

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

IN ATTENDANCE:

Sarah Ficko (President)	Dasha Smirnow (Councillor-at-Large)	Amanda Radil (Ed Psych)	Kelsey Peterson (Occupational Therapy)
Firouz Khodayari (VP Academic)	Sabrina Lopresti (AFNS)	David Li (Electrical & Computer Engineering)	Daniel Kryz; Radim Barta (Oncology)
Sasha van der Klein (VP Labour)	Amy Reedman (Anthropology)	Lorna Sutherland (Elementary Education)	Ashley Bahry (Paediatrics)
Masoud Khademi (VP External)	Michael Woolley (Art & Design)	Kevin Kvas (English & Film Studies)	Hanin Aburasayn (Pharmacy & Pharmaceutical Sciences)
Ali Taleai (VP Student Services)	Francesca Jean (Biological Sciences)	Neil Prather (History & Classics)	Jay Worthy (Philosophy)
Sulya Fenichel (Speaker)	Graham Little (Biomedical Engineering)	Mohammed Abdul-Bari (Human Ecology)	Stephen Hunter (Phys Ed & Rec)
Preshit Verma (Deputy Speaker)	Trent Nabe (Business MBA)	Jocelyn Beyer; Evgeniya Kuznetzova (Humanities Computing)	Andrzej Pokraka (Physics)
Darcy Bemister (DRO)	Katie Lafreniere (Business PhD)	Shivam Srivastava (Internetworking)	Brayden Whitlock (Physiology)
Jane Traynor (Senator)	Karl Roesner (Cell Biology)	Faisal Hirji (Lab Medicine & Pathology)	Leigh Spanner (Political Science)
Michelle Campbell (Councillor-at-Large)	Umme Aulia Munira (Chemical & Materials Engineering)	Carla Lewis (Library & Info Studies)	Joshua Yong; Joanna Scanlon (Psychology)
Alicia Capello (Councillor-at-Large)	Anis Fahandej-Sadi (Chemistry)	Fae Karey-McKenna (Linguistics)	Colin Reynolds (Public Health)
Colin More (Councillor-at-Large)	Natalie Mahé (Communication Sciences & Disorders)	Michelle Michelle (Math & Statistical Sciences)	Bethany Hartman (Rehab Med)
Alphonse Ndem Ahola (Councillor-at-Large)	Roshan Shariff (Computing Science)	Masoud Aliramezani (Mech Eng)	Liam Lin (Resource Economics & Environmental Sociology)
Nicole Noel (Councillor-at-Large)	Dorian Lang (Drama)	Connie Le (Medical Microbiology & Immunology)	Christopher Charles; Remonia Stoddart-Morrison (Secondary Education)
Phil Oel (Councillor-at-Large)	Brette Harris (Earth & Atmo Sciences)	Jay Friesen (MLCS)	Antonio Bruni (Surgery)
Ned Onwugbufor (Councillor-at-Large)	Melody Li (East Asian Studies)	David Parent (Native Studies)	
Robert Reklow (Councillor-at-Large)	Benjamin Denga (Ed Policy Studies)	Upinder Singh (Nursing)	

Speaker Sulya Fenichel in the Chair.

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

Roll Call

1. Roll Call of Council Members in Attendance

At Speaker's request, to maintain meeting timeline, attendances were noted by GSA Council Secretary prior to the beginning of the meeting.

Approval of Agenda

2. Approval of the 21 November 2016 Consolidated Agenda

Members had before them the 21 November 2016 Consolidated Agenda, which had been previously distributed on 18 November 2016. S Ficko **MOVED**; N Prather **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

3. Minutes from the 24 October 2016 GSA Council meeting

Members had before them the 24 October 2016 GSA Council Minutes, which had been previously distributed on 11 November 2016. S van der Klein **MOVED**; A Reedman **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED**. B Whitlock **ABSTAINED**.

Changes in Council Membership

4. Changes in GSA Council Membership

i. Introduction of New Councillors

This was the first meeting for a number of Councillors: U Munira (Chemical & Materials Engineering); N Mahé (Communication Science & Disorders); R Studdart-Morrison and C Charles (Educational Policy Studies); D Li (Electrical & Computer Engineering); B Hartman (Rehabilitation Medicine).

ii. Farewell to Departing Councillors

Councillor Announcements

5. Councillor Announcements

T Nabe introduced Hannah Madsen (former CAL) from his department (Business), who announced an upcoming competition put on by the MBA Women's Network. She noted that they are soliciting applications from all graduate students across all programs for innovative ideas (not related to their thesis work) that could be turned into an entrepreneurial pitch with assistance from members of the MBA program and which would then be entered into a competition. She added that selected applicants would be paired with a graduate student in the MBA program and then invited to deliver a pitch to a panel of judges, including local investors and representatives from entrepreneurial tech incubators. She asked interested graduate students to contact her at hmadsen@ualberta.ca.

C Reynolds reminded GSA Council that the School of Public Health Students' Association was co-hosting a coffee break with the GSA on Thursday, November 24, at lunch time in 1-182 ECHA.

S Ficko thanked J Traynor and R Barta for picking up dishes from the SU's Reusable Dish Program for dinner tonight.

D Lang announced that the final project of the MFA Directing Candidate, Ashley Wright, is Shakespeare's Twelfth Night; showing at the Timms Centre from November 24 to December 3.

A Talaei reminded GSA Council that the GSA Child Care Grant would be re-opening on November 25, at 8:00 am.

N Prather announced the annual History and Classics Book Sale from Wednesday, November 23 to Friday, November 25, in the Humanities Fish Bowl. He noted that there would be a raffle for a Game Cube. He mentioned that they also have some historical items (swords) that interested parties could pose with.

N Prather also announced that History & Classics are celebrating Canada's 150th in January with undergraduate presentations in the Old Arts Building on January 18, 2017 from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM.

M Campbell announced the 2nd Research on Tap, a Nerd Nite Style event, at which some graduate student would present their research, on December 2, at 5:30 pm at the Faculty Club.

Action Items, Elections, Appointments, Special Business, Updates

6. GSA 2016-2017 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report

MOTION BEFORE COUNCIL: That the GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the GSA 2016-2017 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report.

S Ficko explained to GSA Council that this report was an overview of GSA financial situation for the past 3 months. She added that the 2017-2018 budget would come to GSA Council in February. She noted that the GSA financial situation was currently on target. She also noted that the GSA Board Finance Committee had reviewed the report.

C Thomas added that the major points to note are outlined in the cover letter and she thanked S Ball (GSA Accountant) and D Sheikh (GSA Financial Manager) for their work on the report and budget.

C More noted that in the Operating Narrative, the NASA staff's salaries and benefits accounted for \$225,000 and that the Management's salaries and benefits accounted over \$400,000 and asked why there was so much money allocated to Management's salaries and benefits. C Thomas responded that the Management line included some consultants' salaries and benefits such as the former Executive Director and included the salaries of the GSA Accountant and GSA Financial Manager. C More asked whether that line could be explained further to include some more details since the line covered more than strictly the Management salaries and benefits. S Ball noted that this was a feasible. S Ficko noted that his suggestion would be reviewed by GSA Board Finance Committee.

MOTION: That the GSA Council **RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION** the GSA 2016-2017 Budget and Expenditure (Quarterly) Report. S Ficko **MOVED**. T Nabe **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

7. Proposed Changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy on Elections and Referenda

Leigh Spanner (Chair of GSA Elections and Referenda Committee) will present the item.

MOTION BEFORE COUNCIL: That the GSA Council, on the recommendation of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee, **APPROVE** the proposed changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy on Elections and Referenda, as shown in the attached double column documents and effective upon the second reading by GSA Council in the case of GSA Bylaw and the approval of GSA Council in the case of GSA Policy.

L Spanner, Chair of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee, noted that, among other changes, the proposal included recommended changes to enable Directly-Elected Officers (DEOs) not running in a GSA general election to endorse candidates (although not in their official capacity) and to distinguish between campaigning conducted using University physical or electronic resources and campaigning conducted using non-University physical or electronic resources.

A Fahandej-Sadi asked with regards to the translation of campaign materials whether candidates were responsible for the translation. L Spanner replied that effectively the candidates were responsible for providing the translation as it would be unreasonable to presume or expect that the Chief Returning Officer (CRO) have knowledge of many languages.

D Smirnow noted that there was a statement about the necessary neutrality of the CRO, Deputy Returning Officer (DRO), speaker, Deputy Speaker, members of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee (GSA ERC), and members of the GSA Nominating Committee (GSA NoC), she enquired whether the GSA staff should be added to this list. L Spanner noted that the GSA office staff was under obligation to stay neutral in the GSA General Elections due to duties inherent the their jobs.

D Smirnow asked if the consultation with the GSA ERC (required in multiple sections) necessitated a certain number of consulted members for the requirement to be filled. L Spanner noted that it presumes that the GSA ERC quorum is reached.

C More asked about the necessity of registering a 'Yes' or 'No' campaign in a referendum as there was no real mechanism to stop a campaign that did not comply with the rules. L Spanner replied that this is part of the existing policies and she noted that it was not a bad idea to have a certain oversight of campaigns to ensure that no misinformation is communicated to students. C More reiterated the fact that there was no mechanism to enforce the compliance with the rules noting that in the GSA General Elections a candidate that did not comply with GSA Bylaw and Policy could be disqualified but for the referendum there was no punishment that could stop a student, or a group of students, from voicing their opinion. S Ficko noted that the GSA Board raised similar questions and she added that that GSA could disassociate itself with a campaign that was not registered and make it clear that this campaign was not following the GSA processes.

C More asked if the requirement for candidates to submit a written, informal plan for campaign expenditures belonged in GSA Policy. L Spanner acknowledged that it may seem paternalistic and that is something that the GSA ERC took into consideration. She emphasized that the turn around for appeals is short and the submission of an informal plan would allow the CRO to have some foresight, provide feedback, and possibly avoid breaches.

D Smirnow asked what happened if a moderated mailing list was administered by both the student groups and University employees. L Spanner answered that if the list was moderated by a GSA student group it should be fine but that was a question that the CRO would have to answer on a case-by-case basis. She also explained that the goal of this rule (candidates could only circulate campaign material on students group mailing list) was to avoid that University employees being pestered by candidates' requests and having to decide if they would, or would not, circulate their campaign materials. S Fenichel noted that a moderated mailing list by University employees were ones that the University employees could stop (or not) the circulation of a certain email.

D Smirnow asked why Campaign Representatives needed to collect the signature of five graduate students on the referenda registration form. L Spanner replied that it was to be consistent with the general election DEOs nomination form.

C More asked how the candidates were expected to be responsible for their volunteers. L Spanner noted that it was important for candidates to meet with their volunteers and to have a conversation about the rules outlined in GSA Bylaw and Policy.

C More asked about current DEOs running and the use of their GSA calendars for booking campaign events. L Spanner noted that it was ok for the DEOs to personally enter activities in their calendar but they couldn't ask the staff to schedule their campaign activities for them.

D Smirnow asked if the change to the design of the ballots from random order to reverse alphabetical order was due to a technical barrier. L Spanner replied that, yes, it was, and that now it would be consistent with the design of ballots in other GSA elections.

C More asked if the GSA ERC could discuss in the future the requirement of registering a 'Yes' or 'No' campaign. L Spanner noted that she would bring his concerns to the GSA ERC.

MOTION: That the GSA Council, on the recommendation of the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee, **APPROVE** the proposed changes to GSA Bylaw and Policy on Elections and Referenda, as shown in the attached double column documents and effective upon the second reading by GSA Council in the case of GSA Bylaw and the approval of GSA Council in the case of GSA Policy. L Spanner **MOVED**. A Talaei **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED**. J Worthy **ABSTAINED**.

8. Proposed Changes to GSA Policy on the Composition of the GSA Nominating Committee

Sarah Ficko (GSA President) will present the item.

MOTION BEFORE COUNCIL: That the GSA Council, on the recommendation of the GSA Governance Committee, **APPROVE** the proposed changes to GSA Policy on the composition of the GSA Nominating Committee, as shown in the attached double column documents and effective immediately.

S Ficko noted that the GSA was less stable five or six years ago and that, at that time, when a graduate student was needed to serve on a committee the President Roy Coulthard and the Executive Director Ellen Schoeck would place students as quickly as they could. She also noted that the GSA Nominating Committee was now well established to fill this need and that the composition of the committee included the GSA President and Executive Director as voting members. She added that the involvement of the GSA President and the Executive Director changed over time to non-voting members and that this proposal would formalize the processes that are currently used.

S Ficko highlighted that this proposal would add two members of the GSA as voting members and change the GSA President and Executive Director to non-voting members and that the Administrative Chair will become the Chair, rather than the President who is Chair only in name. She added that this proposal was reviewed by the GSA NoC and discussed extensively by the GSA Governance Committee and GSA Board.

MOTION: That the GSA Council, on the recommendation of the GSA Governance Committee, **APPROVE** the proposed changes to GSA Policy on the composition of the GSA Nominating Committee, as shown in the attached double column documents and effective immediately. S Ficko **MOVED**. T Nabe **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

Elections

9. GSA Council Elections

Radim Barta (Administrative Chair of the GSA Nominating Committee) will present the item.

a. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee

R Barta noted that there were two vacancies on the GSA ERC and that the GSA NoC received, after the call for additional nominations, one nomination.

MOTION BEFORE COUNCIL: That GSA Council **DECLARE ELECTED** to the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee the graduate student below:

Nominees for GSA Elections and Referenda Committee:
Runzhi Xu (Chemical and Materials Engineering)

MOTION: That GSA Council **DECLARE ELECTED** to the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee the graduate students below. R Barta **MOVED**. S Ficko **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

b. GSA Awards Selection Committee

R Barta noted that there were five vacancies on the GSA ASC and that the GSA NoC received, after the call for additional nominations, four nominations.

MOTION BEFORE COUNCIL: That GSA Council **DECLARE ELECTED** to the GSA Elections and Referenda Committee the graduate student below:

Nominees for GSA Awards Selection Committee:
Honey Bhatia (Civil Engineering)
Alix Clarke (Dental Hygiene)
Bahador Rashidi (Electrical and Computer Engineering)
Mostafa Tawfeek (Civil Engineering)

MOTION: That GSA Council **DECLARE ELECTED** to the GSA Awards Selection Committee the graduate students below. R Barta **MOVED**. L Spanner **SECONDED**.

Motion **PASSED** unanimously.

c. GSA Appeals and Complaints Board

i. Nominees for GSA Appeals and Complaints Board:

Radim Barta (Oncology)
Antonio Bruni (Surgery)
Justin Leifso (Political Science)
Sarah Prendergast (MBA)
Hajar Amidian (Political Science)
Sarang Gumfekar (Chemical and Materials Engineering)
Liam Heffernan (Renewable Resources)

ii. Nominees for GSA Appeals and Complaints Board Chair and Vice-Chair:

Antonio Bruni (Surgery) – Chair
Justin Leifso (Political Science) – Vice-Chair

R Barta noted that the mandate of the GSA Appeals and Complaints Board (GSA ACB) is to adjudicate possible complaints of the DEOs and possible appeals of CRO decisions. He also noted that last time vacancies on the GSA ACB came forward it was a new committee and the ballot did not indicate if the candidates would be serving for a one-year term or a two-year terms, so it was assumed that it was for a one year term. R Barta noted that all members of the GSA ACB were contacted by the GSA NoC and asked whether they were interested in seeking an additional term. R Barta added that five members indicated an interest and were currently listed on the ballot in front of you. He also noted that following this the GSA NoC advertised for five vacant positions on the GSA ACB. Following the initial call, the GSA NoC interviewed the two nominees whose names are now before GSA Council.

R Barta explained that the interviews were conducted by himself, as Administrative Chair of the GSA NoC, and the recent former Administrative Chair of the NoC, Michele DuVal. He pointed out that Michele DuVal and he had both received training on procedural fairness from the GSA and were expected to demonstrate impartiality through their work on the GSA NoC. He further explained that, during the interview, nominees were asked a series of questions aimed at assessing their awareness of the basic tenets of procedural fairness and their ability to adjudicate potential cases in accord with those tenets. He added that following these interviews and ensuing discussion, the GSA NoC agreed to forward both nominees to GSA Council with the call for additional nominations and that the GSA NoC received no additional nominations

R Barta added that, given this, there were seven nominees for twelve positions. Hence, all positions were uncontested. He indicated that for each nominee the ballot listed whether they were standing for election or re-election, the desired length of the upcoming term, and that GSA Council member could check "Yes" or "No" box for each nominee.

R Barta noted that following this ballot. GSA Council could be presented with another ballot to elect the GSA ACB Chair and Vice-Chair. He added that this ballot would also indicate whether a candidate is running for an additional term. He specified that the results of this second vote would rely on the results of the GSA ACB membership vote; that is, if either the nominee for Chair or Vice-Chair was not voted to serve as a member of the GSA ACB, they would not be eligible to serve as Chair or Vice-Chair. He explained that as such the ballots for GSA ACB membership would be counted first and, in the event that the nominee for Chair and/or Vice-Chair were not elected to serve on the GSA ACB, their names would be automatically struck from the ballot for the positions of Chair and/or Vice-Chair. He mentioned that the GSA NoC would then seek new nominees from amongst the elected GSA ACB members to recommend to GSA Council for election as Chair and Vice-Chair. He explained that GSA Council members were invited to vote for the GSA ACB membership and the GSA Chair and Vice-Chair at the same meeting to allow for training sessions in January in advance of the GSA General Elections in February.

C More asked whether taking into account that the GSA ACB was the check for everything it could be a conflict of interest in having the Administrative Chair of the GSA NoC serving on the GSA ACB. R Barta specified that the GSA ACB was an accountability mechanism for the DEOs and so that appeals of the CRO decisions could be heard, and not GSA Standing Committees. He also noted that as per GSA Policy, the members of the GSA NoC were required to be impartial so there was a clear overlap in the requirements.

To a question from T Nabe about why we were not hearing the usual one question presentations from candidates, R Barta replied that, in accordance with GSA NoC procedures, the candidates were not addressing GSA Council as not all of them could attend the meeting.

D Smirnow noted that last year the Chair and Vice-Chair for these positions were recommended by the GSA ACB and she enquired as to why that recommendation was not there. R Barta explained that they were and that there was some continuation from the past year and there would be some additional training.

For Discussion

None at this time

S Fenichel noted that there would be a special meeting of GSA Council on December 12 at which the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and the Vice-President (Finance and Administration) will discuss graduate tuition fees for 2017-2018. She also noted that guests were welcome. She added that she might seek a motion from the floor to give guests speaking privileges. She reminded GSA Councillors that GSA Council was a collegial environment and that listening to colleagues was important so that the conversation could move along. She noted that the information on the proposal for international graduate tuition fees was still coming in. Any questions about the proposal should be directed to the University of Alberta Administration. S Fenichel noted that the exact procedures for speaking rights would be set at the meeting depending on how long the presenters would be available and the number of guests. A Radil asked what was the timeline of that meeting. S Fenichel replied that the Provost

and Vice-President (Academic) and the Vice-President (Finance and Administration) would do a short presentation and then there would be time for questions.

Following a question by T Nabe to this effect it was noted that the December meeting of GSA Council was cancelled.

Reports

10. President

i. President's Report:

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 November 2016. The report stood as submitted. In addition S Ficko stated, as many students were aware, there was a survey being run by the Alberta Graduate Provincial Advocacy Council (ab-GPAC) sent out today and in the GSA Newsletter on Friday about tuition in the province. S Ficko asked Council to fill out the survey and shared it with their peers. She noted that they had received about 500 responses thus far.

On the subject of the special meeting of GSA Council, S Ficko noted that the information regarding the proposal for international graduate student tuition increases was changing very rapidly and that even at the Board Finance and Property Committee (BFPC) meeting she had attended earlier that day, some changes were made. She also noted that the President's report and the VP Academic's report were largely about the international student tuition changes and she invited GSA Council to read them carefully. She specified that domestic tuition was frozen and that there was a calculation developed for Mandatory Non-Instructional Fees to show the actual costs for the University above the Alberta Consumer Price Index and that the University was considering applying the same calculation to international tuition for 2017-2018 called the Academic Price Index (API). She mentioned that this would mean a 3.02% increase to International Students tuition.

S Ficko noted that the University would also apply a \$4000 increase to international graduate student tuition but would then issue a rebate in the same amount. She also noted that the University stated that the rationale for this was because some international applications made an equation between high tuition costs and the quality of education offered. S Ficko added that she did not agree with this and felt that the University had not provided sufficient evidence in support of this. She indicated that the University also had not done much student consultation. She explained that the GSA first heard about this proposal on October 28, it was then changed and a new version presented on November 7, then it changed again when it was presented to the General Faculties Council Academic Planning Committee (GFC APC), and, finally, it was again modified earlier that day. She noted that the process felt rushed.

S Ficko reminded GSA Council that the Provost and Vice-President (Academic) and the Vice-President (Finance and Administration) would speak at FGSR Council on Wednesday, November 23, at 2:00 pm in Council Chambers. She noted that public could attend as observers. S Ficko added that she was happy to answer questions but noted that it might be easier if questions were emailed.

T Nabe asked if there was any opportunity to collaborate with the Students' Union (SU) to combine forces. S Ficko responded that the SU also had been vocal about their displeasure and would also like to at least see current students grandfathered in. She added that there would likely be articles in the Gateway and the Journal soon.

L Sutherland asked if the tuition increase was coming from the government. S Ficko explained that international tuition fees were not regulated by the government under the Post-Secondary Learning Act, as domestic tuition fees were. She noted that this was something the GSA would like to see changed. She explained further that these increases were internal to the University and that domestic tuition remained frozen.

S Fenichel urged Councillors to take this information back to their constituents and prepare for the December 12 meeting.

ii. GSA Board

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

iii. Budget and Finance Committee

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

iv. GSA Governance Committee

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

11. GSA Nominating Committee

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 November 2016. The report stood as submitted. In addition R Barta stated the Early Call Talent and Training program was ongoing and that there were vacancies on the the GSA ACB, GSA ERC, and GSA ASC, these vacancies would be advertised in January.

12. Vice-President Academic

i. Vice-President Academic's Report:

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 November 2016. The report stood as submitted. In addition F Khodayari stated that, regarding the leave policy, FGSR Council had an extensive discussion last month with many remarks with respect to the medical leave policy. He added that FGSR would consider all the feedback received and reviewed the medical leave policy in details however FGSR Council at their next meeting would be asked to consider separately the Professional Development leave so it could be used by students.

F Khoadayari noted, in reference to the proposed increase to international graduate tuition, that the University is making the argument that international students, in deciding which school they will attend, equate costs with quality. He added that the GSA Board did some research to refute that argument. A Talaei added that in their research they didn't see a link between high cost of tuition and the perception of quality, they found however that other factors such as reputation mattered.

M Khademi noted that the proposal has, so far, been approved by the GFC APC and the BFPC and that in order to be implemented for the 2017-2018 academic year, the proposal must be approved by the University's Board of Governors at its December 16, 2016 meeting. He noted that students should convey their concern with the proposal to the University. He spoke of the need for more thorough consultation.

T Nabe noted his frustration regarding the lack of consultation and that increasing international tuition was an easy way for the University to keep its budget balanced. S Ficko noted that the government of Alberta had not confirmed it would backfill this cost like they did in the past and the University was doubtful they would. She added that there was a lack of \$4 M. She also indicated that it was an interesting time to start using the API because if the government chooses to not regulate international tuition, the University would most likely continue using the API in the future. N Prather noted that he was against the increase and that he didn't like the idea of dividing international and domestic graduate students. He suggested comparing statistics on tuition fees and ranking.

C Reynolds suggested that GSA Council participate in a straw poll as to whether higher price is associated with prestige. S Prescott noted that this was not a good statistical method. R Barta encouraged members to fill out the survey that would be shared with students by the GSA. S Ficko noted that the GSA would submit a written report which would include a summary of the survey responses. She also added that she would do a presentation at the December meeting of the Board of Governors.

D Smirnow asked why the timeline in this issue was so tight. S Ficko replied that the University's plan could not be formalized until the government announced their plans for domestic tuition in 2017-2018 which happened later in the year than is usual. She added that there is a pressure on the University to set tuition fees for 2017-2018 so that recruiters could circulate the correct information. She added that when the University met with both student associations it was more of an information session than a consultation session. She added that she had raised this issue when the proposal was considered by BFPC and that the Board of Governors Chair had asked University Administration to report further on consultation with students.

C Reynolds asked if the \$4000 would be used to inflate the 3.02%. S Ficko specified that it wouldn't as it was made clear that it would be a net zero cost to students.

C Charles asked what was the strategy moving forward. S Ficko replied that the GSA would be circulating a survey on Friday and she encouraged GSA Council members to fill it.

13. Vice-President External

i. Vice-President External's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 November 2016. The report stood as submitted. In addition M Khademi stated: the GSA ASC finalized the list of nominees was sent to the Alberta government. He added that the GSA notified the applicants, via email, whether their applications had been selected.

ii. GSA Awards Selection Committee's Report

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

14. Vice-President Labour

i. Vice-President Labour's Report

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

ii. GSA Negotiating Committee

No meetings this reporting period.

iii. GSA Labour Relations Committee

No meetings this reporting period.

15. Vice-President Student Services

i. Vice-President Student Services' Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 November 2016. The report stood as submitted. In addition A Talaei stated that the GSA is working with the Michener Park Residence Association to advocate for a better transit to the University, some progress have been made and the University Administration and a city Councillor have been involved in the discussion.

ii. GSA Student Affairs Advisory Committee

No meetings this reporting period.

16. Senator

i. Senator's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 November 2016. The report stood as submitted. In addition J Traynor noted that on December 1 and December 2 the Senate would have a discussion on racism. She invited Councillor to email her at gsa.senator@ualberta.ca. if they had any input they would like brought up.

17. Speaker

i. Speaker's Report

No written report at this time.

18. Chief Returning Officer

i. Chief Returning Officer's Report

No written report at this time.

19. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee

i. GSA Elections and Referenda Committee Report

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

20. GSA Management

i. Executive Director's Report

Members had before them a written report, which had been previously distributed on 18 November 2016. The report stood as submitted. In addition C Thomas stated that the Early Call Talent and Training Program was going well, they prepared students for the GSA General Election for DEOs positions plus 10 CAL positions.

Question Period

21. Written Questions

None at this time.

22. Oral Questions

A Radil reminded GSA Council of Helping Individuals at Risk (HlaR), a campus resource for communication and engagement when having concerns about a colleague or a student. She noted that this organization checked in with individuals brought to their attention. T Nabe added that he had worked with HlaR and the organization consolidated all the information from all available campus sources and acted as the main gatekeeper for students at risk on campus. T Nabe invited GSA Council to share this resource with their department. S Ficko also added that the new Dean of Students, André Costopoulos, was working on an email form that when filled out would go to him or HlaR.

B Whitlock expressed concerns about the GSA Bylaw and Policy on elections, particularly the section where it specified that candidates could not make any inappropriate, discriminatory, or ad hominem attacks as it was often important to address character in a campaign. He noted that this was needlessly restrictive and harmfully vague. He asked why the GSA did not want to allow people to be clear. S Prescott, in her capacity as Vice-Chair of GSA ERC, responded that she disagreed with his interpretation of an ad hominem attack and noted that the policy was intended to prevent “you’re ugly and you suck” and to avoid a campaign with a negative tone. This policy would allow the CRO a position when speaking to candidates. She added that the GSA ERC concern was religious or ethnic discrimination, not discriminating facts. B Whitlock agreed that this was reasonable but it was not clear in the policy and that he was concerned that as currently worded would allow for someone to be punished for healthy campaigning. S Prescott responded GSA Bylaw and Policy needed to avoid being too specific as to allow for some discretion if a situation is not covered. S Prescott noted that this attempted to discipline possible bad behaviour while leaving room for good faith behaviour. J Worthy clarified that the term “ad hominem” did not refer to anything you say about a person, it was the name for a logical fallacy – when someone used something about a person to make a point that had nothing to do with your point. B Whitlock agreed with that definition and requested more clarity on that section of the GSA Policy. S Prescott suggested sending his comments to GSA ERC for consideration.

B Whitlock expressed to GSA Council that he was in attendance at the GFC APC meeting and voted for the proposal on international graduate student tuition increase. He explained that the sticker price switch, since it was net neutral comes down to a marketing issue and S Ficko’s objections were reasonable but this was not a strong enough argument for him to vote the proposal down. As far as targeting international students, he noted that the University was mostly funded by the government so there was an argument to be made that international students had not contributed to Education in this province thus far. He added that if students opposed the fee increases then it was prudent to discuss where the cuts would alternately occur.

F Khodayari responded that since the University had not shown their reasoning for making this decision, the GSA cannot yet see if that change would help or not. He added that most international students were drawn to the University of Alberta for the program quality and the cheaper tuition. He specified that other programs might have been better based on their rankings so lower tuition does factor into students’ decisions. He agreed that international students might not yet have contributed to the Canadian/Alberta system but he noted that they brought skills that benefited the whole community and that many alumni stayed in Alberta and paid back their communities. He added that students who did return to their home countries further contributed to marketing the University with their fellow countrymen and women. S Ficko added that B Whitlock made a fair point about cuts and she agreed that was the reality. S Ficko noted that she challenged, at GFC APC and BFPC, the University to be more creative; their approach to marketing was only one strategy and we would like them to look at other options.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 pm.