

GSA Council Meeting CONSOLIDATED AGENDA

Monday, September 22, 2014 at 6:00 pm

MEC 2-01

A light, vegetarian dinner will be served at 4:45 pm at MEC 2-01. During dinner, GSA Consultant Roy Coulthard will lead a Health and Dental 101 Training Session. All Councillors are invited to attend.

Substantive material is sent to all GSA Council members at least one week prior to the date of the meeting to give members abundant time to review (in accordance with the Standing Orders of Council). Any additional substantive material received after this mailing will be emailed as soon as possible.

Reports from committees, Directly-Elected Officers, and management are emailed the Friday before a Monday meeting so that the content is as current as possible.

Speaker Sarah Prescott in the Chair

OPEN SESSION

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of the 22 September 2014 Agenda
3. Approval of the Minutes from the 14 July 2014 GSA Council meeting
Attachments:
 - Minutes from the 14 July 2014 GSA Council meeting
4. Approval of the Minutes from the 12 August 2014 Special GSA Council meeting.
Attachments:
 - Minutes from the 12 August 2014 Special GSA Council meeting
5. Changes in GSA Council Membership
 - i. Introduction of New Councillors (*If you are new to GSA Council, please let us know it is your first meeting*)
 - ii. Farewell to Departing Councillors (*If this is your last GSA Council meeting, or if your last Council meeting is approaching, please let us know*)

Attached Numbered Pages

3.0 - 3.12

4.0 - 4.1

Presentations and Councillor Announcements

6. 2015-2016 Tuition and Fees
Nathan Andrews (GSA President) will present the Item and introduce the guests.

Guests: Carl Amrhein (Provost and Vice-President (Academic)) and Phyllis Clark (Vice-President (Finance and Administration))
7. Physical Activity and Wellness Centre (PAW) Update
Megha Bajaj (GSA Vice-President Student Services) will present the item and introduce the guest.

Guest: Benjamin Louie (University Architect)

8. Councillor Announcements

Action Items, Elections, Appointments, Special Business, Updates

9. Studentcare Agreement Renewal for the GSA Health and Dental Plan
Megha Bajaj (GSA Vice-President Student Services) will present the item and Roy Coulthard (GSA Consultant) and Ellen Schoeck (GSA Executive Director) will also speak to the item.

Guest: Kristin Foster (Pacific and Western Director, Studentcare) will be present to answer Councillors' questions.

Attachments:

- Outline of Issue
- Cover Letter from the GSA President and GSA Vice-President Student Services

9.0*
9.1 - 9.2
***amended**

10. Elections

- i. Vacancies on the GSA Awards Selection Committee: Motion to Elect
Lacey Fleming (GSA Nominating Committee Vice-Chair) will present the item.

Attachments:

- Nominees for GSA Awards Selection Committee

10.0 - 10.1

- ii. Vacancies on the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee: Paper Ballot Election

Lacey Fleming (GSA Nominating Committee Vice-Chair) will present the item.

Attachments:

- Nominees for GSA Elections and Referenda Committee

10.2 - 10.3

11. Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC): Membership
Nathan Andrews (GSA President) will present the Item.

Attachments:

- Outline of Issue
- Cover Letter from the GSA President
- ab-GPAC Bylaws

10.0*
10.1*
10.1 - 10.15*
***previously distributed as Item 10**

12. GSA Board 2014-2015 Strategic Work Plan: Update (**For Information**)
Nathan Andrews (GSA President) will present the item.

Attachments:

- Letter from the GSA President

12.0

13. Special Business (**none at this time**)

Reports

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| 14. President (Nathan Andrews, GSA President) | |
| i. President's Report | 14.0 - 14.1 |
| ii. GSA Board | 14.2 - 14.3 |
| iii. Budget and Finance Committee (no meetings this reporting period, will meet September 23 to discuss the Quarterly Financial Reports) | |
| iv. Governance Committee (no meetings this reporting period) | |
| a) Nominating Committee | |
| i. Nominating Committee Report (presented by Lacey Fleming, GSA Nominating Committee Vice-Chair) | 14.4 - 14.6 |
| 15. Vice-President Academic (Colin More, GSA Vice-President Academic) | |
| i. Vice-President Academic's Report | 15.0 - 15.1 |
| 16. Vice-President Student Services (Megha Bajaj, GSA Vice-President Student Services) | |
| i. Vice-President Student Services' Report | |
| ii. Student Affairs Advisory Committee (joint chair: Vice-President External) (no meetings this reporting period) | 16.0 - 16.2 |
| 17. Vice-President External (Susan Cake, GSA Vice-President External) | |
| i. Vice-President External's Report | 17.0 - 17.1 |
| ii. Awards Selection Committee (no meetings this reporting period, will be meeting shortly) | |
| 18. Vice-President Labour (Monty Bal, GSA Vice-President Labour) | |
| i. Vice-President Labour's Report | 18.0 - 18.1 |
| ii. Negotiating Committee (no meetings this reporting period, will resume meeting Fall 2015) | |
| iii. Labour Relations Committee (no meetings this reporting period) | |
| 19. Senator (Gary Barron, GSA Senator) | |
| i. Senator's Report | 19.0 |
| 20. Speaker (Sarah Prescott, GSA Speaker) | |
| i. Speaker's Report (no written report at this time) | |
| 21. Chief Returning Officer (Hamman Samuel, GSA Chief Returning Officer) | |
| i. Chief Returning Officer's Report | 21.0 - 21.1 |
| ii. Elections and Referenda Committee | 21.2 |
| 22. GSA Management (Ellen Schoeck, GSA Executive Director) | |
| i. Executive Director's Report | 22.0 - 22.5 |

Question Period

23. Written Questions
24. Oral Questions

Adjournment

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MEC 2-01

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Megha Bajaj (GSA Vice-President Student Services) will present the item and Roy Coulthard (GSA Consultant) and Ellen Schoeck (GSA Executive Director) will also speak to the item.

Guest: Kristin Foster (Pacific and Western Director, Studentcare) will be present to answer Councillors' questions.

Attachments:

- Outline of Issue
- Cover Letter from the GSA President and GSA Vice-President Student Services

9.0
9.1 - 9.2

10. Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC): Membership
Nathan Andrews (GSA President) will present the Item.

Attachments:

- Outline of Issue
- Cover Letter from the GSA President
- ab-GPAC Bylaws

10.0
10.1
10.1 - 10.15

11. Elections

- i. GSA Standing Committees
Lacey Fleming (GSA Nominating Committee Vice-Chair) will present the item.

Attachments:

- GSA Awards Selection Committee and GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Nominees

To Be Distributed

12. GSA Board 2014-2015 Strategic Work Plan: Update (For Information)
Nathan Andrews (GSA President) will present the item.

Attachments:

- Letter from the GSA President

12.0

13. Special Business (**none at this time**)

Reports

14. President (**Nathan Andrews, GSA President**)

- i. President's Report
- ii. GSA Board
- iii. Budget and Finance Committee (**no meetings this reporting period, will meet September 23 to discuss the Quarterly Financial Reports**)
- iv. Governance Committee (**no meetings this reporting period**)

To Be Distributed
To Be Distributed

a) Nominating Committee

- i. Nominating Committee Report (**presented by Lacey Fleming, GSA Nominating Committee Vice-Chair**)

To Be Distributed

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>15. Vice-President Academic (Colin More, GSA Vice-President Academic)</p> <p>i. Vice-President Academic's Report</p> | <p>To Be Distributed</p> |
| <p>16. Vice-President Student Services (Megha Bajaj, GSA Vice-President Student Services)</p> <p>i. Vice-President Student Services' Report</p> <p>ii. Student Affairs Advisory Committee (joint chair: Vice-President External) (no meetings this reporting period)</p> | <p>To Be Distributed</p> |
| <p>17. Vice-President External (Susan Cake, GSA Vice-President External)</p> <p>i. Vice-President External's Report</p> <p>ii. Awards Selection Committee (no meetings this reporting period, will be meeting shortly)</p> | <p>To Be Distributed</p> |
| <p>18. Vice-President Labour (Monty Bal, GSA Vice-President Labour)</p> <p>i. Vice-President Labour's Report</p> <p>ii. Negotiating Committee (no meetings this reporting period, will resume meeting Fall 2015)</p> <p>iii. Labour Relations Committee (no meetings this reporting period)</p> | <p>To Be Distributed</p> |
| <p>19. Senator (Gary Barron, GSA Senator)</p> <p>i. Senator's Report</p> | <p>To Be Distributed</p> |
| <p>20. Speaker (Sarah Prescott, GSA Speaker)</p> <p>i. Speaker's Report (no written report at this time)</p> | |
| <p>21. Chief Returning Officer (Hamman Samuel, GSA Chief Returning Officer)</p> <p>i. Chief Returning Officer's Report</p> <p>ii. Elections and Referenda Committee</p> | <p>To Be Distributed To Be Distributed</p> |
| <p>22. GSA Management (Ellen Schoeck, GSA Executive Director)</p> <p>i. Executive Director's Report</p> | <p>To Be Distributed</p> |

Question Period

23. Written Questions
24. Oral Questions

Adjournment

Meeting MINUTES
14 July 2014
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:

| | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| Nathan Andrews (President) | Michele DuVal (Bio Sci) | Solomon Aomaoteng (Law) | Emrah Keskin (Political Science) |
| Colin More (VP Academic) | Dasha Smirnow (Business PhD) | Andrea Johnston (Library & Information Sci) | Dimitar Oudey (Psychiatry) |
| Monty Bal (VP Labour) | Jeremy Wohland (Civ & Env Engineering) | Amir Nosrati (Math & Stats Sciences) | Allison Hahn (Psychology) |
| Susan Cake (VP External) | Myriam Bernier (Comm Sci & Disorders) | Ninad Mehta (Med Microbio & Immunology) | Ruojng Zhou (Psychology) |
| Megha Bajaj (VP Student Services) | Candy Pang (Computing Sci) | Grant Norman (Neurosci) | Tharsini Sivananthajothy (Public Health) |
| Roy Coulthard (Deputy Speaker) | Connie Yuen (Ed Psych) | Jennifer Bell (Nursing) | Arnold Wong (Rehab Med) |
| Hamman Samuel (CRO) | Amanda Radil (Ed Psych) | Rebecca Ellis (Nursing) | Rick VanManen (Religious Studies) |
| Qendresa Beka (Councillor-at-Large) | Sulya Fenichel (Elementary Ed) | Dylan Breitreutz (Oncology) | Alison Murata (Renewable Resources) |
| Sandra Gawad Gad (Councillor-at-Large) | Amanda Daignault (English & Film Studies) | Antoinette Nguyen (Paediatrics) | Angela Bentley (Res Econ & Enviro Sociology) |
| Jude Kong (Councillor-at-Large) | Sandra Sawchuk (Humanities Computing) | Manoj Parmar (Pharm & Pharmaceutical Sci) | Kelsi Barkway (Sociology) |
| Kangyi Lou (Councillor-at-Large) | Qingqing Liu (Lab Medicine & Pathology) | Jennifer Crawford (Phys Ed & Recreation) | Rotem Lavy (Surgery) |
| Harsh Thaker (Councillor-at-Large) | Luciana D S Cavalcante (Lab Medicine & Pathology) | Ruijia Wang (Physics) | |

GUESTS: Kumarie Achaibar-Morrison (Associate Director, International Student Services), Anica Dang (Programs Coordinator, International Student Services), Tom Gee (Auditor (MBA, FCA), Peterson Walker LLP Chartered Accountants), Zhendong Li (Member, GSA President's Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy), and Micaela Santiago (Member, GSA President's Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy).

Speaker Sarah Prescott in the Chair.

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

Roll Call

1. Roll Call of Council Members in Attendance

Approval of Agenda

2. Approval of the 14 July 2014 Consolidated Agenda

Members had before them the 14 July 2014 Consolidated Agenda, which had been previously distributed on 11 July 2014.

C More MOVED to approve the Agenda. SECONDED by N Andrews.

Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Approval of Minutes

3. Minutes

i. Minutes from the 16 June 2014 GSA Council Meeting

Members had before them the 16 June 2014 GSA Council Minutes, which had been previously distributed on 04 July 2014.

N Andrews MOVED to approve the Minutes. SECONDED by J Bell.

Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Prepared by M. Caldwell and C. Thomas for the Council Meeting of 14 July 2014

Changes in Council Membership

4. Changes in Council Membership

i. Introduction of New Councillors

This was the first meeting for a number of Councillors: Q Liu (Lab Medicine & Pathology); D Smirnov (Business PhD); A Johnston (Library & Information Sci); Candy Pang (Computing Sci); and R VanManen (Religious Studies).

ii. Farewell to Departing Councillors

This was the last meeting for two Councillors: S Aomaoteng (Law) and A Hahn (Psychology).

Action Items, Elections, Appointments, Special Business

5. 2013-2014 GSA Audited Financial Statements

Members had before them an outline of issue, the Auditor's cover letter, the Report to the Board with Respect to Matters Arising from the Audit, and the 2013-2014 GSA Audited Financial Statements, which had been previously distributed on 04 July 2014. N Andrews presented the item and introduced the guest, Tom Gee (Auditor (MBA, FCA), Peterson Walker LLP Chartered Accountants). N Andrews stated that the audit had been received for information by the GSA Budget and Finance Committee on 25 June, 2014 and, on the same day, the GSA Board approved and forwarded the audit to GSA Council. He further noted that organizations are typically required to do an audit at the end of the year, and the GSA is required to do so by the *Post Secondary Learning Act*. This year's audit was quick and clean, which showed the strength of the organization. The GSA has been rebuilt since 2010, and is in strong financial shape.

MOTION BEFORE COUNCIL: That the GSA Council, acting on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Board, **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the 2013-2014 GSA Audited Financial Statements.

T Gee stated that the audit started on page 5.6 of the material before Council. The first few pages were the independent auditor's report and T Gee noted he was happy with the audit. With respect to overall financial position, the GSA looked good. Current financial assets were a bit over \$1.6M, and current liabilities a little over \$440K, giving a ratio of about 3.6:1. This ratio showed that the organization was in good shape. Additionally, the ratio had improved since last year. The statement of operations showed that it had been a good year. Last year the surplus was a little under \$168K, and this year the surplus was \$290K. There had been improvement to cash on hand of almost \$316K. Operationally there was a nice surplus, and the cash position and cash flow had improved.

T Gee noted that this did not mean that there was not room for improvement. In 2010, the financial position of the GSA was not good, and it was a bad year for operations. The Executive Director pledged then that there was a plan to work through the problems and improve and T Gee noted that it was nice to see that things had worked out the way they were projected and the GSA should be commended for the work done improving financial systems, policies, and controls.

T Gee stated that the management letter included recommendations for further improvement and that he was pleased to see that there had been follow up on recommendations from previous years, and progress had been made. This year there were two recommendations. The first was to look at bank reconciliation procedures, and the second was to look at reserve funds and make sure they were adequate. T Gee noted that, even though there was money set aside, particularly a contingency for legal expenses, more money should be set aside.

Speaker Prescott noted that any questions from Councillors should be in regards to the audit; questions about the budget could be addressed during Item 6.

Following the presentation, C Iverson asked what T Gee's recommendations were to correct bank reconciliation procedures and T Gee responded that bank reconciliations were being reviewed monthly, but whoever was doing the review should be initialing and dating the reconciliation.

There were no further questions.

MOTION: That the GSA Council, acting on the unanimous recommendation of the GSA Board, **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the 2013-2014 GSA Audited Financial Statements. N Andrews **MOVED**. S Cake **Second**.

Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Prepared by M. Caldwell and C. Thomas for the Council Meeting of 14 July 2014

6. GSA 2014-2015 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report

Members had before them an outline of issue, the GSA 2014-2015 Budget Expenditure (Quarterly) Report, the GSA 2014-2015 Quarterly Operating Budget Narrative, and the GSA 2014-2015 Quarterly Restricted and Other Funding Narrative, which had been previously distributed on 04 July 2014. N Andrews presented the item stated that the report before GSA Council covered two months of the financial year. The budget was balanced so far, but it was difficult to tell what to expect moving forward. The opinion of the GSA's financial team was that the GSA was in good financial health. N Andrews thanked Councillors who had attended Budget 101 sessions and noted that, as GSA Council will be approving the budget for next year in the future, it was good to be knowledgeable on the subject.

MOTION BEFORE COUNCIL: That the GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the GSA 2014-2015 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report.

There were no questions.

MOTION: That the GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the GSA 2014-2015 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report. N Andrews **MOVED**. M Bajaj **Second**.

Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The Executive Director stated that she was grateful for the praise from the Auditor, and that R Coulthard would remember what the situation was in 2010. There would be more Budget 101 sessions throughout the year as the GSA works towards building the next budget, which will come to GSA Council in February. The Executive Director also noted that the budget existed to drive the GSA Board Strategic Work Plan and to support the GSA's operations.

At this time, Speaker Prescott moved to Item 8 on the agenda, as the guests for Item 7 were not yet in attendance.

8. Councillor Announcements

There were no Councillor Announcements.

As there were no Councillor Announcements, Speaker Prescott invited Vice-President Student Services M Bajaj to present Agenda Item 9.

9. GSA Health and Dental Plan: Proposed Increase to Vision Coverage

Members had before them an outline of issue, which had been previously distributed on 04 July 2014. M Bajaj introduced the item and thanked Councillors who attended the Health and Dental 101. M Bajaj stated that GSA Council approved the health and dental plan fee when it approved the most recent GSA budget, it was then forwarded to the Board of Governors, who approved the collection of the fee. She also noted that the health and dental plan fee for a particular year was decided based on data analysis of claims to date done by Studentcare in February. Fee proposals were considered by the GSA Budget and Finance Committee and the GSA Board before coming to GSA Council. M Bajaj further stated that at the 14 April 2014 meeting of GSA Council, Councillors approved the use of the Health and Dental Plan Reserve Fund (HDPRF) to offset an increase in fees in 2014-2015. In June, Studentcare's analysis of claims showed that actual claims were lower than projected. This presented an opportunity to increase coverage without increasing the plan fee. M Bajaj brought GSA Council's attention to the table on page 9.0 of the material before members which recorded that the total cost of the coverage increase was \$7.33 per student, while there was currently \$8.13 per student available in the amount approved for use from the HDPRF. M Bajaj noted that, if GSA Council approved the increase in vision coverage, approximately \$88K would be used from the HDPRF and a healthy balance of approximately \$230K would remain. She also noted that the GSA Financial Manager and GSA Accountant had reviewed the proposal and were confident of the healthy balance. M Bajaj added that the increase to vision coverage was proposed based on the results of the 2013 member survey done by Studentcare.

MOTION BEFORE COUNCIL: That the GSA Council **APPROVE** the proposed increase in vision coverage, as outlined below ("Recommendation").

Following the presentation, A Daignault asked for clarification about what would happen if GSA Council did not approve the increase in coverage, would the fee to graduate students stay the same, and more money stay in the HDPRF? M Bajaj responded that there would be no increase in coverage but the HDPRF would still be used to cover the fee increase. A Daignault asked if usage of the HDPRF would be less if GSA Council did not increase coverage. R Coulthard replied that it would be \$7.33 less per student.

Prepared by M. Caldwell and C. Thomas for the Council Meeting of 14 July 2014

J Kong asked if there would be any hidden costs if the increase went through – vision coverage was being increased because the funds were available, but what would happen in the long run? M Bajaj replied that the GSA was working on a three-year rolling plan regarding the fee but that any fee increase would be covered this year while, next year and the year after, students would likely see small increases and, in the final year, students would be paying the full increase. Graduate students would see a gradual, rather than a drastic increase. J Kong asked M Bajaj to clarify if whether, at the end of the three-year plan, students would have to pay for the increase. M Bajaj replied that the intention of the HDPRF was to cover of fee increases. Right now the HDPRF would cover it, and in the long run, the HDPRF would need to be replenished. This was the first increase to the fee in four years. J Kong asked if that was the reason behind increasing coverage and M Bajaj replied that it was not the reason to increase the coverage. The HDPRF was being used this year to cover the increase for graduate students this year so that they did not see a huge increase to the fee in any one year, and that was the same reason why it would be gradually increased. The fee cannot be increased by more than 15% in any particular year according to GSA Bylaw and Policy. J Kong stated that graduate students had not been informed that they might pay more in the end for the coverage increase. They might say they want more but might not want to pay more. M Bajaj stated that the Studentcare survey showed that graduate students wanted increased coverage and were willing to pay more for it. The survey was done last year, and would be done again next year.

R Lavy asked what the total increase would be at the end of the gradual increases over the next three years. M Bajaj replied that it was hard to predict what the fee would be in three years. R Coulthard stated that the usual yearly inflation on a health and dental plan was 4%; if it was higher than that, then rates might increase more. He noted that, at this point, the amount that was being bridged by the HDPRF was less than 5% and, even with this, inflation would be between 4-6% in the next few years. This had been par for the course since 2003. The highest increase GSA had ever seen was 7% and it was reduced for students using the HDPRF. That increase was eventually reconciled two years later by switching insurers. R Coulthard did not think there was any particular untoward risk to the GSA that there would be a huge increase in the cost of the plan. The biggest risk to the cost of the plan might be in relation to the new dental clinic that will open in the Physical Activity and Wellness Centre, but there were already clinics open close to campus, so there was good reason to think that the GSA would not see quite the same spike in claims as had been observed at other campuses.

MOTION: That the GSA Council **APPROVE** the proposed increase in vision coverage, as outlined below (“Recommendation”). M Bajaj **MOVED**. H Thaker **Second**.

Motion PASSED. J Kong Opposed.

As the guests for Item 7 were not yet in attendance, Speaker Prescott invited N Andrews to present Item 10.

10. Final Report of the GSA President’s Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy

Members had before them an outline of issue and the Final Report of the GSA President’s Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy, which had been previously distributed on 04 July 2014. N Andrews presented the item and asked the Task Force members (J Bell, M DuVal, R Kanyo, Z Li, and M Santiago) to join him at the front of the room. N Andrews stated that at the beginning of his term, he presented GSA Council with a timeline for the Task Force, a mandate for the Task Force, and a list of Task Force members. The report before Councillors had three sections. The first section provided the background to election issues and what resulted in the need for the Task Force. The second part contained a summary of the feedback from people who came to speak to the Task Force. The third part consisted of a table of specific suggestions made by participants.

N Andrews proceeded to review the suggestions to the GSA ERC contained in the report. He first noted that the Task Force was suggesting to the GSA ERC that it reconsider the position of the Chief Returning Officer (CRO), and potentially establish the CRO as a hired position for the duration of an election (this was something to be perhaps considered as a longer term change, rather than for next year’s elections). As part of this suggestion, N Andrews noted that the duties and role of the CRO would need to be determined. Three models for hiring a CRO were outlined in the report. J Bell added that hiring a CRO was one of the things talked about most by participants in the Task Force sessions.

N Andrews stated that the Early Call for Talent program was also discussed by participants. Some felt it was helpful to get people interested in running for office to think about their platforms in advance, while others thought that it had the potential to make people feel excluded or like outsiders. The suggestion from the Task Force was that the Early Call for Talent program be a requirement to run for office so that candidates have a basic understanding of the GSA before running for office. N Andrews noted that, as the GSA grows and becomes more professional, it will be important to invest in that, and a good way is through the Early Call for Talent.

N Andrews then stated that the Task Force heard from participants that the GSA should cover campaign expenses. This was a budget issue, and the pros and cons would have to be considered before the GSA ERC made its recommendation to GSA

Prepared by M. Caldwell and C. Thomas for the Council Meeting of 14 July 2014

Council. N Andrews noted that currently there was \$2,200 in the elections budget line, and campaign expenses up to \$150 are allowed. Reimbursing expenses could be a way of encouraging more people to run.

N Andrews noted that the Task Force also heard about the elections appeal process and was suggesting to the GSA ERC that the entire process be reviewed. The Task Force was also suggesting that the GSA Judicial Committee be made the body to hear appeals, which should be heard publicly. This would require a lot of work and thinking as to function. The report also suggested that the timeline and process around appeals should be reviewed by the GSA ERC. Currently, if anyone had a complaint against an elected officer or a Council member, it would be reported to the President or the Speaker. The Task Force was suggesting that, instead, the GSA Judicial Committee should receive those complaints to allow for transparency. N Andrews noted this could be a simple fix, but would require a lot of restructuring.

N Andrews then stated that the Task Force report also suggested a review of the guidelines, guiding principles, and definitions related to elections in GSA Bylaw and Policy. Currently there were no specific definitions of some key terms, for example, 'discretion', 'slate', or 'unanimous'.

N Andrews also stated that the report suggested that the GSA ERC review how election campaign violations were dealt with. There is no clear system for dealing with some types of infractions, so even if they are reported, they are not easy to resolve. The Task Force was suggesting the introduction of a demerit system, where points would be taken off for violations and there would be a set number of points which could be accumulated, after which a person would be disqualified.

The Task Force was also suggesting that the GSA ERC consider recommending that it be made a requirement that the CRO consult with the GSA ERC in making decisions related to allegations of infractions. The Task Force received feedback to the effect that one person should never be in charge of making a decision independently. If the CRO were required to consult with the GSA ERC, then decisions would be made by the CRO collaboratively. Additionally, since GSA ERC members tend to serve beyond one year, there would be some continuation of knowledge and experience with respect to election issues. Returning to his previous point, N Andrews noted that the SU required candidates to report any violations done in their name; if a candidate knew a violation was committed and did not report it, the infraction can be held against them regardless of whether or not they were involved. The GSA could follow this model.

N Andrews next stated that the report suggested that the GSA ERC consider removing restrictions about how and when people campaign. The Task Force heard feedback that campaigning should continue through the voting period (instead of ending before voting begins). N Andrews noted there was no good way to monitor campaigning during the voting period, and removing the restriction would ease the work of trying to monitor it. There might still be restrictions in place for campaigning in areas that required safety clearance (ie, labs), however it would still be difficult to monitor that type of activity. Candidates need to use discretion and not campaign in those places.

N Andrews noted that the Task Force also heard feedback on the issues of endorsements. He stated that elections were not just about fairness, but also about the perception of fairness. The Task Force was suggesting that the GSA ERC remove allowances for current Directly-Elected Officers and Council-Elected Officers to endorse candidates and make it clear that there can be no endorsements, thereby removing any perception of endorsement or privilege.

N Andrews reported that the Task Force received a lot of divergent feedback on the issue of slates. Some graduate students thought that the ability to form slates encouraged elitism, and that the same slate could keep running and form a group that seemed impenetrable and made others feel like outsiders. Other feedback received expressed the belief that slates helped to professionalize elections and made candidates consolidate their platforms and move their agendas forward. Currently there was nothing to guide the formation of slates in GSA Bylaw or Policy, or to inform candidates about why and when slates might be formed. There are a lot of issues in Canada around elections and slates. The Task Force was suggesting that the GSA ERC look into the issues across Canada regarding slates and make a recommendation to GSA Council on whether or not they should be allowed.

N Andrews then stated that the Task Force also heard from graduate students regarding 'None of the Above' campaigns and how to moderate them. He noted that 'None of the Above' existed for the purpose of a ballot and violations could be committed in the name of 'None of the Above' if a campaign were run, but there was not an actual person running who can be penalized. This was an issue that needed to be looked at in the longer term by the GSA ERC.

Lastly, N Andrews stated that, as its last suggestion, the Task Force suggested that the GSA ERC keep filming campaign videos, but that they figure out a way to help candidates present their positions and inform voters regarding their platforms.

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Questions for the Task Force were postponed at this time due to the arrival of the guests for Item 7. Item 10 continues below, following Item 7.

Presentations and Councillor Announcements

7. International Student Services Provided by University of Alberta International

M Bajaj introduced the item and the guests, Anica Dang (Programs Coordinator, International Student Services) and Kumarie Achaibar-Morrison (Associate Director, International Student Services).

During their presentation, A Dang and K Achaibar-Morrison raised the following points regarding International Student Services:

K Achaibar-Morrison stated that the University of Alberta International (UAI) was situated under Vice-President International Britta Baron, who reported to the Provost. International Student Services (ISS) is one of many units under UAI. ISS serves approximately 7,000 students, half of whom are graduate students. ISS also runs the Education Abroad Program, which runs exchange programs, work internships and work placements with 250 partnerships worldwide, and the Global Education Program, which organizes International Week, visiting lectures, and the Certificate in International Learning. ISS also runs sponsored student programs to bring students from other countries to the U of A.

K Achaibar-Morrison stated that services for international graduate students were primarily delivered through ISS. They have orientation programming and a number of financial programs. The ISS emergency bursary program was entirely maintained through the International Differential Fee (IDF), mostly from undergraduate fees. ISS also offers immigration advising services, including assistance with study and work permit issues (but not Permanent Residency advising) and a number of support programs such as cultural outreach, community research outreach, and a peer-program for new students. It was further noted that ISS was currently forming the International Student Advisory Council to provide students with an opportunity to offer feedback on ISS services (ISS is working with the GSA to place graduate representatives on the Council).

A Dang outlined the various orientation services offered by ISS, including pre-arrival services such as their 'On Your Way' e-newsletter, pre-departure bulletin that students receive before they leave for Edmonton, and online advising in August. At the arrival stage ISS hosts the Transitions Orientation for international students, has a welcome booth at the airport to help students find their way to U of A, and a welcome centre in HUB for one-on-one orientations for recently arrived students. Transitions is a three-day long orientation with a lot of programming, information fairs, tours of Edmonton and shopping trips. Finally, ISS offers ongoing assistance through their peer-program and advising services and is always looking for more graduate students to volunteer for the peer-program.

Following the presentation there were a number of questions.

N Andrews asked why emergency bursaries were funded through the IDF and K Achaibar-Morrison replied that ISS receives about \$40K in funding from the IDF for their emergency bursaries and loans each year. From April 2012 to March 2013, \$24,510 in emergency loans and \$18,000 in emergency bursaries was provided to graduate students. From 2009 to 2013, \$163K in emergency loans and \$96K in emergency bursaries has been distributed to graduate students, while undergraduates over that seem period of time received \$39K in emergency loans and \$6800 in emergency bursaries. The loans and bursaries are meant to cover one month's living expense as cost of living emergency funds; what qualifies as an emergency is very limited.

H Samuel asked if ISS or UAI offer mental health services to international students and K Achaibar-Morrison replied that ISS works with the Office of the Dean of Students' Clinical and Counselling Services. There used to be a psychologist in the International Centre, but there was minimal usage of the service. Now, there is a clear referral process to Clinical and Counselling Services.

There were no further questions.

Action Items, Elections, Appointments, Special Business

Following the presentation of Item 7, Speaker Prescott invited N Andrews and members of the Task Force to resume presentation of Item 10.

10. Final Report of the GSA President's Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy

In conclusion to the point he had raised earlier, N Andrews stated that the most significant suggestion in the report of the Task Force were changes to the position of CRO. However the Task Force did not spend a lot of time considering what it would look Prepared by M. Caldwell and C. Thomas for the Council Meeting of 14 July 2014

like or how much it would cost and it would be the responsibility of the GSA ERC and GSA Council to determine the feasibility of any suggestions in this regard. N Andrews also noted that the Task Force was looking for comments and questions and members could answer questions regarding procedure, but could not give specific examples of things that had happened in elections because that was beyond the scope of the Task Force.

Following the presentation there were a number of questions.

Q Beka asked, regarding the Early Call for Talent, if Task Force members thought people would want to spend time in training without knowing if they have a job at the end, and, regarding hiring a CRO, if students who had graduated would be considered. N Andrews replied that, in the past, the CRO had been part of Council elections, and typically one person ran uncontested. The GSA might be better served if it was a paid rather than a voluntary one. There would be a greater likelihood of getting someone qualified for the position. N Andrews further noted that people who had graduated would qualify for the position if it were a hired one, but it may be that the GSA ERC decides it only wants graduate students in the role. Not being a graduate student would put a CRO at arms' length from any election.

C Iverson suggested that, for campaigning in areas where it is unsafe to do so (ie, labs), there could be a mechanism for departments to request making areas off limits, and departments could complain if there were violations. N Andrews stated that the report suggested that the GSA ERC consider removing exceptions except where safety was an issue, and that enabling departments to set restricted areas for candidates ahead of time was a good idea.

J Kong stated that, even if a CRO were hired, there still might be a conflict of interest. He suggested that before ERC made any concrete decision, GSA Council should vote on the matter, because he did not think hiring would work. J Kong also asked if members of the GSA Judicial Committee were elected by Council, and if so, would this solve the problem of conflict of interest. R Kanyo replied that hiring the CRO was just a suggestion. The Task Force tried to bridge many concerns, and the report was just a beginning to the work that will be done by the GSA ERC. There needs to be a strategy regarding implementation and enforcement. Using the GSA Judicial Committee may solve the problem; the idea is that it could act as an independent body so that people come to appeals with a neutral perspective. R Kanyo noted it was impossible to know if any given suggestion would work until it was tried. J Kong asked if the report would be brought back to GSA Council and R Kanyo replied that the GSA ERC will come to Council with any proposed changes to Bylaw and Policy.

K Lou asked what the motivation for hiring a CRO was and if the Task Force believed that if the CRO were elected they would not do the job well. N Andrews replied that there was a track record of the CRO position not being contested, and that it might be because people do not want to volunteer for it. The incentive of pay might bring more people forward. As well, if the CRO were a hired position, there could be more control over roles and responsibilities, and if the CRO was not performing, they could be fired. K Lou asked if there was documentation on the responsibilities for the CRO, and if the CRO were hired, would there be any potential promotions or HR policies associated with the position. Z Li replied that the idea underlying the suggestions from the Task Force was that, if there were an incentive to holding the position, it could remove the perception or actuality of bias and that there would be control over the position. As well, a hired person with actual elections experience would be able to deal with many situations that might arise during elections. M DuVal added that the role of the CRO was not clear in GSA Bylaw and Policy. Some of the wording regarding the responsibilities was not concrete, and that might put the CRO in a difficult position.

A Councillor asked what the current policies regarding candidate endorsements by Directly-Elected Officers were, and N Andrews replied that the Task Force did not look at all of the current policies and bylaws. Instead, they looked at things from an outsider's perspective. The issue emerged at one of the sessions that GSA Policy states that the Speaker cannot endorse but there is discretion around whether the Deputy Speaker can. It needs to be made specific who can and who cannot endorse, and the Task Force's suggestion to the GSA ERC was to not allow endorsements.

N Mehta stated that, if a candidate was from a department with security barriers, they were at an advantage because they could access a secure environment without anyone complaining. If departments are large enough, this could sway results. M DuVal stated that this point was raised, and it was an issue of fairness. Further, the CRO does not have access to patrol those areas for infractions. R Kanyo stated that reinforcement of rules is important, but if rules are too strictly set, it could cause more damage than good.

S Cake - Point of Information: Is the Task Force looking for feedback on the report, or looking for reactions? N Andrews stated that he appreciated the current discussion, and that this is the first time Council was seeing the report before the GSA ERC's recommendations came forward in October. S Cake stated that she noticed the issue of confidentiality was not raised in the report and that a great deal of bylaws exist concerning reporting, but nothing about confidentiality. She noted there was lots of

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whistleblower legislation that the GSA ERC could draw on to consider confidentiality. N Andrews responded that the GSA ERC would receive the transcript of the present discussion so that they could consider all suggestions along with the report as part of their review process.

K Barkway stated that, while she understands the reasoning around not having rules that cannot be enforced, if the restriction on campaigning during the voting period were removed, it seems that candidates would be given more opportunity to be coercive while people vote (ie, sit next to them at a computer and watch who they vote for). N Andrews stated that this can already happen, but the ultimate decision to vote for a person was still up to the voter.

R Coulthard stated that many of the issues that occurred in past elections (ie, campaigning behind locked doors) were systemic to all student organizations. The bigger issue was trying to address low voter turnout. If everyone voted, there would not be nearly as many concerns about the “twisting” caused by illegal campaigning. He encouraged GSA Council to think about what could be done to increase voting and noted that, if Councillors could get through to students in their departments, then it was likely to increase voter turnout, which would in turn affect a number of elections codes. C Coulthard then noted that GSA Bylaw and Policy on elections was brief. In contrast, the SU had very long elections documentation; and with more complicated elections codes comes more time, money and effort to deal with elections and reported infractions.

S Fenichel stated that she had heard the term ‘reinforcement’ over and over again in the current discussion, and wanted to bring discussion back to the demerit system. She noted that she understood the logic behind the system of demerits, but also wondered about the staggering amount of enforcement and reinforcement that might require. It would be difficult to manage with a group of overtired volunteers. N Andrews stated that it had come up because there was no mechanism for tracking when a person has reached a maximum number of allowable violations and should be removed. It was not clear when that would happen, or who would be in charge of the decision. The Task Force thought the CRO’s ‘discretion’ should be removed from GSA Bylaw and Policy and, instead, that there should be some sort of process, but a non-tedious one.

A Daignault stated that ethics should come first. There should be an expectation on candidates to always behave properly, instead of a focus on whether or not the GSA can enforce improper behaviour. N Andrews stated that he did not report on it, but there was a suggestion in the report of introducing a code of conduct for all candidates. Z Li added that the Task Force was trying to strike a balance between ethical and practical.

M Bal asked if the Task Force considered how changes to processes and rules might affect voter participation, and N Andrews stated that voter participation was covered in the background section of the report. Voter apathy was a serious concern and the Task Force hopes its suggestions might increase participation and make elections more competitive, which would in turn mean more voters.

K Lou stated that engaging more students is important, and asked if there was a plan for getting more students involved and getting more candidates to run. N Andrews stated that the Early Call for Talent was open to anyone. The Task Force did not discuss if it should become mandatory for Councillors-At-Large, but he notes his opinion that it should not be mandatory for CALs but should be for Directly-Elected Officers. N Andrews also noted that the GSA planned to ramp up its Departmental Liaison Initiative to get graduate students to understand and connect with the GSA and to increase graduate student engagement.

A Wong stated that graduate students have a lot of electronic tools available to promote elections and this could result in more direct campaigning, but also in potentially too many emails. R Kanyo stated that voter turnout was definitely an issue and the challenge was that there were multiple ways to try to increase turnout. Part of that involves individual Councillors, who can advocate to graduate students to vote. Other potential proposed changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy might make elections more professional, and hence more competitive, which could lead to improved voter turnout.

N Andrews stated that all of this work was aimed at increasing the professional image of the GSA. Elections and finances were two things that the organization was judged on, and reviewing elections policies and processes was part of doing due diligence and ensuring the health of the organization. In closing, N Andrews noted that any further thoughts on the Task Force’s report could be emailed to gsa.president@ualberta.ca.

There were no further questions.

11. Elections

Members had before them the Nominees for the Advisory Review Committee for the Vice-President (University Relations), which had been previously distributed on 11 July 2014. M Duval presented the item.

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MOTION BEFORE COUNCIL: That the GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the newly-appointed member of the Graduate Students' Association on the Advisory Review Committee for the Vice-President (University Relations).

There were no questions.

MOTION: That the GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the newly-appointed member of the Graduate Students' Association on the Advisory Review Committee for the Vice-President (University Relations). M DuVal **MOVED**. S Gawad Gad **Seconded**.

Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. One abstention (M Bal).

12. Special Business (none at this time)

Reports

13. President

i. President's Report:

Members had before them a written report from the GSA President, which had been previously distributed on 11 July, 2014. The report stood as submitted. In addition, N Andrews stated that, at the last meeting of Council, there was discussion about the idea of guaranteed funding for graduate students. The GSA still has not received a report/proposal but President Samarasekera has promised that it will come in the fall (it was last promised in May). N Andrews expressed confidence that the report/proposal would come in the fall. The GSA has learnt that guaranteed funding is intended only for thesis-based students, which answered some the questions raised at the last meeting of GSA Council. Additionally, it will not apply to professional faculties or programs. The GSA Board will present the report/proposal (when it is shared) to GSA Council for feedback before coming to a position on it.

N Andrews then stated that he had been in an all-day meeting with the Ministry of Innovation and Advanced Education regarding support for post-secondary learners. It was very undergraduate focused, with only a few graduate representatives there. There was discussion about financial support, student aid, loans, and debt. Most graduate students in Canada probably have loans to pay from their undergraduate studies. Suggestions from the discussion included having a debt ceiling and that loans should be interest free for five years after graduation so that graduates have time to find a job. They are also trying to make loans more accessible by reconsidering eligibility requirements, such as spousal income. The key words of the day were access, removing barriers, and more funding. In closing, N Andrews added that there was potentially some money available from the Access to the Future Fund, about \$50M, but it was not clear where it will go other than to post-secondary education in general. There would be a three-year strategic plan around financial aid that is expected to be developed at the end of August, and will be presented to GSA Council when it is received.

There were no questions.

ii. GSA Board

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 11 July 2014. The report stood as submitted.

iii. Budget and Finance Committee

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 11 July 2014. The report stood as submitted.

iv. Governance Committee

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 11 July 2014. The report stood as submitted.

a) Nominating Committee

i. Nominating Committee Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 11 July 2014. The report stood as submitted and, in addition, M DuVal stated that she was presenting the report on behalf of L Fleming. Since the last meeting of GSA Council, the GSA Nominating Committee has placed graduate students on six external bodies.

There were no questions.

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14. Vice-President Academic

i. Vice-President Academic's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 11 July 2014. The report stood as submitted and, in addition, C More stated that he did not have much to report on since university administration was currently relatively quiet. He noted he was working on research arising of N Krogman's supervision report, and was drafting an action plan that should come to GSA Council in September. C More noted he had also been working on professional development initiatives and that Vice-President External S Cake would speak to that further in her report.

Following the presentation H Thaker asked what professional development initiatives were being developed and C More replied that FGSR had put together a committee of people from the broader community to define what a professional development program should look like, what employers want from graduates, and so forth. Hopefully that work would be done by the end of summer, but that was not certain. The GSA was also looking into working with other student organizations and into companies that offer contract training modules.

K Lou asked if C More's slide was the same as last month and C More replied that it was similar.

J Kong asked if C More could explain why university administration was quiet, and if C More had plans to make noise if they keep being quiet. C More responded that university administration was working on things, but nothing has been shared with the GSA yet. Things were happening, and would likely come forward in the fall.

There were no further questions.

15. Vice-President Student Services

i. Vice-President Student Services' Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 11 July 2014. The report stood as submitted and, in addition, M Bajaj stated that the Falling Walls Lab conference, which happened every year in Berlin and was funded by the German Ministry of Education and Research, had invited the U of A to participate. The conference showcases research in science, business, politics, and arts, through three-minute presentations and the U of A event was being coordinated by the Office of the Vice-President Research. The deadline to apply is August 25, 2014 and more information can be found at <http://www.research.ualberta.ca/FWLab.aspx>.

M Bajaj also asked Councillors to send her any feedback they had about Student Group Services' student group training. She noted she would be meeting with them soon and would share the feedback. Councillors were asked to send any feedback by July 25, 2014.

There were no questions.

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

No meetings this reporting period.

16. Vice-President External

i. Vice-President External's Report

Members had before them a written report from the Vice-President External, which had been previously distributed on 11 July 2014. The report stood as submitted and, in addition, S Cake stated that she was serving on the Government of Alberta's Tuition Working Group which was looking at fee consultation practices. The outcomes of the working group will apply to any group that collects a fee, including the GSA. They are currently collecting narratives of good fee consultation, and the GSA has put together a document of what it considers best practices. They have also just announced that there will be a definition group for MNIFs, which will have at least one graduate student representative on it. S Cake noted that getting a definition of what a MNIF is would be beneficial because students pay these fees, but it is hard to track where they money goes.

S Cake also stated that she and C More were on different professional development working groups and the GSA was also looking into what it could do for graduate student professional development activities. The GSA wants to get something together quickly, but still wants it to be well thought out and useful to graduate students. S Cake hopes to come back to GSA Council with more soon. She noted in closing that the working group was also looking at collaborative PhDs and was looking to Europe as a model for PhDs who want to work outside of academia.

Following the presentation N Andrews asked S Cake to define what a MNIF was. S Cake replied that MNIFs were mandatory non-instructional fees. There are five different types of fees levied on students, including tuition, market modifiers, and

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differential fees. None of these have clear definitions. For example, transcript fees are often user fees, but at the U of A, you pay that fee regardless of whether or not you use it. Concrete definitions should help clarify fees and how they are applied. MNIFs are often pointed to as egregiously applied fees, so they need a concrete definition.

There were no questions.

- ii. **Awards Selection Committee**
No meetings this reporting period.

17. Vice-President Labour

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

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 11 July 2014. The report stood as submitted and, in addition, M Bal noted that the Directly-Elected Officers had met with President Samarasekera, and that she had stated that international graduate students would not have to worry about increases to the International Differential Fee beyond CPI this year. It is a big win.

M Bal also stated that the Government of Alberta was looking at how to incentivize students from underrepresented groups to participate in higher education. They were considering increasing the size of available scholarships and looking at outcomes in terms of student debt, and how it might be able to be linked to how much a student makes after graduation. It is all very preliminary, and hopefully there will be action. M Bal also stated that the Government of Alberta was looking at increasing student representation with the Access to the Future Fund – both in terms of including students on the bodies that decide where the money goes, and in opening up applications to students and student groups to apply for project grants.

M Bal also reported that the GSA was working with the Office of the Dean of Students to develop a province-wide advocacy plan for mental health. There are 26 campuses in Alberta, and there are common concerns between them, but they all speak separately to the Government of Alberta. It is more powerful to approach the government as a single voice. There is also a very large project, TRAM (Transformational Research in Adolescent Mental Health Services) out of Montreal has \$24M for projects at six sites over five years. The U of A is one of the sites in the project. The project is directly focused on undergraduates, especially first year students, but since graduate students, as TAs, participate in undergraduate learning, the Office of the Dean of Students has asked for GSA representatives to serve on the Executive Committee and sub-committees.

M Bal MOVED to go into Closed Session. S Cake Seconded.

Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

M Bal MOVED to go out of Closed Session. S Cake Seconded.

Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Following the presentation S Fenichel asked if the reason students do not yet know details about second year funding is because collective bargaining has not yet concluded and M Bal responded that yes, until the settlement is final nothing can be divulged.

There were no further questions.

- ii. **Negotiating Committee**
No meetings this reporting period, meeting expected to be scheduled soon.

- iii. **Labour Relations Committee**
No meetings this reporting period.

18. Senator

- i. **Senator's Report**
No report was required at this time.

19. Speaker

- i. **Speaker's Report**
No report was required at this time.

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20. Chief Returning Officer

i. Chief Returning Officer's Report

No written report was required at this time. H Samuel stated that the GSA ERC would be meeting very soon to deliberate on the Final Report of the GSA President's Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy, as well as the present discussion at GSA Council, and a few other areas. H Samuel noted that he had also been conducting research into election reports from other institutions across Canada, such as the University of Toronto and McGill.

There were no questions.

ii. Elections and Referenda Committee

No report was required at this time.

21. GSA Management

i. Executive Director's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 11 July 2014. The report stood as submitted and, in addition, E Schoeck stated that a lot of work was being done in the office to get prepared for GAS ERC meeting to discuss the Final Report of the GSA President's Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy. The GSA could probably hire someone full time for two months to deal with research coming out of the Task Force report, but the work will be accommodated within the office. Ellen also stated that she is bringing in two people to look at how the GSA is dealing with human resources. All the staff quit in 2010; want to make sure human resources are in good shape. E Schoeck also reported that the GSA staff collective agreement opened up in 2015 and an external consultant would also be coming in to look at the GSA's governance. She reported that she wanted to be able to provide lots of information and ensure things were transparent and that the system was good through these external reviews. Former President B Epperson was asked questions about human resources by the Board of Governors audit committee. The U of A is used to having externals come in to audit their resources; the GSA is doing that within its own budget.

E Schoeck also stated that the GSA would be hosting a chili social for networking in the fall. The Alumni Association will be the sole sponsor of the event, which will be held in September. The GSA is also looking for a sponsor for a similar event in the winter or spring. She then noted that the GSA, headed up by Vice-President Student Services M Bajaj, has been developing a list of departments for the GSA to get out to, to introduce itself, and to hear about what is going on and areas of concern. Additionally, the three Councillors who attended the last Budget 101 session gave eight or nine specific things they would like to see happen, such as a Collective Agreement 101 session. The GSA will be looking into getting those suggestions going. E Schoeck invited Councillors to provide the GSA with any suggestions or feedback at any time and noted that the GSA wanted to respond to the need of graduate students.

E Schoeck reported that the GSA was about to go into business with the Students' Union as part of the Physical Activity and Wellness (PAW) Centre. Part of the signed agreement includes having a food vendor in the building. Former President R Coulthard has been providing assistance to Vice-President Student Services M Bajaj on sorting out this zero-risk business. The GSA went bankrupt in 1997 running Dewey's and does not want that to happen again. E Schoeck then noted that GSA Council has just had a report on the GSA's financial health. The GSA is in good health, as Council heard from the auditor. The GSA has been improving each year. The auditor has carefully examined our statements and cash balance. E Schoeck noted that she asked the auditor if the GSA had too much cash, and he said no. The GSA has had cash flow problems in the past, but cash flow is good now. The GSA will soon be negotiating with Financial Services for a new payment schedule for the fees collected by the U of A for the GSA. The GSA used to get the fees in arrears, and now they are provided in advance. Looking at it from a business perspective, the GSA would like to get three staged payments to match when major bills are due. E Schoeck noted she will personally feel that the GSA is more on its feet when that is set up.

E Schoeck then stated that part of the communications piece when talking about the GSA with anyone, such as new Board of Governors members coming to the GSA Board, is that the GSA has the same corporate structures and the same advocacy as the Students' Union, but that it does it on fees from only 7,600 graduate students, while the Students' Union has fees from 36,000 undergraduate students. That's why many graduate student organizations are part of their undergraduate student organizations, so that they do not have to have their own corporate structures. Ellen feels really good about the GSA and how it is managed. She and C Thomas will be going to Calgary to meet with the Executive Director of the U of Calgary GSA.

Following the presentation N Andrews stated that the GSA has gotten money for the chili social event mentioned by E Schoeck and that it would be happening at the end of September, and there will likely not be a Council meeting in August, so N Andrews asked Councillors to start letting graduate students in their departments know about the social. The GSA is also thinking about an event for winter term, perhaps a Tea at Triffo event. A component of both events will be networking, bringing in alumni to engage with graduate students to make useful connections.

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There were no questions.

Question Period

22. Written Questions

No written questions were received prior to the meeting.

23. Oral Questions

C Iverson asked R Coulthard if he could provide Council with an update regarding Studentcare's response to concerns about lag time in response to questions posed to Studentcare by C Iverson and R Coulthard responded that he had been focused on the proposal for vision increase that had come before Council at this meeting, but that now he will focus on discussing these concerns with Studentcare.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 pm.

Meeting MINUTES
12 August, 2014
GSA Council Special Meeting

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Nathan Andrews (President) | Harsh Thaker (Councillor-at-Large) | Laura Brin (Earth & Atmospheric Sci) | Dylan Breitreutz (Oncology) |
| Colin More (VP Academic) | Alphonse Ahola Ndem (Anthropology) | Hasriadi Masalam (Ed Policy Studies) | Ruijia Wang (Physics) |
| Monty Bal (VP Labour) | Michele DuVal (Bio Sci) | Amanda Radil (Ed Psych) | Arnold Wong (Rehab Med) |
| Susan Cake (VP External) | Patricia Leighton (Bio Sci) | Sulya Fenichel (Elementary Ed) | Rick VanManen (Religious Studies) |
| Megha Bajaj (VP Student Services) | Dasha Smirnow (Business PhD) | Amanda Daignault (English & Film Studies) | Alison Murata (Renewable Resources) |
| Roy Coulthard (Deputy Speaker) | Mary Klute (Cell Bio) | Amir Nosrati (Math & Stats Sciences) | Hawley Campbell (Res Econ & Enviro Sociology) |
| Hamman Samuel (CRO) | Jeremy Wohland (Civ & Env Engineering) | Colleen Reid (Med Microbio & Immunology) | Jing Cui (Secondary Ed) |
| Jude Kong (Councillor-at-Large) | Neda Aslsabbaghpourhokmabadi (Computing Sci) | Grant Norman (Neurosci) | Kelsi Barkway (Sociology) |

Deputy Speaker Roy Coulthard in the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 5:01 pm.

R Coulthard noted he would not entertain changes to the agenda as this was a special meeting, and confirmed quorum was achieved.

Roll Call

1. Roll Call of Council Members in Attendance

Approval of Agenda

2. Approval of the 12 August, 2014 Agenda

Members had before them the 12 August 2014 Agenda, which had been previously distributed on 11 August 2014.

M Bal MOVED to approve the Agenda. SECONDED by L Brin.

Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Action Items, Elections, Appointments, Special Business

3. AEGS Collective Agreement: Approval of the Memoranda of Settlement

Members had before them an outline of issue, a cover letter from the GSA Vice-President Labour, the Memorandum of Settlement - AEGS Collective Agreement, the Proposed 2014-2016 AEGS Collective agreement and Current Agreement Comparison, and the Memorandum of Settlement - Graduate Student Support Fund, which had been previously distributed on 11 August 2014. M Bal presented the item.

MOTION BEFORE COUNCIL: That the GSA Council **APPROVE**, on the recommendation of the GSA Negotiating Committee, the attached Memoranda of Settlement related to the AEGS Collective Agreement and the Graduate Student Support Fund, effective September 1, 2014 to August 31, 2016.

M Bajaj MOVED to go into Closed Session. M Bal Seconded.

Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Prepared by M Caldwell, C Thomas and E Schoeck for the Special Council Meeting of 12 August 2014

C More MOVED to go out of Closed Session. A Radil Seconded.

Motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOTION: That the GSA Council **APPROVE**, on the recommendation of the GSA Negotiating Committee, the attached Memoranda of Settlement related to the AEGS Collective Agreement and the Graduate Student Support Fund, effective September 1, 2014 to August 31, 2016. **M Bal MOVED. N Andrews Seconded.**

S Cake: Point of Information - Are we approving both settlements together? R Coulthard responded that yes, the approval is for both settlements.

APPROVED, with two abstentions: K Barkway and H Samuel.

M Bal thanked everyone for attending the meeting on short notice.

E Schoeck provided Councillors with some background on the Collective Agreement, including that the document used to be very dense and hard to read, and that faculty members often do not know it exists and have no training on the Collective Agreement even when they are in positions of authority. E Schoeck noted that the GSA offered a Collective Agreement 101 training session for anyone interested.

The meeting adjourned at 6:13 pm.

Outline of Issue (GSA Council)

Studentcare Agreement Renewal

Recommended Motion for GSA Council:

GSA Council is asked, on the **unanimous recommendation** of GSA Board, to **APPROVE** renewal of the GSA agreement with Quebec Student Health Alliance Inc. to act as the broker/administrator of the GSA Health and Dental Plan for the period of October 1, 2014 - August 31, 2020.

Note: Quebec Student Health Alliance Inc. conducts business as “studentcare.net/works”, or informally, Studentcare.

Background:

The GSA’s agreement with Studentcare to act as its Health and Dental Plan (H&DP) provider **expires August 31, 2015**. GSA Vice-President Student Services Megha Bajaj (supported and advised by GSA Consultant Roy Coulthard, GSA Executive Director Ellen Schoeck, GSA Director of Services and Governance Courtney Thomas, and GSA Director of Operations Heather Hogg) has **taken steps to consider renewing the 2010 agreement with Studentcare**. Some of these steps include receiving information about the U of Calgary GSA’s recent Request for Proposals for H&DP providers (from which they selected Studentcare), contacting other GU15 GSAs who use Studentcare regarding satisfaction levels, having the agreement reviewed by the GSA lawyers, and meeting with Kristin Foster (Pacific and Western Director, Studentcare) to discuss Studentcare’s business case for renewal.

Members of the GSA have met with K Foster three times to discuss renewal of the Studentcare agreement (June 19, July 28, and August 20), including a presentation to the GSA Board on August 20. The GSA Board has also discussed issues surrounding renewal at a number of meetings, including June 25, August 13, August 20, August 27, and September 3.

At the August 27, 2014, meeting of the GSA Board, Board Members unanimously recommended that GSA Council approve renewal of the agreement with Studentcare to act as the broker/administrator of the GSA Health and Dental Plan for the period of November 1, 2014 - August 31, 2020.

Further information is available in the attached draft cover letter to GSA Council (pages 9.1 - 9.2).

Jurisdiction:

Bylaw Part XII Health and Dental Plan, Section 7, Oversight by GSA Board, 7.1:

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

September 12, 2014

Dear Council Colleagues,

We write to summarize the process underlying the Board's recommendation to renew with Studentcare.

First, the GSA has been **fully satisfied with Studentcare's services levels, responsiveness, problem-solving, pro-activity, cost-effectiveness, and advocacy with the insurance company on our behalf**. We especially recognize the power in being part of the pool of Studentcare's 650,000-plus students . The **on-campus office is also a key service** in our view.

Second, the U of Calgary GSA conducted a Request for Proposals last year for an H/D plan administrator and **switched to Studentcare** from an broker they had for 15+ years. They made the move in part because of **the cost, the level of transparency offered by Studentcare, and the underlying philosophy of the company**.

Third, we have collected data and sought testimonials from the SU and other graduate student associations who use Studentcare. Studentcare represents nine of the 15 GSAs in the GU15 group (our peerset); we spoke to four of them and **heard nothing but overwhelmingly positive reviews about the company and its service levels** Finally, Brownlee LLP, the GSA's lawyers who review the GSA's legal documents, **saw no problems with the Studentcare agreement**. We also attach additional information about what Studentcare offers GSA Members.

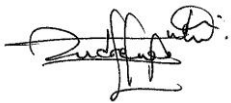
Based on all the above, the GSA Board recommends that the GSA Council approve renewal of our agreement with Studentcare to act as the administrator of the GSA Health and Dental Plan for the period of October 1, 2014 - August 31, 2020.

Specific key details of the renewal include:

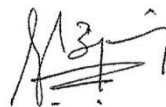
- An increase in administration fee of \$0.75 per plan per plan member; first increase since 2004
- Commitment of annual financial contribution towards Awards Night, the Handbook, and social engagement
- If there is no longer an on-campus office, the GSA will be provided with funding to provide equivalent administrative service within the GSA office

We would like to thank the team who helped prepare the Studentcare renewal proposal: former GSA President Roy Coulthard (who is providing us with advice based on the previous renewal which he led), Directors Ellen Schoeck and Courtney Thomas and financial team of Shirley Ball and Dorte Sheikh. **Kindly let us know if you have any questions in advance of the September 22 GSA Council meeting regarding the renewal with Studentcare.**

Sincerely,



Nathan Andrews, GSA President



Megha Bajaj, GSA Vice-President Student Services

What Studentcare Offers GSA Members & the GSA

Studentcare provides a number of valuable services directly to graduate students:

- **On-campus office** where students can submit claims and ask questions directly to a Studentcare representative
- **Mobile app** that has made it quick and easy to submit claims.
- An informative and helpful **website**, which is currently undergoing a complete overhaul to make it mobile-friendly and easier to navigate.
- Studentcare's claims data (see below) allows them to **figure out when individual students are not receiving proper coverage**.
- Studentcare has **gone to bat for students**, reviewing individual claims under exceptional circumstances numerous times over the last ten years.

In terms of their relationship with the GSA:

- Studentcare has an **involved, communicative, and hands-on approach**.
- Our "relationship manager", Kristin Foster (the Pacific & Western Director for Studentcare) **frequently attends meetings in-person at the GSA, where she provides claims data, support for decisions around plan changes, and answers questions that Directly-Elected Officers and Councillors have about the GSA Health and Dental Plan**.
- The GSA was one of the first organizations in Western Canada to sign with Studentcare, and **they value our ongoing relationship**.
- **Studentcare has their own actuary and is able to assess our claims data separate from the insurance provider** (currently Desjardins) (these claims data are proprietary and would not pass on to a new plan administrator).
- **Studentcare has gone to bat for us with insurance providers** when claims come in lower than projections but the fee for the next year is already set, as occurred this past spring and resulted in the increased vision care coverage approved by Council in July (the second time they have done this).
- When the GSA's RFP went out for new health and dental insurance providers in 2012, **Studentcare was able to negotiate a great deal with Desjardins because it was done in concert with a number of other clients**. Studentcare now acts as the agent for nine of the GU 15 universities (our peer set) and represents some 40,000 graduate students at these institutions alone, and 650,000-plus students across Canada. These numbers give Studentcare clout when dealing with insurers.
- Studentcare was able to negotiate a fee with Desjardins that has **saved students an approximate cumulative total of \$220K over the last two years** and, despite the recent increase, remains competitive with the other proposals received during the 2012 RFP process.
- Studentcare has a third-party information sharing agreement with the U of A. **The company has lived up to the University's rigorous guidelines with that agreement, and there have not been any privacy problems**.

GSA AWARDS SELECTION COMMITTEE (ASC) NOMINEES:**Suggested Motion for GSA Council:**

That GSA Council **ELECT** the nine (9) nominees listed below to the GSA Awards Selection Committee, effective immediately.

GSA Awards Selection Committee Nominees:

- 1) Sahar Banisoltan (PhD program, Civil and Environmental Engineering)
- 2) Margot Challborn (MA program, Political Science)
- 3) Guangfeng Chen (PhD program, Modern Languages and Cultural Studies)
- 4) Sulyn Chow (PhD program, Political Science)
- 5) Christine Massing (PhD program, Elementary Education)
- 6) Grant Norman (PhD program, Neuroscience)
- 7) Ye Shen (MPH program, School of Public Health)
- 8) Daniel Sims (PhD program, History and Classics)
- 9) Michael Wong (MSc program, Electrical and Computer Engineering)

If all nine (9) GSA ASC nominees agree to have their bios and resumes circulated to GSA Council, hard copies will be distributed at the GSA Council meeting on September 22, 2014.

NOTE: The GSA Council elects members to all of its own committees, including the GSA ASC. **Normally this works in one of two ways:** 1) the GSA Nominating Committee (NoC) puts forward nominees equal to the number of vacancies, and there are no additional nominations from Council; or 2) the GSA NoC puts forward nominees equal to the number of vacancies, and there are additional nominations from Council resulting in a contested election. In the first case, nominees are considered elected at the close of additional nominations and **GSA Council receives for information** the list of the new committee members. In the second case, a **paper ballot election** is held at a meeting of GSA Council.

In this instance, the GSA NoC put forward **fewer nominees than the number of vacancies** (8 nominees for 11 vacancies). The GSA NoC received one (1) additional nomination, making nine (9) nominees for eleven (11) vacancies. **As there are still fewer nominees than the number of vacancies on the committee, and therefore it is not a contested election,** GSA Council is being asked to **ELECT** the nine (9) nominees standing for the GSA ASC.

The GSA NoC has reviewed the biographies and resumes of all nine (9) nominees, and are forwarding all nine (9) nominees, including the additional nominee, to stand for election.

Background:

There are currently vacancies for up to eleven (11) graduate student positions on the GSA Awards Selection Committee (ASC).

Continuing GSA Members Serving on this Committee (1): Karen Vera Lyn Turpin (PhD Program, School of Public Health)

GSA Members Leaving this Committee (5): Richard Zhao (PhD Program, Computing Science); Yuxian Song (MA Program, History); Tran Tran (MSc Program, Chemistry). Harsh Thaker (MSc Program, Medicine), Leigh Spanner (PhD program, Political Science)

The GSA Nominating Committee advertised in the GSA Newsletter on August 22, 2014, vacancies for up to twelve (12) graduate student positions. **Nine (9) nominations were received.** The GSA Nominating Committee unanimously voted to forward **ALL nominations received to GSA Council for consideration.** The list of ASC Nominees and a call for additional nominations was distributed to Council on September 12, 2014, and one additional nomination was received.
Jurisdiction:

Policy Manual, Nominating, 6.6

“The NoC will provide Council with nominations for [...] all GSA standing committees [...]. Additional nominations may be made by Councillors, **in writing**, in advance of the Council meeting where elections will take place.”

Awards Selection Committee: Positions: UP TO TWELVE (12) GRADUATE STUDENTS

Composition of this committee, as set out in GSA Policy, is:

- I. “The Vice-President External, as Chair.”
- II. “The Vice-President Labour serves on the ASC.”
- III. “Up to twelve (12) graduate students, elected by Council. The Chair, in consultation with the GSA Nominating Committee Vice-Chair, can decide to increase the number of graduate student members on ASC” (GSA Policy, Standing Committees, 6.1)

GSA ELECTIONS AND REFERENDA COMMITTEE (ERC) NOMINEES

List of Nominees and Call for Additional Nominations Previously Distributed to Council on September 17, 2014; Advertisements for up to two positions on ERC Distributed through the GSA Newsletter on September 12, 2014

The GSA Nominating Committee advertised up to two positions to graduate students through the GSA Newsletter and received **three nominations**. The GSA Nominating Committee unanimously voted to forward **ALL nominations received to GSA Council for consideration**. A call for additional nominations went out to Council and one additional nomination was received.

There will be a paper ballot vote held at the September 22, 2014 GSA Council meeting for the two graduate student positions on the GSA ERC

If you are unable to attend the September 22, 2014 meeting of GSA Council and would like to cast an electronic vote for this position, you must contact the Nominating Committee Coordinator (gsa.nomcomm@ualberta.ca) BEFORE 3:00 PM on Monday September 22, 2014 in order to cast your vote in advance of the Council meeting.

Nominees for the position are listed in alphabetical order and will be presented in *reverse* alphabetical order on the ballot. 'None of the Above' will also be considered a nominee for the purpose of each ballot (GSA Policy, Elections, 10.4).

Jurisdiction:

GSA Policy, Nominating, 6.6

"The NoC will provide Council with nominations for the GSA Board, all GSA standing committees, Speaker, CRO, and Senator. Additional nominations may be made by Councillors, in writing, in advance of the Council meeting where elections will take place. If a Councillor(s) makes an additional nomination, there will be a written ballot at the Council where the election will take place."

Nominees:

1. **Jean-Philippe Crete (PhD program, Sociology)**
2. **Risha Dutt (MSc program, Rehabilitation Science)**
3. **Pat Schultz (PhD program, Educational Policy Studies)**
4. **Leigh Spanner (PhD program, Political Science)**

The bios and resumes for Jean-Philippe Crete, Pat Schultz and Leigh Spanner were previously distributed to GSA Council on September 17, 2014. If Risha Dutt agrees to have her bio and resume circulated to GSA Council, hard copy of all four nominees' bios and resumes will be distributed at the GSA Council Meeting on September 22, 2014.

GSA Elections and Referenda Committee: Vacancy: UP TO TWO GRADUATE STUDENTS**Composition:**

- i. "The Chief Returning Officer (CRO), as Chair.
- ii. The Deputy Returning Officer (DRO), as Vice-Chair.
- iii. At least one (1) Councillor, elected by Council.
- iv. Up to four (4) graduate students, elected by Council" (GSA Policy, Standing Committees, 9.1)

Eligibility

Members of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee **must be neutral**. GSA Policy states:

2. "Eligibility

- a. All members of the GSA are eligible to serve on ERC unless they intend to run in the General Election. If standing for election to ERC, ERC candidates agree not to campaign for or endorse any individual running in the General Election.
- b. If an ERC member intends to run in a GSA General Election or campaign for or endorse any individual running in the General Election they shall resign from ERC" (Standing Committees, 9.2)

Continuing GSA Councillors Serving on ERC (2): Virginia Pimmett (Councillor, Cell Biology), Jennifer Bell (Councillor, Nursing)

Continuing GSA Members Serving on ERC (1): Zhendong Li (Chemistry)

Outline of Issue (GSA Council)

Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC): Membership

Suggested Motion for the GSA Council:

GSA Council, on the **unanimous recommendation** of GSA Board, is asked to **APPROVE** membership of the Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta in the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC).

Background:

Since the dissolution of the Alberta Graduate Council in October of 2013, members of the four Graduate Student Associations at CARI Universities in Alberta (**U of A, U of Calgary, U of Lethbridge, and Athabasca U**) have been working to form a new graduate provincial advocacy group. A series of governing documents have been produced and agreed upon by the four GSAs (see the attached cover letter for more background, page 10.1).

The GSA Board discussed these documents at its meeting of September 3, 2014, and **unanimously recommended that GSA Council approve membership of the Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta in the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council.** Should GSA Council approve membership in ab-GPAC, the four CARI GSAs anticipate filing an application to form under the Alberta *Societies Act* in mid-November.

Currently, U of A GSA members pay \$0.50 per term as a fee for membership in a provincial graduate student advocacy group. Additionally, there is a budget line providing additional funds for a provincial graduate student advocacy group in the Council-approved GSA 2014-2015 Budget.

Jurisdiction:

Bylaw Part III Council, Section 1 Mandate, Subsection 1.1:

"The mandate of the Council is to fulfill all responsibilities listed in Section 95 of the Post-Secondary Learning Act."

Alberta Post-Secondary Learning Action, Section 95(1):

"The business and affairs of a student organization of a public post-secondary institution must be management by a council..."

Dear GSA Council,

At the September 22, 2014, meeting of GSA Council, **Councillors will be asked to consider a proposal to approved membership in the a provincial graduate student advocacy group, the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC).** ab-GPAC is the replacement of the former provincial advocacy group, the Alberta Graduate Council (AGC).

In October of 2013, **the Graduate Student Associations of the four CARI Universities in Alberta (U of A, U of Calgary, U of Lethbridge, and Athabasca U) agreed to dissolve AGC in order to work together to create a new provincial advocacy group for graduate students with a proper, legal basis for existence.**

Following the dissolution of AGC, the four GSAs began work to form a new provincial graduate student advocacy group. In January and February of 2014, members of the four Alberta GSAs met to construct a mutually agreeable list of considerations ('MoU') from which a new provincial graduate lobby group would be formed. From that list, **a series of governing documents were solicited: a Societies Act application, a membership agreement and bylaws were drafted by Brownlee Law, and financial control policies and a code of conduct were drafted by Russell Farmer** (a governance subject matter expert from Russell Farmer and Associates Consulting Ltd.).

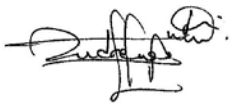
Due to his extensive background with the former Alberta Graduate Council, Roy Coulthard, current GSA Consultant and former GSA President, was asked to review these documents and suggested several changes and revisions based on his understanding of how the group had functioned in the past and best practices for the group moving forward. Additional suggestions were made by GSA Executive Director Ellen Schoeck and GSA Assistant Director Megan Caldwell based on the content of the 'MoU'.

On June 7, 2014, members of the four Alberta GSAs met to discuss and revise draft governing documents for the soon to be formed Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC). Further discussions occurred via teleconference in July and August, resulting in a series of mutually agreed upon governing documents for the new group. In addition to the attached ab-GPAC Bylaws (pages 10.1 - 10.15), the group has also finalized a Financial Control Policy, Code of Conduct for members of its board, and a membership agreement (which outlines obligations of member GSAs to ab-GPAC). A Travel and Expenses Policy will also be drafted for the group, and any additional policies the group deems necessary once it has formed.

The GSA Board has discussed the set of governing documents multiple times as they were being drafted. At meetings on January 29 and July 9 Board Members discussed and weighed in on aspects of the 'MoU' and draft governing documents, respectively. The GSA Board reviewed the final documents at its meeting of September 3, 2014, and **unanimously recommended that GSA Council approve membership of the Graduate Students' Association of the University of Alberta in the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council.** Should GSA Council approve membership in ab-GPAC, the four CARI GSAs anticipate filing an application to form under the Alberta *Societies Act* in mid-November.

I will be happy to answer any questions Councillors have about ab-GPAC.

Sincerely,



Nathan Andrews, GSA President 2014-2015

**GRADUATE PROVINCIAL ADVOCACY COUNCIL
BYLAWS**

ARTICLE 1 - NAME OF SOCIETY

- 1.1 The name of the Society shall be "Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council".

ARTICLE 2 - INTERPRETATION

- 2.1 In these Bylaws, so far as the context does not otherwise require:

- (a) "**Act**" means the *Societies Act*, RSA 2000, c. S-14, as amended from time to time;
- (b) "**Annual General Meeting**" means that meeting of the Members to be held as set forth in Article 5.1 hereof;
- (c) "**Application**" means that application filed with the Alberta Corporate Registrar which sets forth the objects of the Society;
- (d) "**Board**" means Board of Directors of the Society;
- (e) "**Business Day**" means a day other than a Saturday, Sunday or statutory holiday in the Province of Alberta;
- (f) "**Bylaws**" means the Bylaws of the Society;
- (g) "**CARI Institution**" means any university pursuant to the *Post-Secondary Learning Act*, S.A. 2003, c.P-19.5 that is recognized as a comprehensive academic and research intensive institution by the Minister of Innovation and Advanced Education or any successor thereto;
- (h) "**Chair**" means that Director appointed as the Chair under these Bylaws;
- (i) "**Conflict of Interest**" means a situation where an individual or Member is involved in multiple interests, one of which could possibly corrupt the motivation of that individual or Member.
- (j) "**Directors**" means the Directors of the Society appointed from time to time and a "Director" means one of them;
- (k) "**Members**" means those members of the Society from time to time;
- (l) "**Ordinary Resolution**" means:
 - (i) a resolution passed at a general meeting of the Society by a simple majority of the votes cast by those Members entitled to vote at the general meeting; or
 - (ii) a resolution that has been submitted to the Members and consented to in writing by no less than all of the Members, in person or by proxy, who would have been entitled to vote on it; or
- (m) "**Other Provincial Advocacy Group**" means another group or society in Alberta whose object is to advocate or lobby on Advanced Education;
- (n) "**PSLA**" means *Post-Secondary Learning Act*, S.A. 2003, c.P-19.5.
- (o) "**Secretary**" means that Director appointed as the Secretary under these Bylaws;

- (p) **"Society"** means the Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council;
- (q) **"Special Resolution"** means:
 - (i) a resolution passed
 - (A) at a general meeting of which not less than 21 days' notice specifying the intention to propose the resolution has been duly given, and
 - (B) by the vote of not less than 100% of those members who, if entitled to do so, vote in person or by proxy; or
 - (ii) a resolution proposed and passed as a special resolution at a general meeting of which less than 21 days' notice has been given, if all the members entitled to attend and vote at the general meeting so agree;
- (r) **"Treasurer"** means that Director appointed as the Treasurer under these Bylaws; and
- (s) **"Vice-Chair"** means that Director appointed as the Vice-Chair under these Bylaws.
- (t) **"Voting Director"** - means the Director from each Member that has the power to vote at Meetings and on the Board

2.2 Except where they conflict with the definitions contained in these Bylaws, the definitions in the Act apply to these Bylaws.

2.3 The objects of the Society are those named in the Application under the Act, and a copy of that Application, as amended from time to time with approval of the Members, shall be kept with a copy of these Bylaws.

2.4 Words using the singular number or the masculine gender shall include the plural number or the feminine gender, as the case may be, and vice versa, and references to persons, organizations or corporations shall include individuals, partnerships, firms, societies and corporations, all as the context requires.

ARTICLE 3 - MEMBERSHIP

3.1 **Members of Society** – Any person may become a Member, subject to:

- (a) the prior approval of a two-thirds majority of the Members at a duly-constituted general meeting;
- (b) the person being a Graduate Students' Association, as set out in the *PSLA* Section 94, at a CARI Institution;
- (c) the person executing that form of membership agreement that the Board may require; and
- (d) further complying with any other requirement imposed by the Board, from time to time.

3.2 **Fees Payable by Members** - Yearly membership fees shall be fixed by resolution of the Board, subject to approval by the Members. The Chair shall notify the Members of the dues or fees at any time payable by them.

3.3 **Membership Ongoing** - Membership in the Society is ongoing, non-transferable and does not require affirmation by the Members.

3.4 **Conduct of Society** - The Society shall conduct its activities without the purpose of personal gain for any of its Members or Directors, except as otherwise specifically stated in the Bylaws. Any income or other assets of the Society shall be used in carrying out the Society's objects.

3.5 Membership in Other Provincial Advocacy Groups

- (a) The Members acknowledge and agree that the intent of the Society is that it shall be an entity to advocate collectively for the Members. As such, the Members also agree and acknowledge that it is contrary to the best interests for any Member to belong as a member or support any other provincial advocacy group.
- (b) The Members each acknowledge and agree that any Member upon becoming a Member shall no less than 24 months after becoming a Member, terminate its membership in any other provincial advocacy group.
- (c) In the event that any Member continues its membership or support of another provincial advocacy group contrary to Section 3.5(b) (the “**Infringing Member**”), the other Members have the right, but not the obligation, to call a special meeting of the Members to discuss the expulsion of the Infringing Member from the Society.
- (d) Should a special meeting of the Members be called pursuant to Section 3.5(c) hereof:
 - (i) the Infringing Member shall be granted the opportunity to discuss the matter of the Infringing Member’s expulsion;
 - (ii) all other Members shall have the right to discuss the matter of the Infringing Member’s expulsion; and
 - (iii) once all parties are heard from regarding the matter of the expulsion of the Infringing Member, a vote of all Voting Directors, which shall include the Infringing Member, shall be conducted by secret ballot. If a majority of Members vote to expel the Infringing Member, the Infringing Member shall no longer be a Member of the Society.
- (e) Upon the expulsion of the Infringing Member of the Society, the Infringing Member shall forthwith pay to the Society, its dues that it would have been responsible to pay to the Society for the next twelve (12) months, had it not been otherwise expelled.
- (f) Notwithstanding the expulsion of any Infringing Member, an Infringing Member may at any time, reapply to the Society to obtain membership of the Society.

ARTICLE 4 - MEMBERSHIP CEASES

4.1 Membership Ceasing - A Member shall cease to be a Member:

- (a) upon the termination of the corporate existence of a Member;
- (b) upon the Member having been expelled from Membership as set forth in Section 3.5;
- (c) upon the Member failing to forward to the Society the fees payable by them, as set forth in Section 3.2, within the six (6) months following receipt of a notification of Fees Payable from the Chair.

4.2 Voluntary Withdrawal of Member - A Member may terminate its membership in the Society by providing no less than 12 months’ notice in writing to the Society, which termination shall be effective of December 31 of the following year. For greater certainty, the Member shall be responsible for forwarding to the Society such dues as are normally required from a Member (Section 3.2) up to December 31 of the following year. For example purposes only, should a Member provide notice in 2018 of its intent to cease being a member, that Member’s status of a Member terminates as of December 31, 2019.

ARTICLE 5 - MEETINGS OF MEMBERS

5.1 **Annual General Meeting** - The Annual General Meeting shall be held at such time and place, in accordance with the Act, as the Board shall decide. It is the intention that the Annual General Meeting will be held within four weeks of the final day of October every calendar year. Notwithstanding this, this date is not binding upon the Members.

5.2 **Notice of Annual General Meetings** - Written notice of the time and place of Annual General Meetings of the Members and an agenda of the business to be transacted shall be given to each Member, as applicable, at least **twenty-one (21) days before the holding of any such meeting.**

5.3 **Minimum Number of Annual General Meetings** - The Board shall cause at least one Annual General Meeting to be called each calendar year within four weeks of the final day of October.

5.4 **Quorum for Annual General Meetings** - A quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of Members (general meeting, special meeting or Annual General Meeting) shall consist of a no less than 100% of voting Members.

5.5 **Other Meetings of Members** - All other meetings of Members shall proceed as Board Meetings, outlined in Article 9 below.

ARTICLE 6 - PROCEEDINGS AT MEMBERS' MEETINGS

6.1 **Meeting Agenda** - Other than at the Annual General Meeting, the agenda for a general or special meeting shall be that approved at the meeting.

6.2 **Voting Director** - As each Member is a corporate body itself, each Member shall appoint a Voting Director, who is a member in good standing of the Graduate Student Association which they are representing, in the following form or in any other appropriate form accepted by the Chair, to indicate that this individual shall be entitled to vote for that Member:

“Voting Director Appointment”

WE being a member of the Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council, hereby nominate, constitute and appoint _____, or in the absence of _____, _____ as our Voting Director, attorney, and/or representative with full power and authority to attend, vote and otherwise act for us in our name and on our behalf at all meetings of Members of the Society (including the Annual General Meeting), with full power of substitution, and

WE hereby revoke all other appointments given by us which might be used in respect of such meetings and any and all adjournments thereof.

Given this ____ day of _____, 20__.

[Name of Member]

Per: _____c/s)

6.3 **One Vote for Each Member** - Each Member in good standing shall be entitled to one (1) vote on every matter properly put before a meeting for a vote. In the event of a tie, the matter shall be considered defeated. Notwithstanding the attendance of more than one person as a Director of a Member, only the Voting Director shall be entitled to vote for each Member.

6.4 **Voting Procedure**

- (a) Unless otherwise required by the Bylaws or pursuant to applicable law, any resolution put before the Members with no less than twenty-one (21) days notice must be supported by not less than a majority of the votes cast, failing which the resolution shall fail.
- (b) Unless otherwise required by the Bylaws or pursuant to applicable law, any resolution put before the Members with less than twenty-one (21) days notice must be supported by not less than two thirds (2/3) of the votes cast, failing which the resolution shall fail.
- (c) Questions shall be decided in the first instance by a voice vote unless any Member requests a recorded vote.
- (d) A declaration by the chairperson of the meeting that a resolution has been carried or not carried and an entry to that effect in the minutes of the Society shall be sufficient evidence of the fact without proof of the number or proportion of the vote accorded in favour of or against such resolution.

6.5 **Conduct of Business at Meeting** - Business at all meetings of the Members shall be conducted according to these Bylaws and the rules of order adopted by resolution of the Members.

6.6 **Submission of Resolutions** - Except as provided in the Act, a resolution may be submitted to any meeting by any Member, with notice in writing of the intention to submit such resolution given to the Secretary prior to such meeting. Voting Members present at the meeting may submit a resolution at such meeting.

6.7 **Chairperson of Member Meetings** - The Chair shall preside at every meeting of the Members but if the Chair is not present, or for any reason the Chair refuses to preside, the Vice-Chair shall preside. In the absence of both the Chair and Vice-Chair, then those present at the meeting shall appoint a chairperson to act at that meeting.

6.8 **Conflict of Interest** – A Member shall not vote on a matter in which that Member has a conflict of interest. Where a Member believes a conflict of interest on a given matter exists, that Member shall make that declaration at a meeting. Should a conflict exist, the Member will be asked to leave the room for that part of the meeting where the matter in question is discussed. In the event that a Member or Members are asked to leave the room for part of the meeting due to determination of a conflict, resolutions may be passed on the subject regarding such conflict by the majority of those remaining at the meeting.

6.9 **Advocacy Policies** – Each Member shall have the right to present to the Chair for the Board's consideration, an advocacy policy that this Member wishes for the Society to implement. Upon the Chair's receipt of this advocacy policy that the Member desires to be considered, the Chair shall present said policy to the Board for its consideration at the next meeting of the Board. Each Member agrees and acknowledges that notwithstanding this presentation, the Board shall not be obligated to ratify this advocacy policy.

ARTICLE 7 - COMPOSITION OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

7.1 **Appointment of the Board of Directors**

- (a) Each Member shall have the right to appoint up to (3) Directors from time to time;
- (b) One (1) Director shall be appointed Voting Director by the Member.
- (c) At the discretion of the Members, the appointment of each Director may occur by each Member submitting a letter to the Society, advising of their appointment of the Director, normally in April of each year.

7.2 **Situations Where Director is Deemed Not Be a Director** - A Director shall immediately cease to be a Director upon:

- (a) giving his resignation in writing to the Board;
- (b) his/her death;
- (c) being removed by the Member that appoints him or her;
- (d) the Director ceases to be a Member in good standing of their Graduate Students' Association;
- (e) failing to attend or to participate in two (2) consecutive regular meetings of the Board of which he had notice unless the Board has specifically excused the Director from attendance. The Board shall send notice to the Member who appointed the Director and shall request the Member to appoint a new Director; or
- (f) Number of Directors - **The number of Directors shall not be less than one Director from each Member.**

ARTICLE 8 - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

8.1 **Powers of Board** - The Board shall manage the property and affairs of the Society and may exercise all powers and do all acts and things as the Society may exercise and do, and which are not by these Bylaws or by statute or otherwise lawfully directed or required to be exercised or done by the Members, but subject nevertheless, to rules, not being inconsistent with either the Application or these Bylaws, which are made, adopted, revised or replaced from time to time by Members of the Society.

8.2 **Term of Directors** - The term of each Director shall be for one year. Notwithstanding this, a Director may be reappointed by the Member who initially appointed him or her.

8.3 **Payment to Directors** - No Director shall be paid by the Society for being or acting as a Director.

8.4 **Board Expenditures** - The Board shall have the power to make expenditures for the purpose of furthering the objects of the Society.

8.5 **Compliance with Code of Conduct** - The Board shall develop a code of conduct respecting certain obligations and expectations of the Directors from time to time. Respecting this code of conduct:

- (a) each Director shall execute and abide by this code of conduct, as it may be amended or replaced, from time to time;
- (b) if a Director fails to abide by the code of conduct, the Board shall notify the Member that appointed the Director that is failing to abide by the code of conduct. That Member will take appropriate action respecting this Director, which action may result in the removal of this Director from the Board.

ARTICLE 9 - PROCEEDINGS OF BOARD MEETINGS

9.1 **Frequency and Location of Board Meetings** - The meetings of the Board may be held at any time and place to be determined by the Chair in consultation with the Board. Notwithstanding anything in the Bylaws to the contrary, the Board may set a schedule of Board meetings for a certain period or periods.

9.2 **Notice of Board Meetings** - Written notice of the time and place of a meeting of the Board and an agenda of the business to be transacted shall be given to each Director no fewer than five (5) Business Days prior to the meeting. A Director may, but is not obligated to, at any time, waive the requirement of notice in writing of any such meeting and may ratify, approve and confirm any or all proceedings taken or had thereat.

9.3 **Meeting Agenda** - The agenda for a meeting shall be that approved at the meeting.

9.4 **Quorum for Meeting** - A quorum for all meetings of the Board shall be a majority of the Directors, with at least one Director present from each Member.

9.5 **Voting on Matters** - Except as otherwise described in these Bylaws, a majority of votes cast at a meeting of the Board shall be required to pass a resolution of the Board.

9.6 **Voting Procedure** – Subject to Section 9.12, voting shall be by voice vote unless the majority of the Directors present and eligible to vote shall otherwise determine.

9.7 **No Casting Vote** - The Chair shall have the right to vote on any question if they are the Voting Director of their Graduate Students' Association, but may only cast one (1) vote that shall be cast at such time as the other votes are cast.

9.8 **Tie Vote** - In the event of a tie vote, the motion shall be declared lost.

9.9 **Recorded Votes** - Directors may request that their vote be recorded.

9.10 **Resolutions in Writing** - A resolution in writing, signed by all the Directors and deposited with the Chair, is as valid and effective as a resolution of the Board passed at a meeting of the Board.

9.11 **Frequency of Meetings**

(a) The Board shall have no fewer than four meetings of the Board per annum whereby the expectation is that notwithstanding Section 9.12 hereof, each Director shall attend the Board meeting in person. Subject to Section 9.1, the Chair shall, in consultation with the Board, determine which meetings these will be, from time to time. Only in extenuating circumstances recognized by the Board shall a Director not attend this meeting of the Board in person.

(b) The Board shall endeavor to hold additional meetings of the Board whereby the Directors shall be entitled to attend and participate via those means as set forth in Section 9.12 hereof.

9.12 **Telecommunication** - A Director may participate in a meeting of Directors or of a committee of Directors by means of telephone or other communication facilities that permit all Directors participating in the meeting to hear each other. A Director participating in a meeting by those means is deemed to be present at the meeting.

9.13 **Conflict of Interest** – A Director shall not vote on a matter in which that Director has a conflict of interest. Where a Director believes a conflict of interest on a given matter exists, that Director shall make that declaration at a meeting. Should a conflict exist, the Director will be asked to leave the room for that part of the meeting where the matter in question is discussed. In the event that a Voting Director or Voting Directors are asked to leave the room for part of the meeting due to determination of a conflict, resolutions may be passed on the subject regarding such conflict by the majority of those Voting Directors remaining at the meeting.

9.14 **Private Board Meetings** – Within the discretion of the Board, the Board shall have the right to hold all or a portion of the Board meeting *in camera*.

ARTICLE 10 - CREATION OF CERTAIN EXECUTIVE OFFICER POSITIONS/ROLES OF THE BOARD

10.1 **Election of Positions**

The Board shall elect, no later than June 30 of every year, from amongst those sitting as Directors, the following Board positions:

- (i) the Chair;
- (ii) the Vice-Chair;

(iii) the Secretary; and

(iv) the Treasurer.

10.2 **Restrictions on Board Positions** - The Chair shall not serve as any other Executive Officer.

10.3 **Chair of the Board** - Without **limiting anything contained in this Bylaw, the Chair shall:**

- (a) **preside over each** regular meeting, special meeting and the annual meeting of the Board and of the Members, and in doing so be the chairperson of such meetings;
- (b) vote on all matters before the Board;
- (c) be an ex-officio member of all committees of the Society that may be created from time to time.
- (d) Notwithstanding the membership ex-officio of any committee:
 - (i) the Chair shall not have voting rights at any committee meeting unless the Chair is appointed by the Board to be a member of the committee beyond his or her capacity as a member ex-officio; and
 - (ii) the Chair shall not be a chairperson of the committee unless the members of the committee agree that the Chair of the Board shall be the chairperson of the committee; and
- (e) exercise such other powers and authority and shall perform such other duties as may from time to time be prescribed by the Board.

10.4 **Vice-Chair of the Board** - The Vice-Chair shall:

- (a) have the powers of the Chair, in the absence or inability of the Chair to discharge his or her duties; and
- (b) exercise such other powers and authority and shall perform such other duties as may from time to time be prescribed by the Board.

10.5 **Secretary of the Board** – The Secretary shall:

- (a) attend at all meetings of the Board for the purposes of being the recording secretary of the meeting and shall therefore enter or cause to be entered in records kept for that purpose, minutes of all proceedings at such meetings;
- (b) otherwise ensure that a recording secretary is present at such meetings and shall therefore enter or cause to be entered in records kept for that purpose, minutes of all proceedings at such meetings; and
- (c) exercise such other powers and authority and shall perform such other duties as may from time to time be prescribed by the Board.

10.6 **Treasurer** – The Treasurer shall:

- (a) keep or cause to be kept proper accounting records in compliance with the Act and shall be responsible for the deposit of monies and other valuable effects of the Society in the name and to the credit of the Society in such banks or other depositories as the Board may from time to time designate;
- (b) subject to any financial policies enacted by the Board, shall be responsible for the disbursement of the funds of the Society;
- (c) render to the Board, whenever so directed, an account of all financial transactions and of the financial position of the Society; and
- (d) exercise such other powers and authority and shall perform such other duties as may from time to time be prescribed by the Board.

10.7 **Removal of Executive Officers**

The Board, in their discretion, may remove any person elected in Section 10.1, with or without cause, at any time. Any resolution under Section 10.7 must be supported by not less than two thirds (2/3) of the votes cast, failing which the resolution shall fail. Notwithstanding the removal of any Executive Officer from the position in Section 10.1, this removal does not remove the Executive Officer as being a Director on the Board.

ARTICLE 11 - DUTIES OF STAFF

11.1 **Appointment of Staff Positions** - The Board may appoint Staff positions, such as an Executive Director, as the Board sees fit. Without limitation of the foregoing,

- (a) the powers of the Staff positions shall be set by the Board, from time to time, in accordance with any employment contract with the Staff member;
- (b) the remuneration of each Staff position shall be set by the Board from time to time in accordance with any employment contract with the Staff member; and
- (c) prior to a Staff member assuming the their responsibilities, the Board shall execute an employment contract with the Staff member governing, without limitation, the responsibilities, remuneration and mechanism of removal of the Staff member

11.2 **Restriction on Staff Positions** - No Director shall be an employee of the Society.

11.3 **Removal of Staff** - The Board, upon a majority vote of the Directors, may remove the Executive Director, subject to any employment contract that the Executive Director may have with the Society to the contrary.

11.4 **Duties and Responsibilities of Executive Director** - The duties and responsibilities of the Executive Director shall be codified in an employment contract between the Executive Director and the Society. Without limiting the foregoing, any such contract shall require that the Executive Director:

- (a) be executive director of the Society and subject to the authorities of the Board shall have supervision of the business and affairs of the Society and shall have such other additional powers and duties as the Board may specify from time to time in accordance with any employment contract with the executive director;

- (b) give or cause to be given as and when instructed, all notice to Members, the Board, Officers, Auditors and members of committees of the Board;
- (c) provide operational reports or other statements as to the affairs of the Board, as the Board may require from time to time;
- (d) certify any documents of the Society except when some other Officer or agent has been appointed for any such purpose;
- (e) ensure that the policies and programs of the Society are implemented;
- (f) advise and inform the Board on the operations and affairs of the Society;
- (g) carry out any lawful direction of the Board from time to time;
- (h) attend at all meetings of the Board and committees of the Board for the purposes of being the recording secretary of the meeting and shall therefore, in consultation with the Secretary, enter or cause to be entered in records kept for that purpose, minutes of all proceedings at such meetings;
- (i) otherwise ensure that a recording secretary is present at such meetings and shall therefore, in consultation with the Secretary, enter or cause to be entered in records kept for that purpose, minutes of all proceedings at such meetings;
- (j) keep or cause to be kept, in consultation with the Treasurer, proper accounting records in compliance with the Act and shall be responsible for the deposit of monies and other valuable effects of the Society in the name and to the credit of the Society in such banks or other depositories as the Board may from time to time designate;
- (k) be responsible, in consultation with the Treasurer, for the disbursement of the funds of the Society;
- (l) render to the Board, whenever so directed, an account of all financial transactions and of the financial position of the Society; and
- (m) be responsible for registering or filing of, or causing to be registered or filed, all reports, certificates and all of the documents required by law to be registered or filed by the Society; and
- (n) be the custodian of the corporate seal, if any, of the Society and shall have charge of all books, papers, reports, certificates, records, documents, registers and instruments belonging to the Society;

11.5 In the event of a vacancy of the Executive Director position the supervision of the business and affairs of the Society and any other powers and responsibilities assigned to the Executive Director rest with the Board.

ARTICLE 12 - COMMITTEES

12.1 **Board Committees** - The Board may appoint standing or *ad hoc* committees that it deems necessary consisting of Directors and others and may assign duties and responsibilities to the committees that are not inconsistent with the Act and may make regulations governing their conduct.

12.2 **Directors on Committees** - At least one (1) Director shall be a member of each committee.

12.3 **Committees Accountable to Board** - All such committees shall be accountable to the Society through the

Board and shall regularly report their discussions and activities to the Board.

12.4 **Delegation of Board Powers** - By Resolution of the Board, the Board may delegate some, but not all, of its powers to its committees as it thinks fit. Notwithstanding any delegation of its powers to its committees, the Board remains responsible and accountable for all decisions made by its committees.

ARTICLE 13 - AUDITOR

13.1 **Annual External Audit** - The Society shall appoint a qualified external auditor and the books and records will be audited once a year as soon as possible after each fiscal year end (August 31st) of the Society.

13.2 **External Auditor Appointed at Annual General Meeting**

- (a) At each Annual General Meeting the external auditor shall be appointed by the Members to hold office until he or she is re-appointed or his successor is appointed, at the next following Annual General Meeting.
- (b) The books and records of the Society shall not be audited by:
 - (i) a Director;
 - (ii) an Officer;
 - (iii) an employee of the Society; or
 - (iv) a Member of the Society, or any employee of a Member of the Society.

ARTICLE 14 - SEAL

14.1 **Seal** - The Board may provide a seal for the Society and it shall have power from time to time to change such seal.

14.2 **Seal Affixation** - The seal shall be affixed only when authorized by a resolution of the Board, and then only in the presence of the persons prescribed in the resolution, or if no persons are prescribed, in the presence of any two (2) Directors.

ARTICLE 15 - FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES AND OPERATIONS

15.1 **Financial Control Policy** - All financial activities of the Society shall be subject to any financial control policy enacted by the Board, as amended from time to time.

15.2 **Borrowing by Society** - For the purposes of the Society, the Board may, on behalf of and in the name of the Society, raise or secure the payment or repayment of money in any manner it decides, and in particular, but without limiting the foregoing, by the issue of debentures, provided however, that no debenture shall be issued without being approved by Special Resolution.

15.3 **No Personal Gain of Directors** - The Society shall conduct its activities without the purpose of personal gain for any of its Directors, except as otherwise specifically stated in the Bylaws. Any income or other assets of the Society shall be used in carrying out the Society's objects.

15.4 **Fiscal Year of Society** - The fiscal year of the Society shall terminate August 31st annually, and the financial statements of the Society's affairs for presentation to the Members at the Annual General Meeting shall be made up to that date.

ARTICLE 16 - MINUTES

16.1 **Minutes to be Entered** - The Directors shall cause minutes to be entered in books provided for the purpose of:

- (a) all appointments of Officers;
- (b) all names of all Directors present at each meeting of the Directors; and
- (c) all resolutions and proceedings of meetings of the Members and of the Board.

16.2 **Minutes Endorsed by Chair** - Any minutes of the Members and the Board, if approved by normal resolution of the Members or Board, as appropriate, and signed by the chairperson of that meeting or the Chair of the next succeeding meeting, shall be receivable as prima facie evidence of the matters stated in such minutes.

16.3 **Records Activities** - The Board shall cause all facts and minutes of all proceedings to be kept on all meetings of the Society and shall cause all notices to be given to Members and to Directors required by these Bylaws. The Board shall cause to be kept the seal of the Society and all books, papers, records, correspondence, contracts and other documents belonging to the Society and shall cause the same to be delivered up when required by the Act or when authorized by the Board to such person as may be named by the Board.

ARTICLE 17 - NOTICE

17.1 **People Entitled to Notice of Annual General Meeting** - Notice of an Annual General Meeting shall be given to:

- (a) every person shown on the register of Members as a Member on the day notice is given; and
- (b) the external auditor, if appointed.

17.2 **Method of Providing Notice** - Any notice which is required or permitted to be given under these Bylaws shall be in writing and shall be:

- (a) delivered or mailed by regular mail to the address of the recipient, to whom is it intended, last known to the Society as recorded on its books or records;
- (b) sent by fax to the fax number of the recipient last known to the Society as recorded on its books or records; or
- (c) sent by electronic mail to the electronic mail address of the recipient last known to the Society as recorded on its books or records.

17.3 **Deemed Delivery of Notice**

- (a) Any notice delivered before 4:30 p.m. (local time) on a Business Day shall be deemed to have been received on the date of delivery.
- (b) Any notice delivered, sent by facsimile or by electronic mail after 4:30 p.m. (local time) on a Business Day or delivered on a day other than a Business Day, as the case may be, shall be deemed to have been received on the next Business Day. Any notice mailed by regular mail shall be deemed to have been received four (4) days after the date it is postmarked.
- (c) Further, if normal mail service is interrupted by strike, slow-down, force majeure or other cause after a notice has been sent by regular mail, such notice will not be deemed to be received until actually received. In the event that normal mail service is impaired at the time of sending a notice, then the other means of sending such notice shall be the only effective means of giving notice.

ARTICLE 18 - INSPECTION OF BOOKS AND RECORDS BY MEMBERS

18.1 **Inspection of Books and Records by Members** - Any Member may inspect the books and records of the Society at any time upon providing written notice to the Board and arranging a time satisfactory to the Chair or Vice-Chair respectively. For greater certainty, the Chair or Vice-Chair shall arrange for a Member to inspect the books and records no more than twenty-one (21) days following receipt of such written notice. Each Director shall, at all times, have access to such books and records.

ARTICLE 19 - BYLAWS

19.1 **Alteration of Bylaws** - These Bylaws may be rescinded, altered or added to by a Special Resolution.

ARTICLE 20 - DISSOLUTION OF SOCIETY

20.1 **Special Resolution to Dissolve** - The Society may only be dissolved by Special Resolution. Unless otherwise unanimously agreed by the Members, any assets of the Society will be assigned to each Member according to the proportion of fees paid to the Society by each Member in the previous year.

DATED this ____ day of _____, 2014

THE GRADUATE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION OF ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY

Address (including postal code)

Per: _____

THE GRADUATE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Address (including postal code)

Per: _____

THE GRADUATE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Address (including postal code)

Per: _____

THE GRADUATE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY OF LETHBRIDGE

Address (including postal code)

Per: _____

Address (including postal code)

WITNESS to signature of **THE GRADUATE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION OF ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY**

Address of Witness (including postal code)

Signature:

Print Name of Witness:

WITNESS to signature of **THE GRADUATE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA**

Address of Witness (including postal code)

Signature:

Print Name of Witness:

WITNESS to signature of **THE GRADUATE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY**

Address of Witness (including postal code)

Signature:

Print Name of Witness:

WITNESS to signature of **THE GRADUATE STUDENTS ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY OF LETHBRIDGE**

Address of Witness (including postal code)

Signature:

Print Name of Witness:

WITNESS to signature of _____

Signature:

Address of Witness (including postal code)

Print Name of Witness:

GSA Council 22 September 2014
GSA Board 2014-2015 Strategic Work Plan: Update

Dear GSA Council,

As continuing members will recall, **the GSA Council received the GSA Board 2014-2015 Strategic Work Plan (SWP) at its meeting of June 16, 2014.** The SWP is available online for your review at <http://www.gsa.ualberta.ca/03SWP.aspx>. The 2014-2015 SWP was prepared by me along with the GSA Vice-Presidents to direct our efforts and identify areas where we can work with others in the University community. The SWP built upon the 2013-2014 SWP, which ensures continuity in terms of strategic goals, planning, and advocacy.

After releasing the SWP, the Directly-Elected Officers (DEOs) and I have met with various members of University administration to discuss common goals, and devise strategies to implement aspects of the plan that are of mutual interest. **At this point in our terms, I would like to offer you an update concerning the GSA's progress thus far in pursuing the strategic goals outlined in the GSA Board 2014-2015 SWP.** Updates will also come to Council in January and April, but I encourage you to ask questions about the status of SWP goals at any time throughout the year.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The FGSR professional development working groups continue to meet, and the GSA continues to be active in those groups, with Vice-President Academic Colin More and Vice-President External Susan Cake leading the team on professional development issues. We are looking forward to the outcomes and new opportunities that will be available for graduate students. Over the summer we have had the opportunity to **discuss professional development for graduate students with both the Dean of FGSR and the Provost, and have received encouragement from both to push forward on this issue.**

SUSTAINED AND ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT IN PSE TUITION, FEES, AND FUNDING DISCUSSIONS

Vice-President External Susan Cake has been representing graduate students across Alberta on a **number of committees organized by the Alberta Ministry of Innovation and Advance Education.** In these meetings, **discussion has ranged from the current state of post-secondary education funding and potential models for increasing the sustainability of funding, to working to define terms such as 'mandatory non-instructional fees' and 'tuition'.** As part of this work, Susan has reached out to the other Alberta CARI GSAs to receive input and examples to take back to the committees, and has met with representatives from the Council of Alberta Undergraduate Students (CAUS) and the Alberta Student Executive Council (ASEC) to **ensure that student voices are consistently represented at the table.**

GRADUATE STUDENT SUPERVISION

Vice-President Academic Colin More continues to **work on matters associated with supervision.** Additionally, the DEOs have had the opportunity to speak to Provost Carl Amrhein, Deputy Provost Olive Yonge, Vice-Provost Roger Epp, and the other Vice-Provosts about this important issue. The DEOs have also recently had the chance to discuss issues associated with graduate supervision with FGSR Dean Mazi Shirvani.

SERVICES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

The GSA also recently sent a letter to the provincial government, along with the Athabasca University GSA and the University of Lethbridge GSA Presidents, **asking that the QEII Graduate Scholarship applications be opened to international students.** We have yet to hear from the province in regards to that letter, but are hopeful that the response will be positive.

Vice-President Student Services Megha Bajaj and Vice-President Labour Monty Bal continue to work on the issue of **Permanent Residence (PR) application assistance at the U of A.** They met with Vice-President (International) Britta Baron in August to discuss the issue. From that meeting, we learned that **the proposal for PR application assistance includes initial consultations regarding which PR stream to apply under, group sessions about PR application, and the ability to have an immigration consultant review a PR application before it is submitted.** The application assistance services are proposed to be **available at a subsidized, pay-per-use cost.** The proposal is currently under review by the U of A legal counsel. We will continue to meet with University of Alberta International about PR as the proposal evolves.

DEPARTMENT LIAISON INITIATIVE (DLI)

In August, the GSA moved forward with the next stage of the Departmental Liaison Initiative (DLI). Vice-President Student Services Megha Bajaj and I sent letters to a number of departmental GSAs, **asking for the opportunity to come to their departments, and speak with graduate students about their concerns and priorities.** We have had the opportunity to meet with one department, and are working to contact and arrange meetings with more departments. **It is our goal to have meetings with every departmental GSA on campus, to hear directly from graduate students, and**

to strengthen the connection between graduate students and the GSA. We copy the GSA Councillor on those letters, so watch your email if we haven't already met with your department!

CONNECTING WITH GRADUATE STUDENTS

Our Fall Orientation event on August 29 was a great success! Over 300 new graduate students came to learn about the GSA and visit the information booths set up by our service providers. We presented at 33 departmental orientations, and **want to thank all of the Councillors who joined us for the presentations in their departments!**

Our first ever Fall Mix and Mingle event will be held on September 24, 2014. Councillors will have received an invitation, and I look forward to seeing you there. The event is generously sponsored by the Alumni Association, and we are all very excited to 'mix and mingle' with fellow graduate students.

GSA INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ADVOCACY

As Council will be hearing the upcoming meeting of GSA Council, Vice-President External Susan Cake and myself have been hard at work since the start of our terms **finalizing the creation of the new provincial advocacy group with the three other Alberta CARI GSAs.** Should all four GSAs agree to join the new group, the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) will submit its application to register under the Alberta *Societies Act* in early October. **In the meantime, representatives from the four GSAs have already begun preparing other governing documents (eg, financial control policy) and identifying mutually agreeable advocacy points.**

Over the summer, Susan and I also had the opportunity to attend a **GU15** meeting in Montreal. As I reported to Council in August, in addition to sharing important information about issues that each GSA is facing individually, the group also discussed becoming more of an **advocacy organization at the federal level.** Although the group does not plan to formalize as a federal lobby group, it will be interesting to observe how the 15 GSAs who meet under this banner move towards coming together on common issues and concerns.

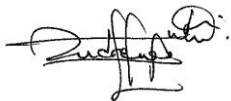
COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT UPDATE

As Councillors are aware, **we recently reached settlements with the U of A Board of Governors (BoG) regarding the AEGS Collective Agreement.** Council ratified this agreement in a Special Meeting on August 12, and ratification of the agreement by the BoG will follow. As this is a two-year agreement (ending in 2016) the team, led by Vice-President Labour Monty Bal, is looking forward to spending this year **focusing on issues of compliance and education alongside the Office of the Provost.** Please consult the GSA website for more information about the CA: <http://www.gsa.ualberta.ca/04CollectiveAgreement.aspx>.

PAW CENTRE

Finally, we would like to remind Councillors that the Physical Activity and Wellness (PAW) Centre will be opening this year - in fact, **Social Street and the Graduate Student Lounge are already open!** As Vice-President Student Services Megha Bajaj has reported to Council previously, the soft opening will happen over the fall semester, with the grand opening slated for March 2015. The GSA is excited about the Graduate Student Lounge that will be available in the PAW Centre for graduate student drop-in use, graduate student group bookings, and for social engagement events hosted by the GSA. Watch for more announcements about programming in the lounge over the next year. I also want to draw to Councillors' attention that graduate students will begin to see the PAW Centre fee on their tuition and fee assessments starting in January 2015. University Architect Ben Louie will be present at the September 22 meeting of GSA Council to provide an update on the PAW Centre and answer questions that Councillors may have.

Sincerely,



Nathan Andrews, GSA President 2014-2015

GSA President's Report to Council
Report to Council for September 22, 2014 GSA Council Meeting

To: GSA Council
From: Nathan Andrews
Date: September 19, 2014

Dear Councillors,

I can't believe it's already mid-September. It is no cliché to say that time flies. I guess we have to make good use of the remaining 'good' weather before it gets dark and cold. The beginning of the school year has been busy for all of us at the GSA, with a huge number of orientation sessions. **We presented at 33 Departmental Orientations and hosted more than 250 incoming graduate students at our annual Fall Orientation.** And my wife and I had our first baby on August 24!! Let me use this opportunity to welcome both returning and new Councillors.

First, the GSA has learned about, and is closely monitoring, the appointment of an Interim Dean of FGSR. The Interim Dean's term will begin on July 1, 2015, at the end of Dean Mazi Shirvani's term.

Since my August report, and as GSA Vice-President External Susan Cake also mentions in her report to Council this month, **the GSA and our counterparts at the University of Calgary, University of Lethbridge and Athabasca University have made steps to finalize the legal and financial documents of the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC)** in order to formally establish the new group. This item is before Council for a vote so I will leave it here and wait to answer any questions Councillors may have. But I will say that I am happy to see this group taking shape.

As Colin notes in his report to you, we are also making important headway with the discussion around Dr. Naomi Krogman's **graduate supervision report**. We developed an internal action plan and with the help of the Dean of FGSR, Dr. Mazi Shirvani, we were able to hire a research assistant to do more work on best practices at the U15 schools and beyond. **Four major progress steps lie ahead, including an online tracking system for graduate students and supervisors to file annual reports, agreed-upon letters of expectation, more resources for supervisors on a regularly updated FGSR website, and possibly a "college of supervisors."** More information on each of this is available in Vice-President Academic Colin More's report to Council. All these are at a preliminary stage as more work needs to be done by the FGSR and its Policy Review Committee to make sure there is overarching buy-in. Overall, I believe we're making good progress on this matter.

I can't end this report without mentioning that we're having the **GSA Fall Mix and Mingle on September 24, generously sponsored by the U of A Alumni Association**. I hope you have all RSVP-ed and will be attending!

I will conclude by adding that the Province is experiencing a great deal of change, with the new Premier Jim Prentice and a new Minister of Innovation and Advanced Education, Donald Scott. This dynamic could possibly change a lot of the discussions we've been having with government around tuition regulation, definitions, and market modifiers. At this point, we should just wait and see how it all unfolds. Vice-President External Susan Cake also says more about this matter in her report. I am happy to answer any questions about any of the meetings I attended since my last report to Council. Please find the list of meetings included below.

Cheers,
Nathan Andrews, GSA President

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between August 16, 2014 to September 19, 2014. I was on Personal Leave August 25-29, 2014.

| | |
|--------------|---|
| August 18 | MBAC-TBAC |
| August 21 | Dean of FGSR |
| August 21 | B Epperson & Guest |
| August 22 | Students' Union |
| August 22 | Dean of Students |
| August 22 | GSA Presidents Dinner |
| September 3 | Connecting Universities and Industries |
| September 4 | Dean of FGSR |
| September 9 | Mechanical Engineering DLI |
| September 10 | Supervision Research |
| September 12 | BURC Lunch |
| September 12 | Phone Call with Provost |
| September 17 | MBAC-TBAC |
| September 17 | FGSR Council |
| September 17 | GFC APC |
| September 18 | Dean of FGSR |
| September 18 | Kim Campbell |
| September 18 | Alumni Awards Night |
| September 19 | Alumni Association Cap 'n Gown Ceremony |
| September 19 | BURC |
| September 19 | Dean of Business |
| September 19 | Students' Union |

**GSA Board
Report to Council for September 22, 2014 GSA Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
 From: Ellen Schoeck, Executive Director and Coordinator of the GSA Board; Heather Hogg, Director of Operations; and Courtney Thomas, Director of Services and Governance
 Date: September 19, 2014

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. Open session Minutes are available upon request. The President, Vice-Presidents, Director of Operations, Director of Services and Governance, Financial Manager, and I will be happy to answer any questions or provide more information at the Council meeting.

20 August, 2014 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Studentcare Agreement Renewal: Business Case and Draft Documents; Travel Estimate: Rough Annual Advocacy Expenditures

Motions and Agreements:

None were made.

27 August, 2014 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Studentcare Agreement Renewal: Recommendation to Council

Motions and Agreements:

Board members **AGREED** to change the length of agreement from “November 1, 2014 to August 31, 2020” to “October 1, 2014 to August 31, 2020”; The GSA Board is asked to **RECOMMEND** to GSA Council that it approve renewal of the GSA agreement with Quebec Student Health Alliance Inc. (doing business as “studentcare.net/works”) to act as the broker/administrator of the GSA Health and Dental Plan for the period of October 1, 2014 - August 31, 2020. CM **MOVED**. MoB Seconded. **CARRIED**.

3 September, 2014 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Revisions to the Studentcare Draft Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement; Advocacy Travel Expense Estimates for Remainder of 2014-2015; Membership in the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Group (ab-GPAC)

Motions and Agreements:

Board Members **AGREED** to amend the Motion to remove “at the time of its formation.”; The GSA Board is asked to **RECOMMEND** to GSA Council that it approve membership of the Graduate Students’ Association of the University of Alberta in the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC). NA **MOVED**. SC Seconded. **CARRIED**.

10 September, 2014 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

CASA Membership; Conference Board of Canada Post-Secondary Education Skills Summit: GSA Attendance; Graduate Citizenship Award and GSA Awards Application/Nomination and Adjudication Processes: Proposed Revisions to GSA Board Policy

Motions and Agreements:

That the GSA Board **APPROVE** the proposed revisions to the GSA Board Policy “Graduate Citizenship Award and GSA Awards Application/Nomination and Adjudication Processes” as presented in the attached tracked changes document, **effective immediately**. NA **MOVED**. MeB Seconded. **CARRIED**.

17 September, 2014 GSA Board Meeting

Main Agenda Items:

Attendance at the Conference Board of Canada Post-Secondary Education Skills Summit, November 4-6, 2014, in Toronto: Estimate Expenses; Long Night Against Procrastination: Request for Sponsorship

Motions and Agreements:

That the GSA Board **APPROVE** the estimated expenses for two representatives of the GSA to attend the Conference Board of Canada Post-Secondary Education Skills Summit, November 4-6, 2014, in Toronto, as shown in the attached travel estimate. NA **MOVED**. CM Seconded. **CARRIED**. SC Abstained.; That the GSA Board **APPROVE** an external grant of \$300 for the Long Night Against Procrastination, as requested in the attached letter (pages 4.1). CM **MOVED**. MeB Seconded. **CARRIED**.

In addition, the following motion was considered by the voting members of GSAB via email.

15 September 2014

That the GSA Board **APPROVE** the estimated expenses for one representative of the GSA to attend the Canadian Association of Graduate Studies annual conference, October 26-30, 2014, in St. John's, as shown in the attached travel estimate. NA **MOVED**. MoB Seconded. **CARRIED**.

GSA Nominating Committee (NoC)
Report to Council for September 22, 2014 GSA Council Meeting

To: GSA Council
From: Lacey Fleming
Date: September 19, 2014

Dear Council Colleagues,

The report from the GSA Nominating Committee (NoC) 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 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.

Sincerely,

Lacey Fleming, Vice-Chair of the GSA Nominating Committee

GSA Standing Committees

1) GSA Awards Selection Committee

An advertisement for positions on the GSA Award Selection Committee was sent through the GSA newsletter on August 22, 2014. The deadline for nominations was September 5, 2014 at noon and additional nominations were accepted until **Friday September 19, 2014 at 12:00 PM (Noon)**. **SEE NOMINEES UNDER ELECTION ITEM.**

2) GSA Elections and Referenda Committee

An advertisement for up to two positions on the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee was sent through the GSA newsletter on September 12, 2014. The deadline for nominations was September 16, 2014 at noon and additional nominations were accepted until **Friday September 19, 2014 at 12:00 PM (Noon)**. **SEE NOMINEES UNDER ELECTION ITEM.**

3) GSA Judicial Committee

GSA Policy requires that "The Judicial Committee shall be comprised of eight (8) Councillors who are selected at random as members of the Committee at the outset of each semester" (GSA Policy, Standing Committees, 11.1). **Risha Dutt, Md. Mohib-Ul-Haque Khan, Jennifer Wang, Gino Ganlas, Axel Perez Trujillo, Grant Norman, Tharsini Sivananthajothy and Rick Van Manen** were selected at random to serve on the Judicial Committee for the fall term.

Bodies External to the GSA

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 Policy, "advertising may be waived in instances where, in the NoC's view, it is urgent to fill a vacancy" (GSA Policy, Nominating, 5.2).

1) Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research Council

There are 20 Councillor positions and 5 Alternate positions available on FGSR Council. Through advertising in the GSA Newsletter and a proactive search for representatives from the GSA Nominating Committee Bank of Names, the following representatives were elected to serve on FGSR Council for 2014-2015. The GSA Nominating Committee worked to ensure there was as broad representation as possible, with not more than two graduate students from a given graduate program (FGSR Council Terms of Reference).

FGSR Councillors (20 positions)

1. Ahmad Al-Dabbagh (PhD program, Electrical and Computer Engineering)
2. Pooran Appadu (MSc program, Agricultural, Food and Nutritional Science)
3. Sahar Banisoltan (PhD program, Civil and Environmental Engineering)
4. Nicolas Barriga (PhD program, Computing Science)
5. Margot R. Challborn (MA program, Political Science)
6. Lin Chen (MEng program, Chemical and Materials Engineering)
7. Risha Dutt (MSc program, Rehabilitation Science)
8. Jason Gardiner (PhD program, Biological Sciences)
9. Sarang Gumfekar (PhD program, Chemical and Materials Engineering)
10. Robert Gustas (MA program, Anthropology)
11. Samreen Khan (MA program, Political Science)
12. Joshua Lee (MSc program, Medical Genetics)
13. You Wei Lin (MSc program, Neuroscience)
14. Jenelle Pederson (MSc program, Medicine)
15. Estacio Siemann Santos Pereira (PhD program, Civil and Environmental Engineering)
16. Amanda Radil (PhD program, Educational Psychology)
17. Sukhpreet Tamana (PhD program, Educational Psychology)
18. Harsh Thaker (MSc program, Medicine)
19. Patricia Schultz (PhD program, Educational Policy Studies)
20. Cuiying Jian (PhD program, Mechanical Engineering)

FGSR Alternates (5 positions)

The GSA Nominating Committee will carry out a search to fill the five alternate positions on FGSR Council for 2014-2015.

2) FGSR Council Policy Review Committee (2 positions)

There are two positions for graduate student FGSR Council members on this Committee. As the representatives needed to be finalized as soon as possible, the GSA Nominating Committee waived advertising (GSA Policy, Nominating, 5.2) and elected **Colin More (GSA VP Academic) and Harsh Thaker (MSc program, Medicine)** to serve on this committee for 2014-2015.

3) Sustainability Advisory Committee (1 position)

The one graduate student position on the Sustainability Advisory Committee was advertised through the GSA Newsletter on August 8, 2014. **Eight (8) strong applications were received in response to the advertisement before the deadline of Friday August 22, 2014. Carlos Fiorentino (PhD program, Human Ecology)** was elected to serve on the Sustainability Advisory Committee.

4) Shell Enhanced Learning Fund (SELF) Selection Committee (1 position)

The student position on this committee was advertised through the GSA Newsletter on August 15, 2014 and **two** applications were received. The committee requested that the student representative be from the Faculty of Engineering as the faculty members on this committee are from Business and Science.

Alireza Talei (PhD program, Mechanical Engineering) was elected to serve on this committee.

5) Information Technology Advisory Council (ITAC) (2 positions)

There are two positions for graduate students on the Information Technology Advisory Council. The Nominating Committee elected representatives from 2013-2014 expressed interest in serving a second term on this committee. The Nominating Committee elected **Hamman Samuel (PhD program, Computing Science), and Ali Utku Akkoc (PhD program, Business)** to serve a second term on this committee.

**GSA Vice-President Academic
Report to Council for September 22, 2014 GSA Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Colin More
Date: September 19, 2014

Hello everyone!

Welcome back from summer! For my part, I suffered many scrapes and bruises in the mountains, and an incredible number of mosquito bites. Hopefully you had a similarly excellent time!

As Nathan reported, the GSA spent a large portion of the summer working with the FGSR on a **strategy to improve graduate supervision**. The focus of the project could have gone in three directions: further improving the best supervisors, punishing the worst, or trying to improve the average level of supervision. We wanted to maximize student benefit, so we opted for the latter, though with consideration to mitigating the worst experiences.

The GSA and FGSR have discussed pursuing graduate supervision on four fronts. First, the FGSR has been working for some time on an **electronic records management system for students**. We've discussed expanding the capabilities of this system to include the ability to file progress reports, proof of program requirement completion, and so on. This allows better tracking of a student's progress and increasing the potential for problem situations to be caught early. Second, **some form of agreement between student and supervisor at the beginning of every program** (possibly to be reviewed and renewed in each subsequent year).

Third, **posting materials for new and incoming students prominently on the FGSR website**. Fresh from undergrad, did you know how graduate school really works, what you should look for in a potential supervisor, or how to select one? As a new graduate student, did you know who you should go to for help (or even expense claims) in your department or faculty, or how you should interact with your supervisor? I certainly didn't. And that would be the intent of the documents and checklists and whatever else we come up with: to give people help in becoming a great grad student. Finally, we've discussed the potential establishment of some sort of **college for supervisors** within FGSR. This could function as a way to train supervisors and oversee, generally, the supervisory process.

Besides supervision, progress is also being made (again with FGSR) on a **professional development strategy**. We have three working groups examining various facets of professional development for graduate students, the current plan being to have all three groups meet and pool ideas in mid- to late-October. **A final consolidated strategy will then be written by the FGSR (in close consultation with the GSA), to be delivered by Christmas.**

So, things are happening! In addition, we'll soon begin to hear what the University President has in mind for the final part of her term. Stay tuned next month for the thrilling details!

Cheers,

Colin More, GSA Vice-President Academic

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between August 16, 2014 to September 19, 2014.

| | |
|--------------|---|
| August 18 | SU VP Academic |
| August 18 | MBAC-TBAC |
| August 21 | Dean of FGSR |
| August 22 | Students' Union |
| August 22 | Dean of Students |
| August 25 | SU VP Academic |
| August 25 | Long Night Against Procrastination Planning |
| August 26 | Writing Resources |
| August 26 | Dinner with U of A Chancellor & President |
| August 27 | F&O Orientation |
| August 28 | ab-GPAC Teleconference |
| August 29 | GSA Fall Orientation |
| September 2 | Dean of Students BBQ |
| September 4 | Meeting with CAL |
| September 4 | Dean of FGSR |
| September 8 | SU VP Academic |
| September 8 | O Mike-Ifeta (IST) |
| September 8 | GFC Exec |
| September 9 | Mechanical Engineering DLI |
| September 10 | Supervision Research |
| September 13 | Post-Secondary Relations Breakfast |
| September 15 | SU VP Academic |
| September 15 | FGSR Council and GFC Caucus Training |
| September 15 | CaPS |
| September 16 | FGSR Caucus |
| September 17 | MBAC-TBAC |
| September 17 | FGSR Council |
| September 18 | Dean of FGSR |
| September 18 | GFC Caucus |

**GSA Vice-President Student Services
Report to Council for September 22, 2014 GSA Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Megha Bajaj
Date: September 19, 2014

Dear Council Colleagues,

Hope the fall semester is treating you all well. Apart from the usual routine of graduate student life, I hope you have managed to find time to enjoy the last bit of this beautiful weather.

The semester so far has been really busy for me with research, teaching and GSA work but I am enjoying it immensely! As you can judge by the length of my report, I do have lots to report this month.

GSA Fall Orientation and Departmental Orientations

As Acting President, I did the **presentation for all the incoming graduate students during the GSA Fall Orientation on August 29**. The Dean of FGSR and the Acting Dean of Students were also in attendance. After the presentation, the other Vice-Presidents and I got a chance to **mingle with a number of new graduate students**. It was a great opportunity for the **GSA to welcome the incoming class** of graduate students and help **answer their questions** as they begin graduate studies at the U of A.

In addition to GSA Fall Orientation, I presented at a number of **Departmental Orientations**, which went **quite well**. As part of the orientation events, I also attended the **U of A Residence Services-East Campus Block Party** to welcome new students.

I would like to acknowledge the GSA management and staff for all their hard work and meticulous management skills, which made all the GSA orientation events a huge success!

Permanent Residency Application Services for International Students

As he has also reported, GSA Vice-President Labour Monty Bal and I met with Britta Baron, U of A Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President (International), and Doug Weir, Director of UAI, this month. As a **follow-up from my June 2014 Report to Council**, I am happy to report to you that the **proposal that UAI has put together for permanent residency (PR) application services completely aligns with what the GSA and international graduate students had asked for**. The proposal lays out **different models in which PR application services could be offered at the U of A**, and I will report the details to you during my oral report to Council. This proposal is currently **under review by the University's legal counsel**. I will bring the legal counsel's feedback to you once we receive it. If the University approves this proposal, I think it will be a big win for graduate students! So stay tuned!

StartUp U Event- Entrepreneurship Week Steering Committee

As a follow-up to my August 2014 Report to Council, I am happy to report to you that the dates for this event have now been finalized. The event is called **StartUp U** and it will run from **October 20-24, 2014, on campus**. This is a **free weeklong event for all students and you do not need any experience with entrepreneurship to attend any sessions**. I will briefly talk about the various types of sessions during my oral report to Council. A lot of start-up organizations, students and other entrepreneurs will be present during the sessions to answer your questions and for general networking opportunities. **Watch out for communications about this event** in the

coming weeks, from us and other offices from the U of A. **I hope you will make good use of this wonderful resource that is available to you for free!**

Meetings with Writing Resources and CAPS

GSA Vice-President Academic Colin More and I met with representatives from Writing Resources and CaPS this month. We meet with them annually to talk about the **programs they offer to graduate students, which are subsidized by the GSA through the Council-approved GSA Budget**. In addition, along with GSA management, we also **reviewed the feedback from graduate students** who use their services. Both Writing Resources and CaPS have received **excellent written feedback** from graduate students. The feedback reflects that **students truly value their services**, which are offered in the form of **workshops, seminars, and individual consultations**. I will briefly talk about some programs offered by these service providers during my oral report to Council.

Also, as a follow up to these meetings University Student Services is now in the process of starting a new committee, which will **specifically discuss academic services provided to graduate students**. Among other things, the goal of this group is to discuss ways in which all these groups can work together to make academic services for students more effective. This group will be meeting for the first time next month, and we are looking forward to the discussion.

Post Secondary Relations Meeting with the City of Edmonton

The City of Edmonton has initiated a post secondary relations meeting which was hosted by **City Councillors- Bev Esslinger and Andrew Knack, and Bin Lau from the Mayor's office**. This meeting brought together all **student executives from Edmonton** - the GSA and SU from U of A, as well as MacEwan, NAIT, Norquest, Concordia and Kings University College students' associations. As student representatives, we discussed various **issues that affect us all and how the City of Edmonton can help students overcome some of these challenges**. There were five breakout sessions which covered challenges related to **housing, transportation, networking, international students and advocacy to the province and the city**. **I represented graduate students in the group discussing networking challenges**. Each group also made **recommendations to the City** and gave the City Councillors something to think about and work on! The City intends to have a **follow-up meeting sometime later this year**, to discuss these issues further and also to update us on various recommendations that were given to them. GSA Vice-President Labour Monty Bal includes information about this meeting in his report as well.

Physical Activity and Wellness Centre (PAW) Steering Committee

In case you missed the announcement in the GSA Newsletter, **the Social Street and the Graduate Student Lounge in PAW are now open!** So have a look at the partially open PAW building as you get time. The fitness centre is expected to start functioning in November 2014 and the climbing wall and other areas in PAW are expected to be fully functional in early 2015. The **grand opening** of the PAW building is scheduled for **March 2015**. **The PAW Strategic Operating Committee (PAW SOC), part of the legal agreement between the GSA, SU and U of A regarding PAW, is in the process of being formed and will meet for the first time soon**. This committee will have representatives from the GSA and SU, Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation, and the Dean of Students, among other members. While the PAW Steering Committee looked at the construction aspect of the project, the goal of the **PAW SOC is to set policies for the operation of PAW**, including discussions around programming and events, booking spaces including the student lounge space and some businesses (a restaurant and a retail space) in the building.

This is all for now. As always please feel free to get in touch with me if you have any questions, concerns or suggestions. See you at Council!

Sincerely,
Megha Bajaj, GSA Vice-President Student Services

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between August 16, 2014 to September 19, 2014.

| | |
|--------------|---|
| August 19 | NPP Tour |
| August 21 | PR Assistance with B Baron & D Weir |
| August 22 | Students' Union |
| August 26 | Writing Resources |
| August 26 | Dinner with U of A Chancellor & President |
| August 27 | F&O Orientation |
| August 29 | GSA Fall Orientation |
| September 2 | PAW Steering Committee |
| September 2 | Dean of Students BBQ |
| September 4 | PSAC |
| September 6 | East Campus Village Block Party |
| September 13 | Post-Secondary Relations Breakfast |
| September 15 | CaPS |
| September 18 | U-Pass Admin |
| September 19 | Dean of Business |

**GSA Vice-President External
Report to Council for September 22, 2014 GSA Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Susan Cake
Date: September 19, 2014

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope that everyone is doing well with the start of a new semester...despite the snow fall...in September...

Anyways, for the past month I've been quite busy. As my colleagues have reported, orientations took up quite a bit of time at the beginning of the month. It was fun to get out there and meet the new students and inform them about the GSA. **I would like to thank all the Councillors who were able to attend their department's Orientation and make the welcoming even better.**

Aside from Orientation, I have also been busy with provincial government meetings. As I'm sure you have heard in the newspapers the government has opened a call for **Market Modifier Proposals**. Market Modifiers were originally introduced in 2010 to adjust program fees considered out of step with the cost to students of similar programs in the province and Canada. Unfortunately, this one-time tool has remained in regulation and is being used once again. **As noted in the GSA Board SWP, "the GSA will lobby for affordable graduate student tuition and fees" and Market Modifiers are a part of this issue.** As other groups have pointed out, these tuition modifiers affect the grounding principles of the Alberta Post-Secondary system of shared investment, predictability, simplicity and transparency, along with the accessibility of post-secondary education without sufficient consultation to the various stakeholders. **There is no clear word yet as to how many proposals the University of Alberta is submitting, or if there are any checks and balances to ensure these proposals are well crafted or have had sufficient consultation with students. The GSA Directly-Elected Officers are committed to working hard to ensure graduate students are properly consulted on these specific proposals and that we are representing the interests of graduate students to the best of our abilities.**

In addition to the Market Modifiers, **I am still working closely with government, university administrators and other student groups to help define and categories the various tuition and fees paid by students.** As well, we are also working on **best practices for consultation.**

As GSA President Nathan Andrews also mentions in his report to Council, alongside the issues involving the provincial government, the GSA is working hard towards finalizing the details of the **provincial lobby groups for graduate students**, otherwise known as ab-GPAC. A suggested motion to join ab-GPAC will be before Council on September 22. If that motion is successful, we hope to have everything finalized by the end of November.

Lastly, I am currently in the beginning stages of consultation regarding some **upcoming changes to U of A Residences**. This consultation is spread across three groups and covers some **changes to how monies are collected and allocated to the residence student groups, some of the major renovation projects in residences, and the next year rent increases.** All of these meeting are in the beginning stages so there will be more details coming later.

If you have any questions, concerns or comments please feel free to contact me.

Susan Cake , GSA Vice-President External

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between August 16, 2014 to September 19, 2014.

| | |
|--------------|---|
| August 18 | IAE Monthly Meeting |
| August 20 | IAE External Stakeholders Meeting |
| August 21 | Alumni Council Orientation |
| August 21 | Community Helpers Training |
| August 22 | Students' Union |
| August 25 | Tuition and Fees Guidelines Subcommittee |
| August 26 | Dinner with U of A Chancellor and President |
| August 27 | F&O Orientation |
| August 27 | O'Neil Outar Reception |
| August 28 | ab-GPAC Teleconference |
| August 28 | Professional Development Working Group |
| August 29 | GSA Fall Orientation |
| September 2 | President's Address at SU Orientation |
| September 3 | RBAC |
| September 6 | East Campus Village Block Party |
| September 9 | Edmonton Student Leaders |
| September 9 | Mechanical Engineering DLI |
| September 11 | RAC |
| September 13 | Post-Secondary Relations Breakfast |
| September 16 | RBAC |
| September 18 | ab-GPAC Teleconference |
| September 18 | Alumni Awards Night |
| September 19 | Alumni Association Cap 'n Gown Ceremony |
| September 19 | Dean of Business |

**GSA Vice-President Labour
Report to Council for September 22, 2014 GSA Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Monty Bal
Date: September 19, 2014

Dear Council Colleagues,

Below are some of the highlights of what I've been up to since we last met.

Permanent Residency Feasibility Study

GSA Vice-President Student Services Megha Bajaj and I met with Britta Baron, U of A Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President (International), and Doug Weir, Director of UAI. We discussed in detail the issues faced by students regarding permanent residency (PR) and post-graduate work. We were informed that UAI is considering moving forward with additional services for students (at cost). **Specifically, they are moving forward with a proposal which will allow students to access PR consultation services (at cost), allowing students to learn about the PR process and having their PR application reviewed by an immigration consultant.** This was an option students informed us would be most useful in our consultation with them. Megha reports more on this as well in her report to Council.

Connecting Industry and Universities (Professional Development Talk)

GSA President Nathan Andrews and I attended a talk given by Dr. Horst Hippler, President of the German Rectors' Conference. The lecture addressed some of the **innovative methods being deployed at German universities and other educational institutions to enhance the readiness of students for the employment market.** This includes for example **in-depth internships and industry sponsored professorships.** He specifically cited the desire for German industries of not only wanting the research, but the belief that the investment in these opportunities was in reality more about investing in future researchers. Finally, he highlighted the importance of recognizing the contributions of the arts and social sciences in forward thinking society and that engineers and scientists are not the only people necessary to construct a better society.

The Landing

I met with a representative from The Landing, a Students' Union funded safe space project. The Landing offers a number of **educational opportunities for sexual minorities on campus.** They are looking forward to **providing these services for graduate students and working with the GSA to provide offerings targeted directly to the graduate student population.**

City Councillors Meeting

As Vice-President Student Services Megha Bajaj includes in her report, the GSA Vice-Presidents met with **Edmonton City Councillors, along with representatives from other students' organizations across Edmonton.** I was in a group which sought to address the issues we felt were important to **international students.** We informed the Councillors and group of the difficulty graduate students have in regards to permanent residency and support services. **We asked that the City provide some of these services, as the City is keen on domesticating international students.** We also asked that the City provide **more services for international student families** to better integrate them into the community, for example through family oriented language lessons and classes. Over all I believed that the Councillors present, Andrew Knack and Bev Esslinger, were **very interested in student concerns and have asked to have a follow up meeting as the year moves forward** to address any progress that has been made and how the relationship between the City and educational

institutions can be made more productive.

Mental Health Taskforce

I met with representatives from Grant MacEwan, NAIT, and King's University College, as a mechanism to **discuss the mental health initiatives occurring on campuses around Edmonton**. There is **movement on most campuses to centralize the mental health services and better connect service providers around campus**. In addition to this, schools are offering crisis prevention pamphlets at targeted locations (bathrooms). NAIT has in place a 'wellness hour', where they provide yoga instruction and mats for 100 students. King's has a storytime day where the president dresses up and reads stories to students. Further programs are planned at MacEwan regarding financial literacy, budgeting, eating healthy etc. NAIT offers students classes on how to prepare healthy meals and learn how to cook.

Finally, as always, if there are any issues you have related to your RA/TAship, please contact us directly so we can work to help you out.

Thanks,

Simarjit S. Bal (Monty), GSA Vice-President Labour

Please find below a list of meetings I attended between August 16, 2014 to September 19, 2014.

| | |
|--------------|---|
| August 19 | Meeting with a Student |
| August 21 | PR Assistance with B Baron & D Weir |
| August 21 | Community Helpers Training |
| August 22 | Students' Union |
| August 26 | Dinner with U of A Chancellor & President |
| August 27 | Mental Wellness |
| August 27 | F&O Orientation |
| August 27 | O'Neil Outar Reception |
| August 28 | GFC CLRC |
| August 29 | Transitions CA Presentation |
| August 29 | GSA Fall Orientation |
| September 2 | Dean of Students BBQ |
| September 6 | East Campus Village Block Party |
| September 6 | U of A Ambassador Dinner |
| September 9 | The Landing |
| September 12 | World Cafe Planning Committee |
| September 13 | Post-Secondary Relations Breakfast |
| September 15 | VP University Relations Review Committee |
| September 17 | FGSR Council |
| September 19 | Dean of Business |

GSA Senator
Report to Council for September 22, 2014 GSA Council Meeting

To: GSA Council
From: Gary Barron
Date: September 19, 2014

Dear Council Colleagues,

I hope everyone has had a good first few weeks of the new school year, and is now settling into their new routines balancing independent research, course work, service, and other duties. I have spent this past month becoming oriented to the Senate, and since there have not yet been any meetings, I have little to report.

My work with the Task Force on Community Engagement is ongoing, and I am still in the process of scheduling times for focus groups. **At the recent Senate orientation I was able to connect with other new senators that are very interested in learning about what is happening with graduate students on campus, and I will likely be having meetings with several of them in the coming month to help them better understand current challenges and opportunities at the University of Alberta, and in the academic world more broadly.**

That is all I have to report for now, I look forward to attending the next GSA Council meeting and having the opportunity to meet introduce myself, and meet some of you face-to-face.

Best regards,

Gary Barron, GSA Senator

**GSA Elections and Referenda Committee and Chief Returning Officer
Report to Council for September 22, 2014 GSA Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Hamman Samuel, GSA CRO
Date: September 17, 2014

Dear Council Colleagues,

The GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (ERC) has continued looking into the points raised by the GSA President's Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy, in addition to other issues. We have had discussions on hiring the Chief Returning Officer (CRO) and developing a code of ethics. The GSA ERC has also started looking into whether to continue with preferential voting, and reviewing the elections software we have used in the past elections. We are also in the process of mapping out strategies to potentially increase voter turnout.

One of the suggestions put forward in the report by the GSA President's Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy was that the **CRO could be hired**. There were different models suggested on how this could be done, such as hiring on contract, or hired only during the election period. The GSA ERC has continued to discuss the different scenarios, and **the consensus is that before the topic about hiring versus election can be looked into, some critical sub-topics need to be clarified**. The GSA ERC has identified **three sub-topics: the CRO's roles and responsibilities, review of the appeals process, and well-defined penalties for elections violations**. The GSA ERC has noted that the role of the CRO is not clear-cut in GSA Bylaws and Policy. The GSA ERC has been working on developing a **job description for the role** that would make it clearer what exactly this position requires in terms of skills and competencies, as well as duties and responsibilities. In addition, the GSA ERC will be reviewing the elections appeals process to determine whether a hired CRO would have avoided previous elections incidents. **The GSA ERC is in agreement that a hired CRO might not solve the issue of conflict of interest or bias. The GSA ERC has also begun early discussions about having a transparent system of counter-balances and punitive measures.** The CRO's position is expected to rule on different election situations, but it is for the most part at the discretion of the CRO. While there are a set of rules for what candidates can or cannot do during campaigning and elections, the penalties for breaking these rules are decided by the CRO. **An overarching discussion touching the above issues has been whether the CRO should be a non-voting member of the GSA ERC.** While the CRO normally chairs GSA ERC meetings, allowing the CRO to vote on policy mixes up the judicial and legislative. Ideally, the CRO shouldn't be involved in making the rules and then enforcing the rules during elections. **The GSA ERC has agreed that this should be considered in the future. Meanwhile, I will be abstaining on all policy votes at the GSA ERC.**

The suggestion to develop a **code of ethics** was made to the GSA ERC, and we have been discussing at length about this proposal. The GSA ERC is in agreement that introducing a code of ethics rather than focusing on issues of enforcement of bylaws and policies would help to **professionalize elections**. However, the GSA ERC has also noted that **a code of ethics might not solve election issues and that ethics are subjective**. After all, a candidate may believe they are acting ethically and think that they are in the right. While the GSA ERC agrees that this is a very good suggestion, developing a full-fledged code of ethics would require resources and time, and the GSA ERC needs to prioritize and work within constraints. **Presently, the GSA ERC agreed on including a statement on fairness in the by-laws, this will be presented to Council as a future proposal.** The GSA ERC is fully in support of establishing a culture of promoting fairness and transparency among the candidates.

The GSA ERC has also discussed the **preferential voting method**. Having ranked/preferential voting does have its merits when there are many candidates to choose from. However, GSA elections have not been heavily

contested, with a fairly low candidate-to-position ratio, except for the Councillors-At-Large (CAL) positions which typically have many names put forward. **The single-selection format is just as well-suited for declaring winners, and it is unclear why preferential voting has been used for the past elections.** The GSA ERC will be considering alternative voting methods and looking into whether the elections software used can support any new recommendations. Another area under consideration will be voter preferences and feedback.

The GSA ERC has begun reviewing the elections software used in past elections with the objective of continuing with the same system or switching over to another system. The ERC has discussed one-off software glitches that were reported from the last general election, where the CAL names did not show up, and some votes had to be re-cast. Technical support for the software has been provided by a branch of the University. The current GSA elections software is proprietary code, and we are also exploring eClass Moodle and Google Forms as voting platforms. The GSA ERC has discussed at length about having the University continue to support the elections software and have also explored Whitematter, the company that runs the SU elections software.

I have emphasized previously that **one of my major goals for the upcoming 2015 election is to increase voter turnout.** This is a difficult issue, faced by all student associations. It is also true that when positions are contested turn out is generally higher. **Councillors have a big part to play, by advertising the elections in their departments ahead of time.** Apart from letting their departments know about the elections, creating more awareness about what the GSA is and how it affects the graduate student body is an important step. An elevated awareness about the GSA also helps people want to get involved and perhaps run for positions. Marketing the election in general is another important aspect of the election, to make sure graduate students are aware it is happening and for them to get out and vote. The SU elections have been very visible with posters everywhere, in contrast with the GSA elections, which are fairly low-profile. To this end, we are considering having voting booths around campus during the election period. The GSA ERC is very happy to receive ideas and feedback from Council about how to increase turn out.

Overall, it has been a busy and productive time for the GSA ERC, we have been doing the ground-work for answering critical questions and proposals by the GSA President's Task Force on GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy. The GSA ERC will be presenting to Council an Elections Bylaw and Policy and Referenda Bylaw and Policy review proposal in the near future. Feel free to contact me with any questions: gsa.elections@ualberta.ca.

Best regards,

Hamman Samuel, Chief Returning Officer and Chair of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee

**GSA Elections and Referenda Committee
Report to Council for September 22, 2014 GSA Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Hamman Samuel
Date: September 19, 2014

Dear Council Colleagues,

The ERC has continued to actively review the President's Task Force Report on Elections Bylaw and Policy Report which was presented at the July 14, 2014 meeting of GSA Council and work on reviewing GSA Elections Bylaw and Policy.

ERC met on August 28, 2014 and the main agenda items and topics of discussion and review included:

- My meeting with Craig Turner, a former SU CRO, to discuss the role of the CRO.
- Election appeals and the role of the Judicial Committee.
- Issues of campaigning in unsafe spaces (eg chemistry labs).
- Reviewing the first draft of a job description for the CRO and DRO and reviewing the job descriptions for the CRO and DRO positions at other student associations.
- Discussing the role of ERC and increasing their involvement in decision making.
- Creating a clear list of penalties, counter-balances and disciplinary measures for the CRO, DRO, and ERC to follow during an election.
- Creating a basis of ethics during an election.
- Pros and cons of maintaining slates.
- GSA Elections Software.

ERC also met on September 18, 2014 and the main agenda items and topics of discussion and review included:

- Long term agenda for Elections Bylaw and Policy Review.
- CRO and DRO job descriptions and role of the Elections and Referenda Committee.
- Preferential voting and election software and vendors.
- Judicial Committee Composition and Election Appeals policy changes.

Additionally, I held a planning meeting with the DRO, GSA management, and GSA staff on September 11, 2014 to prioritize the election bylaw and policy review.

Further information on these discussions can be found in the Chief Returning Officer's Report to GSA Council (pages 21.0 - 21.1), and I will be reporting on these discussions orally at the September 22, 2014 meeting of GSA Council.

Feel free to contact me with any questions before the September meeting of GSA Council:
gsa.elections@ualberta.ca.

Best regards,

Hamman Samuel, GSA Chief Returning Officer and Chair of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee

**GSA Executive Director
Report to Council for August 18, 2014 GSA Council Meeting**

To: GSA Council
From: Ellen Schoeck
Date: September 19, 2014

Dear Council,

With GSA President Nathan Andrews updating you on the progress of the GSA Board Strategic Work Plan this month, I thought it would be a good time to do a "1/3 of the way through term" review of the work that has been accomplished with support from the GSA management and staff.

The GSA brought in external consultants over the summer to review our governance, communications, and business operations. We feel the GSA is at a stage in its evolution as an organization where such a review will be beneficial as we move forward with new initiatives. We will be working over the coming months on implementing the recommendations that were generated (we have lots of follow-up to pursue).

Alongside the other members of the management team and the GSA staff team, I am very proud to have supported the President, Vice-President Academic, , Vice-President External, Vice-President Labour, and Vice-President Student Services (as they carry full academic loads) in their work over the first third of their terms with respect to:

- Negotiation of the **2014-2016 AEGS Collective Agreement** and the negotiation of **increased funding for the Graduate Student Support Fund**
- The **Departmental Liaison Initiative**
- The **GSA Health and Dental Plan**
- The **building of a new provincial graduate students advocacy group**, the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC)
- A **pro-rated replacement cost pilot project** for lost U-Pass stickers
- The **PAW Centre**
- Graduate **supervision**
- **Professional development** initiatives

It's hard to believe that we are only 1/3 of the way through the year, as so much has already been accomplished. The GSA management team and staff look forward to offering continued support in an administrative role to the Directly-Elected Officers throughout the remainder of their terms.

We're very proud to support and work with Nathan, Colin, Susan, Monty, and Megha.

As always, copies of the weekly Management Reports to the GSA Board are attached below. Feel free to contact me with any questions you might have.

Best,

Ellen Schoeck, GSA Executive Director

Management Report to the GSA Board, August 20, 2014

Dear All,

The following issues have dominated management's attention in the week since the last GSA Board meeting on August 13, 2014:

Strategic

- **Main Issues Dealt With in the Past Week:** Special Bulletin to graduate student regarding the conclusion of CA negotiations, planning for the Chili Social (drafting invitations, etc, and working with the Alumni Association), review of materials for fall orientation and departmental orientations, PAW Strategic Operating Committee (discussing the committee with the SU), NPP (site tour, ongoing discussions with the SU, B Louie, and the Alumni Association, and drafting a proposal related to the space), Health and Dental Reserve Fund (HDPFRF) four-year plan and attendant proposed revisions to GSA Bylaw on the Health and Dental Plan and HDPFRF, developing a GSA communications strategy (a subject matter expert has been hired), Health and Dental agreement renewal (current agreement expires August 31, 2015), and continued work with respect to moving forward with external consultants on reviews of governance, internal operations, HR systems, and training in fair process.
- **Bylaw and Policy Review** – R Coulthard's contract has been extended to focus on Bylaw and Policy review in August (**Editorial:** integrating bylaw and policy into one document (a draft has been prepared and is being reviewed), a review of all Bylaws and Policies for inconsistencies and errors, and creating a "definitions" section and **Substantive:** thinking regarding a review of the Board Policy Manual, and a targeted focus on some specific policies, is underway.
- **Graduate Student Groups:** renewing the MOU with the Dean of Student and Student Group Services, template constitution, alcohol liability waiver, ability for the GSA to assist groups experiencing governance issues, **the next stage of the Department Liaison Initiative (getting into departments – emails have been sent to 5 departmental GSAs requesting to arrange meetings) and connecting effectively with constituents.** Assisting groups experiencing registration difficulties with SGS (Megha, Courtney, and Megan met with SGS to discuss solutions moving forward). **Strategic thinking with respect to hiring a part-time staff members to liaise with departmental/student groups and ways to fund such a position.** Examining sources of funding for graduate student groups from across campus with an aim to providing a comprehensive list to graduate student groups. Thinking on ways to better acknowledge the contributions and activities of graduate student groups.

Grants and Operations

- **Social Media:** Facebook = 449 likes (up 16 from August 13), Twitter = 247 followers (up 5 from August 13) and a **review of the GSA website (suggested changes are being integrated into a shadow site for a focus group style review by DEOs, Speaker, and select Councillors).**
- **Grants review and processing:** (**NOTE:** THE CURRENT GRANTING PERIOD OPENED ON JULY 1 BUT, AS COLLECTIVE BARGAINING HAD NOT YET BEEN CONCLUDED, FUNDS WERE NOT REPLENISHED FOR PDAs, CCGs, and EBs (ASGAs ARE FUNDED FROM THE GSA'S OPERATING BUDGET). NOW THAT BARGAINING HAS CONCLUDED, A BUDGET FOR THE GSSF IS BEING DEVELOPED AND, CURRENTLY, APPLICATIONS ARE BEING ACCEPTED. UP-TO-DATE BALANCES WILL APPEAR IN WHAT FOLLOWS SHORTLY) **Professional Development Awards (no funds – period opened with \$0, had we received the same amount as last year the balance would have been approx. \$95,126 available for the period of which \$45,297 remains)** and 103 applications submitted this period (19 pending processing), **Childcare Grants – APPLICATIONS CLOSED (no funds – period opened with \$0, had we received the same amount as last year the balance would have been approx. \$39,741 available for the period, of which \$3,741 remains)** and 26 applications submitted this period (3 pending processing), **Academically-Related Student Group Awards closed (period opened with \$3,886, of which \$2,387 remains)** and 1 application submitted this period, **Emergency Bursaries (no funds – no periods but had we received the same amount as last year there would have been approx. \$109,820 available for the fiscal year)** and 10 applications totaling \$18,837 submitted since April 1, 2014, which were processed using funds carried over from 2013-2014 and the \$50,000 advance on the GSSF provided by the University on May 22, 2014.
- Acquiring a food safety certification from Alberta Health Services.

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- **Filling in for the EA position** (lots of scheduling as September draws near!). Compiling the **GSA Media Tracker** and assisting with **planning for fall orientation and departmental orientations.** Assisting with planning for the **Chili Social.**
- Building **wiki pages on key issues** (ie, MNIFs) and **grants processing.**
- **Research on elections bylaws and policies and CRO and DRO position descriptions** at GU15 institutions, **ERC support,** and Early Call for Talent planning.
- Developing a **list of GSA committee members on the GSA website,** and assisting the Nominating Committee with **filling vacancies on several committees** (FGSR Council, Sustainability Advisory Committee, GSA Awards Selection Committee, etc).

Management Report to the GSA Board, August 27, 2014

Dear All,

The following issues have dominated management's attention in the week since the last GSA Board meeting on August 20, 2014:

Strategic

- **Main Issues Dealt With in the Past Week:** Hiring a temporary EA, planning for the Chili Social, review of materials for fall orientation and departmental orientations, ongoing review of the Health and Dental Reserve Fund (HDPFRF) four-year plan and attendant proposed revisions to GSA Bylaw on the Health and Dental Plan and HDPFRF, developing a GSA communications strategy (ongoing review of the GSA website), Health and Dental agreement renewal (draft agreement review, etc), meeting with Writing Resources, research on MNIFs, forward planning for GSA Council, and GSA reports to Alumni Council and Senate.
- **Bylaw and Policy Review** – R Coulthard continues to focus on Bylaw and Policy review in August (**Editorial:** integrating bylaw and policy into one document (a draft has been prepared and is being reviewed), a review of all Bylaws and Policies for inconsistencies and errors, and creating a “definitions” section and **Substantive:** thinking regarding a review of the Board Policy Manual, and a targeted focus on some specific policies, is underway.
- **Graduate Student Groups:** Planning to ramp up work with respect to renewing the MOU with the Dean of Student and Student Group Services, template constitution, alcohol liability waiver, ability for the GSA to assist groups experiencing governance issues, **the next stage of the Department Liaison Initiative (getting into departments – 15 departments have been identified and contact has been made with the first round of 5) and connecting effectively with constituents. Strategic thinking with respect to hiring a part-time staff members to liaise with departmental/student groups and ways to fund such a position.** Examining sources of funding for graduate student groups from across campus with an aim to providing a comprehensive list to graduate student groups. Thinking on ways to better acknowledge the contributions and activities of graduate student groups.

Grants and Operations

- **Social Media:** Facebook = 454 likes (up 5 from August 20), Twitter = 251 followers (up 4 from August 20).
- **Grants review and processing:** (**NOTE:** THE CURRENT GRANTING PERIOD OPENED ON JULY 1 BUT, AS COLLECTIVE BARGAINING HAD NOT YET BEEN CONCLUDED, FUNDS WERE NOT REPLENISHED FOR PDAs, CCGs, and EBs (ASGAs ARE FUNDED FROM THE GSA'S OPERATING BUDGET). NOW THAT BARGAINING HAS CONCLUDED, A BUDGET FOR THE GSSF IS BEING DEVELOPED AND, CURRENTLY, APPLICATIONS ARE BEING ACCEPTED AND PROCESSED. UP-TO-DATE BALANCES WILL APPEAR IN WHAT FOLLOWS SHORTLY) **Professional Development Awards (no funds – period opened with \$0, had we received the same amount as last year the balance would have been approx. \$95,126 available for the period of which \$45,297 remains)** and 103 applications submitted this period (19 pending processing), **Childcare Grants – APPLICATIONS CLOSED (no funds – period opened with \$0, had we received the same amount as last year the balance would have been approx. \$39, 741 available for the period, of which \$3,741 remains)** and 26 applications submitted this period (3 pending processing), **Academically-Related Student Group Awards closed (period opened with \$3,886, of which \$2,387 remains)** and 1 application submitted this period, **Emergency Bursaries (no funds – no periods but had we received the same amount as last year there would have been approx. \$109,820 available for the fiscal year)** and 10 applications totaling \$18,837 submitted since April 1, 2014.

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- **Assisting with the training of a temporary EA.**
- **Assisting with planning for fall orientation and departmental orientations,** and planning for the **Chili Social.**
- **Grants processing.**
- **Research on elections bylaws and policies and CRO and DRO position descriptions** at GU15 institutions, **ERC support,** and **Early Call for Talent planning.**
- **Developing a list of GSA committee members on the GSA website,** and assisting the Nominating Committee with **filling vacancies on several committees** (FGSR Council, University Animal Policy and Welfare Committee, Faculty of Science Council, GSA Awards Selection Committee, etc).

Management Report to the GSA Board, September 3, 2014

Dear All,

The following issues have dominated management's attention in the week since the last GSA Board meeting on August 27, 2014:

Strategic

- **Main Issues Dealt With in the Past Week:** GSA Fall Orientation and departmental orientations, duty to accommodate with respect to scheduling, planning for the GSA Fall Mix and Mingle, training for the temporary EA, organizing project work, budget building, IT review/support, follow up from multiple meetings (Writing Resources, PAW, etc), ongoing review of the Health and Dental Reserve Fund (HDPFR) four-year plan and attendant proposed revisions to GSA Bylaw on the Health and Dental Plan and HDPFR, GSA communications strategy (ongoing review of the GSA website and development of a GSA poster), Health and Dental agreement renewal (draft agreement review, etc), grants processing (131 applications processed over 2 days), review of the 2015-2016 Academic Schedule, ERC (elections software), GSA-FGSR survey on supervision, strategic thinking on several fees paid by graduate students (CoSSS fee, Student Services fee, etc), GSSF budget
- **Bylaw and Policy Review** – R Coulthard continues to focus on Bylaw and Policy review in August (**Editorial:** integrating bylaw and policy into one document (a draft has been prepared and is being reviewed), a review of all Bylaws and Policies for inconsistencies and errors, and creating a “definitions” section and **Substantive:** thinking regarding a review of the Board Policy Manual, and a targeted focus on some specific policies, is underway.
- **Graduate Student Groups:** Planning to ramp up work with respect to renewing the MOU with the Dean of Student and Student Group Services, template constitution, alcohol liability waiver, ability for the GSA to assist groups experiencing governance issues, **the next stage of the Department Liaison Initiative (getting into departments – 15 departments have been identified and contact has been made with the first round of 5) and connecting effectively with constituents. Strategic thinking with respect to hiring a part-time staff member to liaise with departmental/student groups and ways to fund such a position.** Examining sources of funding for graduate student groups from across campus with an aim to providing a comprehensive list to graduate student groups. Thinking on ways to better acknowledge the contributions and activities of graduate student groups.

Grants and Operations

- **Social Media:** Facebook = 465 likes (up 11 from August 27), Twitter = 256 followers (up 5 from August 27).
- **Grants review and processing:** (**NOTE:** THE CURRENT GRANTING PERIOD OPENED ON JULY 1 BUT, AS COLLECTIVE BARGAINING HAD NOT YET BEEN CONCLUDED, FUNDS WERE NOT REPLENISHED FOR PDAs, CCGs, and EBs (ASGAs ARE FUNDED FROM THE GSA'S OPERATING BUDGET). NOW THAT BARGAINING HAS CONCLUDED, A BUDGET FOR THE GSSF IS BEING DEVELOPED AND, CURRENTLY, APPLICATIONS ARE BEING ACCEPTED AND PROCESSED. UP-TO-DATE BALANCES WILL APPEAR IN WHAT FOLLOWS SHORTLY) **Professional Development Awards (no funds – period opened with \$0, had we received the same amount as last year the balance would have been approx. \$95,126 available for the period of which \$45,297 remains)** and 103 applications submitted this period (19 pending processing), **Childcare Grants – APPLICATIONS CLOSED (no funds – period opened with \$0, had we received the same amount as last year the balance would have been approx. \$39,741 available for the period, of which \$3,741 remains)** and 26 applications submitted this period (3 pending processing), **Academically-Related Student Group Awards closed (period opened with \$3,886, of which \$2,387 remains)** and 1 application submitted this period, **Emergency Bursaries (no funds – no periods but had we received the same amount as last year there would have been approx. \$109,820 available for the fiscal year)** and 10 applications totaling \$18,837 submitted since April 1, 2014.

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- Assisting with the training of a temporary EA.
- Assisting with **Fall Orientation and departmental orientations**, and planning for the **Chili Social**.
- **Grants processing** and assisting with review of the GSA website.
- **ERC support**, and Early Call for Talent planning.
- Developing a **list of GSA committee members on the GSA website**, and assisting the Nominating Committee with **filling vacancies on several committees** (FGSR Council, FGSR Policy Review Committee, FGSR Academic Appeals Committee, SELF Selection Committee, University Animal Policy and Welfare Committee, Faculty of Science Council, GSA Awards Selection Committee, etc).

Management Report to the GSA Board, September 10, 2014

Dear All,

The following issues have dominated management's attention in the week since the last GSA Board meeting on September 10, 2014:

Strategic

- **Main Issues Dealt With in the Past Week:** GSA departmental orientations, HR, DLI meeting, the graduate student lounge in PAW (programming and bookings), chair of PAW Strategic Operating Committee, planning for the GSA Fall Mix and Mingle, training for the temporary EA, organizing project work, budget building, IT review/support, ongoing review of the Health and Dental Reserve Fund (HDPRF) four-year plan and attendant proposed revisions to GSA Bylaw on the Health and Dental Plan and HDPRF, GSA communications strategy (next stage of the review of the GSA website and development of a GSA poster), Health and Dental agreement renewal (draft agreement review, etc), grants processing, GSA-FGSR survey on supervision, proposed changes to GSA Board Policy, ramping up for the application period and adjudication of the Alberta Graduate Citizenship Award, strategic thinking with respect to training for new FGSR Council Caucus and GFC Caucus members, GSSF budget, final piece of review of the Canadian Anti-Spam Legislation, monitoring **graduate student enrolment levels (currently 5233 FT (compared to 5419 in 2013) and 1595 part-time (compared to 1513 in 2013) - it is likely that many of the part-time enrolments will convert to full-time but the overall numbers at this time are a bit lower than they were last year.**
- **Bylaw and Policy Review** – Bylaw and Policy review (**Editorial:** integrating bylaw and policy into one document (a draft has been prepared and is being reviewed), a review of all Bylaws and Policies for inconsistencies and errors, and creating a “definitions” section and **Substantive:** thinking regarding a review of the Board Policy Manual, and a targeted focus on some specific policies, is underway.
- **Graduate Student Groups:** Planning to ramp up work with respect to renewing the MOU with the Dean of Student and Student Group Services, template constitution, alcohol liability waiver, ability for the GSA to assist groups experiencing governance issues, **the next stage of the Department Liaison Initiative (getting into departments – 15 departments have been identified and contact has been made with the first round of 5, meetings will be scheduled) and connecting effectively with constituents. Strategic thinking with respect to hiring a part-time staff member to liaise with departmental/student groups and ways to fund such a position.** Examining sources of funding for graduate student groups from across campus with an aim to providing a comprehensive list to graduate student groups. Thinking on ways to better acknowledge the contributions and activities of graduate student groups.

Grants and Operations

- **Social Media:** Facebook = 476 likes (up 11 from September 3), Twitter = 263 followers (up 7 from September 3).
- **Grants review and processing: Professional Development Awards (based on recently concluded bargaining process \$106,401 is available for each period (but \$102,861 was available for this period due to over-expenditure in period one), of which \$35,416 remains) and 140 applications submitted this period (34 pending processing), Childcare Grants (based on recently concluded bargaining process \$44,210 is available for each period, of which \$6,422 remains) and 26 applications submitted this period (1 pending processing), Academically-Related Student Group Awards closed (period opened with \$3,886, of which \$2,387 remains) and 1 application submitted this period, Emergency Bursaries (no periods and, based on recently concluded bargaining process, \$153,068 is available for the fiscal year, of which \$132,231 remains) and 11 applications submitted since April 1, 2014.**

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- Assisting with the lead up to the opening of applications (and subsequent adjudication) for the **Alberta Graduate Citizenship Award.**
- Debrief on **Fall Orientation and departmental orientations** (and associated changes to next year's roll out), and planning for the **Fall Mix and Mingle.**
- **Grants processing** and assisting with review of the GSA website.
- **ERC support** and related research.
- Developing a **list of GSA committee members on the GSA website**, and assisting the Nominating Committee with **filling vacancies on several committees** (FGSR Council, FGSR Policy Review Committee, FGSR Academic Appeals Committee, University Animal Policy and Welfare Committee, Faculty of Science Council, GSA Awards Selection Committee, GSA Elections and Referenda Committee, etc).

Management Report to the GSA Board, September 17, 2014

Dear All,

The following issues have dominated management's attention in the week since the last GSA Board meeting on September 10, 2014:

Strategic

- **Main Issues Dealt With in the Past Week:** HR, Council preparations (our first meeting in our new space), market modifiers, the graduate student lounge in PAW (programming and bookings), ab-GPAC, planning for the GSA Fall Mix and Mingle, budget building, IT review/support, ongoing review of the Health and Dental Reserve Fund (HDPRF) four-year plan and attendant proposed revisions to GSA Bylaw on the Health and Dental Plan and HDPRF, GSA communications strategy (next stage of the review of the GSA website and development of a GSA poster), Health and Dental agreement renewal (review of draft agreement and appendices, etc), grants processing, ramping up for the application period and adjudication of the Alberta Graduate Citizenship Award, advocacy travel budget.
- **Bylaw and Policy Review** – Bylaw and Policy review (**Editorial:** integrating bylaw and policy into one document (a draft has been prepared and is being reviewed), a review of all Bylaws and Policies for inconsistencies and errors, and creating a “definitions” section and **Substantive:** thinking regarding a review of the Board Policy Manual, and a targeted focus on some specific policies, is underway.
- **Graduate Student Groups:** Planning to ramp up work with respect to renewing the MOU with the Dean of Student and Student Group Services, template constitution, alcohol liability waiver, ability for the GSA to assist groups experiencing governance issues, **the next stage of the Department Liaison Initiative and connecting effectively with constituents. Strategic thinking with respect to hiring a staff member to liaise with departmental/student groups.** Thinking on ways to better acknowledge the contributions and activities of graduate student groups.

Grants and Operations

- **Social Media:** Facebook = 487 likes (up 11 from September 10), Twitter = 271 followers (up 8 from September 10).
- **Grants review and processing:** **Professional Development Awards (based on recently concluded bargaining process \$106,401 is available for each period (but \$102,861 was available for this period due to over-expenditure in period one), of which \$23,515 remains)** and 163 applications submitted this period (30 pending processing), **Childcare Grants (based on recently concluded bargaining process \$44,210 is available for each period, of which \$6,422 remains)** and 26 applications submitted this period (1 pending processing), **Academically-Related Student Group Awards closed (period opened with \$3,886, of which \$2,387 remains)** and 1 application submitted this period, **Emergency Bursaries (no periods and, based on recently concluded bargaining process, \$153,068 is available for the fiscal year, of which \$130,231 remains)** and 12 applications submitted since April 1, 2014.

Week in Review – Office Operations:

- Assisting with the lead up to the opening of applications (and subsequent adjudication) for the **Alberta Graduate Citizenship Award**.
- Planning for the **Fall Mix and Mingle** and early assistance with respect to planning for GSA Awards Night 2015.
- **Council preparations.**
- **Grants processing** and assisting with review of the GSA website.
- **ERC support** and related research.
- Developing a **list of GSA committee members on the GSA website**, and assisting the Nominating Committee with **filling vacancies on several committees** (GSA ERC, FGSR Academic Appeals, Science Faculty Council, Dean of Arts Review Committee, etc).