into open session. SECONDED by N Andrews.**

**Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**16. Senator**

**i. Senator's Report**

No report was required at this time. In addition, R Coulthard noted the following:

- In 2011 there was a small absolute international fees decrease that was a consolation prize for accepting the market modifiers. It will be interesting to learn why their position has changed;
- Attended the Alberta Congress Board meeting in Jasper. These meetings are held annually and have heavy participation from the labour sector. This year's conference was not overly relevant to the GSA or post-secondary education, but next year the focus will be on youth and likely more relevant;
- Alberta Congress Board wants more student participation in the future;
- He had the chance to speak with Minister Lukaszuk along with other students. They spoke about professional development, which the Minister is in favour of. The Minister also stated that he supports curiosity based research but not at the expense of applied based research;
- The Senate is running a task force about interacting with Alberta communities to find out what is important to Albertans when it comes to post-secondary education. The GSA might have involvement in this; *and*
- Convocation is next week and members of the GSA will be on stage to congratulate convocating graduate students

## **17. Speaker**

### **i. Speaker's Report**

No report was required at this time. In addition, D Prins asked Councillors, by a show of hands, based on the information presented with so far, who was in favour of an increase in the Athletics and Recreation Fee? No Councillors were in favour of the increase, and several were opposed.

## **18. Chief Returning Officer**

### **i. Chief Returning Officer's Report**

No report was required at this time.

### **ii. Elections and Referenda Committee**

No report was required at this time.

## **19. GSA Management**

### **Executive Director's Report**

Members had before them a written report, which had been distributed on 15 November, 2013. The report stood as submitted and, in addition, E Schoeck noted that the report was intended to show how busy the GSA Office is. The report says these are the issues dealt with in the course of one week, but they are really the issues dealt with in one day. Nine people have responded to the Early Call for Talent and a dinner will be held on Wednesday for anyone interested in running for a Directly-Elected Officer position.

## **Question Period**

### **20. Written Questions**

No written questions were received prior to the meeting.

### **21. Oral Questions**

No questions were asked.

## **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15pm.